A LEARNED AND COMPLETE

COMMENTARY

UPON THE BOOK OF THE

REVELATION.

DELIVERED IN SEVERAL LECTURES,

By that learned, laborious, and faithful SERVANT of JESUS CHRIST,

MR. JAMES DURHAM,

Late Minister of the Gospel in GLASGOW.

WHEREIN

The TEXT is EXPLAINED, the SERIES of the several PROPHECIES contained in that Book, deduced according to their Order and Dependance upon each other; the Periods and Succession of Times, at, or about which these Prophecies, that are already fulfilled, began to be, and were more fully, accomplished, fixed and applied according to History; and those that are yet to be fulfilled, modestly, and so far as is warrantable, inquired into.

TOGETHER WITH

Some practical OBSERVATIONS, and several DIGRESSIONS, (an Index whereof is prefixed) necessary for vindicating, clearing, and confirming many weighty and important Truths.

TO WHICH IS AFFIXED,

A brief SUMMARY of the whole REVELATION, with an Alphabetical INDEX of the chief and principal PURPOSES and WORDS contained in this Commentary.

AS ALSO,

Two SERMONS preached by the Author, on Rev. xxii. 20. Together with a Collection of some memorable Things in his Life.

2 TIM. iii. 16, 17. *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.*

REV. i. 3. *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.*

REV. xxii. 7. *Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.*

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TO THE

JUDICIOUS AND CHRISTIAN

READER.

THE reverend (now triumphing and glorified) Author, was ſo famous, and deſervedly in very high eſteem in our church, both becauſe of the ſingular and extraordinary way of God's calling him forth to the miniſtry of the goſpel, having left the univerſity (wherein I was at the ſame time a ſtudent (before he had finiſhed his courſe of philoſophy, and without any purpoſe to follow his books, at leaſt in order to ſuch an end; and having lived ſeveral years a private gentleman, with his wife and children, enjoying a good eſtate in the country; from which he did, no doubt, to the great diſſatisfaction of many of his natural friends, and with not a little prejudice to his outward condition, retire, and (being called thereto) humbly offer himſelf to trials, far from his own home, in order to his being licentiated to preach the goſpel; in the miniſtry whereof, he was immediately thereafter ſettled at Glaſgow, where it hath not wanted a ſeal in the hearts and conſciences of his hearers. And alſo, becauſe of his eminent piety, ſtedfaſtneſs, gravity, prudence, moderation, and other great abilities, whereof the venerable general aſſembly of this church had ſuch perſuaſion, that they did, in the year 1650, after mature deliberation, very unanimouſly pitch upon him, though then but about eight and twenty years of age, as among the ableſt, ſafeſt, and moſt accompliſhed miniſters therein, to attend the king's family: in which ſtation, though the times were moſt difficult, as abounding with temptations and ſnares, with jealouſies, heart-burnings, emulations and animoſities, and flowing with high tides of many various and not a few contrary humours, he did ſo wiſely and faithfully behave and acquit himſelf, that there was a conviction thereof left upon the conſciences of all who obſerved him, and ſo as he had peace through Jeſus Chriſt as to that miniſtration. The Author, I ſay, was in theſe and other reſpects ſo famous, that he needs no teſtimony or epiſtles of commendation, eſpecially from ſo obſcure and worthleſs a perſon; yet, being of his particular and very intimate acquaintance, daily converſant with him, and withal his ordinary hearer; being in a good providence colleagued with him in the miniſtry, (though a moſt unequal yoke-fellow to ſo ſtrong a labourer) I thought it my duty to give thee ſome brief hint both of himſelf, who loved always to be hid, except when it was neceſſary for him to appear, and of his book, wherein thou wilt find, that the ſpirit of Mr. Durham was not of an ordinary elevation; notwithſtanding whereof, as, in preaching the goſpel, he liked not to ſoar and hide himſelf from the hearers in a cloud of words; it was not in the wiſdom of words, but in the demonſtration of the Spirit, and of power, that he taught; ſo in his writing, he uſed the ſame plainneſs of ſpeech; yet how low ſoever his ſtile ſeemeth to be, I nothing doubt, but that every intelligent reader, will find ſuch certainty of truth to ſatisfy the mind, and ſuch ſweetneſs of matter to engage the affections, that he will count the Author an interpreter, one among a thouſand. And therefore, if at any time thou miſs, as poſſibly thou mayeſt, that comptneſs and fineneſs of phraſe, which in this phraſing and wording age is much in uſe, know that he had ſo very ſharp and pregnant an engine, and ſo exceeding rich and fruitful an invention, that they ordinarily did outſtrip and go beyond his expreſſion and pen, ſo that theſe could very hardly, and but ſeldom hold foot with him. Beſide, if his expreſſion was ſuch as might make his meaning be conceived by the hearers or readers, he did not at all effect, neither could he ſtay, being ſo cloſe in his purſuit of the matter, to chaſe, or follow after, fine words, ſo that I may here, without all complement, according to the proverb, ſay, *Aquila non captat muſcas*; yet none of

his expreſſions were baſe or unſuitable to the matter, but ordinarily, very maſſy, ſignificant and expreſſive of his meaning, though plain and ſimple, and, it may be, ſometimes not ſo beautifully ſituated, nor ſo adorning and outſetting of it, as poſſibly ſome would be at, which the Lord, in the depth of his wiſdom, did ſo order, that, as the author himſelf might be kept humble, (and indeed he did exemplarily ſhine in humility) ſo no other ſhould think of him above what was meet: for, it hath been thought by ſome, while hearing him diſcourſe, that if he had had ſuch a poliſhed ſtyle, and ſo well combed words as ſeveral others have, whoſe matter yet falleth exceedingly ſhort of his, he would have been looked upon as a very rare and ſingular man in his generation, as really he was, and as theſe ſame lectures of his upon the REVELATION (which he was by many importuned to publiſh) will readily give ground to think of him: which, though for ſubſtance (except as to theſe few intermixed, ſolidly, ſuccinctly, and I hope, ſatisfyingly, diſcuſſed queſtions) they were delivered by him to the people of his charge, within a very ſhort time; one of them every Lord's-day before ſermon, when all that time he did alſo preach twice a week, at leaſt, and moſt ordinarily thrice, beſide his daily public lecturing every fifth week, according to his courſe in the city, and all his other miniſterial duties of catechiſing, viſiting of the ſick, exhorting of the whole from houſe to houſe and his weekly meetings with the congregational elderſhip, for the exerciſe of diſcipline, moſt dexterouſly, faithfully, condeſcendingly, and indefatigably diſcharged by him, towards about fifteen hundred ſouls, of whom he alone as miniſter had the overſight: yet, in the whole ſeries and contexture thereof, thou wilt, notwithſtanding, find as much ſolidity, ſobriety and modeſty, much quickneſs and ſagacity, and very much plainneſs and perſpicuity, conſidering the obſcurity (comparatively I mean) of this ſcripture, which is rare, ſweetly kiſſing and embracing each other. So likewiſe, thou wilt diſcover, beſide a clear explication of the text of this book, and convincing proofs of the pope of Rome's being that Antichriſt, (a main ſcope of it) even to the awakening of the lamentably decayed zeal of the people of God againſt that beaſt, drunk with the blood of ſaints; after whom, ſo conſiderable a part of the Chriſtian world, and that to the great offence of the Jews, is, alas! ſtill wondering; thou wilt, I ſay, beſide thoſe, diſcover vaſt lecture in hiſtory, great light in the ſcriptures, and very deep reach in the profoundeſt, and moſt intricate things in theology, to a public profeſſion whereof, in this univerſity of Glaſgow, he was ſometime, viz. a little before his being appointed to attend the king's family, by the commiſſioners of the general aſſembly, authorized for viſiting the ſaid univerſity, moſt unanimouſly and ſolemnly deſigned and called, to the great ſatisfaction and refreſhment of many, and more particularly and eſpecially, of famous and worthy Mr. Dickſon, to whom the precious author was choſen to ſucceed in that profeſſion, he being called to a profeſſion of the ſame nature in the univerſity of Edinburgh, as one of the ableſt and beſt furniſhed men, all things being conſidered, in our church, that were not already engaged in ſuch employments, and moſt likely to fill Mr. Dickſon's room. But, his work will ſpeak for itſelf, and praiſe him in the gate, and, no doubt, provoke the reader, as to bleſs God for him, ſo to lament the church's great loſs in the removal of ſuch an uſeful inſtrument, in the very flower, prime, and vigour of his grace, gifts, and age, being but about ſix and thirty years: which loſs is ſo much the greater, that he was eminently, and beyond many, as ſeveral other ways, ſo, through the healing diſpoſition, and great moderation of ſpirit given unto him, fitted to deal in the edification, obſtructing differences, of this poor, torn and divided church; as may further afterwards appear, by a piece of his concerning ſcandal, ſhortly, if the Lord will, to be publiſhed. I will not detain thee much longer from peruſing of this work, only I ſhall in ſhort give thee an account, leſt his way of writing ſhould be miſtaken by any, becauſe it differeth from that which others, eſpecially of late, have followed, to the no ſmall edification of the church of God, of the reaſons inducing the author (as he once paſſingly ſhewed me upon his death-bed) to inſert theſe queſtions, that are, by way of digreſſion, more largely handled in this book. 1. The importunity of ſome friends. 2. His perſuaſion of the ſoundneſs and inoffenſiveneſs of the matter; wherein, though he hath here and there differed from ſome great men, yet hath he carried the difference with ſo much meekneſs, and ſo few irritating or reflecting expreſſions, dealing only by the ſtrength of ſimple reaſon, that he hath caſt a copy, worthy to be followed by others

in this eraſtic age. 3. Some apprehenſion, that to not a few, that way of touching upon ſome queſtions, might be more pleaſing and taking. 4. To prevent drowning, as it were, in following the ſeries and tract of the ſtory and commentary, according to the practice of ſeveral learned and worthy men in their writings upon the ſcripture. 5. Becauſe the clearing of ſome places along the book itſelf, did call for ſeveral of them. 6. That if they might any way at all be uſeful, they ſhould not altogether periſh, there having been no other convenient way for the publiſhing of them: and indeed it had been a pity to have ſmothered and kept them from ſeeing the light; for I have ſometimes heard him in his ſickneſs, profeſs, that, however feckleſs they were, as he had peace in his mind, that there was no new, uncouth or ſtrange things in them; ſo he could not deny, but that ſometimes in them, and other parts of the book, he had found God ſenſibly aſſiſting and carrying him through, beyond his own expectation.

Now, deſiring that theſe labours of the Author, which were intermixed with much prayer to God, (for, all the while he was a lecturing upon this ſcripture, and after, there was a conſiderable part of a day every week extraordinarily ſet apart for prayer, as for other cauſes, ſo, no doubt, for ſeeking God's help in that work) deſiring, I ſay, that theſe prayerful labours of his may be richly bleſt of God to thee, for making thee read the REVELATION, which, it may be, hath lien by thee, for moſt of it at leaſt, as a ſealed book hitherto, with more underſtanding, edification and comfort than ever; and deſiring withal, that the bright and Morning-ſtar, who holdeth the ſtars in his right-hand, may illuminate and fix many ſtars of ſuch magnitude, and keep them long brightly ſhining in the firmament of his church, for the direction, guidance and comfort thereof in theſe cloudy and ſad times, I am, at leaſt would be,

Chriſtian,

Thy ſervant

for Chriſt's ſake,

in the work of the goſpel,

JOHN CARSTAIRS.

Glaſgow, Sept. 23d. 1658.

TO THE READER.

READER,

BEING desired to speak my knowledge of this subsequent work, I acknowledge that I was one who frequently encouraged the author to let it go abroad. For, however he had no time to polish it, and what is here, almost all was taken from his mouth, by the pen of an ordinary hearer, yet I am assured, the matter of it, as I heard it weekly delivered, is so precious, as cannot but be very welcome and acceptable to the world of believers. I am confident, that the gracious design which some worthy brethren, among us, have in hand, and have now far advanced, to the good satisfaction of all who have tasted of the first-fruits of their labours, of making the body of holy scriptures plain and useful to vulgar capacities, is not a little furthered by this piece: for, albeit with greater length, as the nature of the book of necessity did require, than these brethrens design of shortness doth admit; yet it maketh very plain and useful, that which, without all question, is the hardest of all scriptures. This I can say, that divers of the most obscure texts of that holy book, which I understood little at the beginning of his lecture, before he closed his exercise, were made to me so clear, that I judged his exposition might well be acquiesced into without much more debate.

THAT wit were more than ordinary weak, which durst promise from the pen of any man a clear and certain exposition of all the REVELATION, before the day of performance of these very deep and mysterious prophecies. It was not for nought, that most judicious Calvin, and acute Beze, with many other profound divines, would never be moved to attempt any explication of that book: yet, I hope, I may make bold to affirm, without hazard of any heavy censure, that there is hear laid such a bridge over that very deep river, that whoever goeth over it, shall have cause to bless God for the Author's labour.

THE epistle speaketh to the man, I shall add but this one word, That from the day I was employed by the presbytery to preach and pray, and to impose, with others, hands upon him for the ministry at Glasgow, I did live to the very last with him, in great and uninterrupted love, and in an high estimation of his egregious endowments, which made him to me precious among the most excellent divines I have been acquainted with in the whole isle. O if it were the good pleasure of the Master of the vineyard, to plant many such noble vines in this land! I hope many more of his labours shall follow this first, and that the more quickly as this doth receive the due and expected acceptance.

Thine in the Lord,

ROBERT BAILLIE.

A COLLECTION OF SOME MEMORABLE THINGS IN THE AUTHOR'S LIFE.

MR. JAMES DURHAM, by birth was a good gentleman, of the houſe and family of Grange Durham, an antient, honourable, and ſometime flouriſhing family in the pariſh of Monufeith, in the ſhire of Angus. He had a good eſtate in the pariſh of Murroſe, then called Eaſter Powrie, but now called Wedderburn, after the gentleman's name who is preſent heritor of it.

He left the univerſity before he was graduate; and for ſome time after he came from the college, lived as a private gentleman at his own dwelling-houſe in the country, without any thought then of further proſecuting his ſtudies, eſpecially for the miniſtry. And though he was always blameleſs and moral in his life, both in the univerſity and when he left it, yet was he much a ſtranger to religion, in the ſerious exerciſe and power of it; and through prejudice of education, did not ſtand well affected to the preſbyterial government. He firſt married a daughter of the laird of Duntervie: his wife and her mother were both very pious women.

His converſion to the Lord was very remarkable. Going with his lady to viſit her mother in the pariſh of Abercorn, ſome miles weſt from Edinburgh, a conſiderable diſtance from his own houſe, it happened to be the time of the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper its being adminiſtrate in that pariſh. Upon Saturday his mother-in-law earneſtly preſſed him to go with them to church, and hear ſermon; he ſhewed at firſt a great unwillingneſs, but, partly by their perſuaſions, and partly by his complaiſant diſpoſition, he was prevailed with to go along with them. The miniſter that preached that day was extremely affectionate and ſerious in his delivery, and though the ſermon was but a plain familiar diſcourſe, yet his ſerioufneſs fixed Mr. Durham's attention very cloſely, and he was much affected therewith, but the change was to be reſerved for the morrow. When he came home, he ſaid to his mother-in-law, The miniſter has preached very ſeriouſly this day, and I ſhall not need to be preſſed to go to church to-morrow. Accordingly on Sabbath morning riſing early, he returned to church, and Mr. Ephraim Melvil preached from 1 Pet. ii. 7. *To you that believe, he is precious.* Where he ſo ſweetly and ſeriouſly opened up the preciouſneſs of Chriſt, and the Spirit of God wrought ſo effectually upon his ſpirit, that in the hearing of that ſermon he firſt cloſed with Chriſt, and then went to the Lord's table and took the ſeal of God's covenant. He ordinarily called Mr. Melvil, father, when he ſpoke of him.

He did afterwards make ſerious religion his buſineſs and daily exerciſe, both in ſecret and in his family, and in all companies and places where he came, and did cordially embrace the intereſt of Chriſt and his church as then eſtabliſhed.

He gave himſelf much to reading, for which cauſe, and that he mi ht be free of all diſturbance of the family, &c. he cauſed build a ſtudy for himſelf, on the head of the ſtair of his houſe in the country, which yet remains ſtanding, though all the reſt of that great houſe be pulled down. In this little chamber he gave himſelf continually to prayer, reading and meditation, and was ſo cloſe a ſtudent there, that he oft forgot to eat his bread; and was ſometimes ſo intent on his ſtudies, that ſervants who were ſent to call him down, have often returned without anſwer, yea, his lady was frequently obliged to call on him with tears to open and come down, before he would come; ſuch ſweet communion he had with the Lord in that place at ſometimes.

He made great proficiency in his ſtudies, and not only became an experimental Chriſtian, but a learned man. One evidence of this he gave in a little diſpute with one of the then miniſters of Dun-

dee. Being in that town, he did (in the houſe where he was occaſionally) meet with the parſon of the pariſh, as miniſters were then called, who knew not Mr. Durham: but after ſome diſcourſe he fell upon the popiſh controverſy with the parſon, and did put him ſo to ſilence, as the parſon was not able to anſwer, but ſneakingly paſſed out of the room from Mr. Durham, and went to the provoſt, craving his aſſiſtance to apprehend Mr. Durham as a Jeſuite, aſſuring the provoſt, that if ever there was a Jeſuite in Rome he was one, and that if he were ſuffered to continue in the town and country, he might pervert many from the faith. Upon which the provoſt going alongſt with the parſon to the houſe where the ſuppoſed Jeſuite was, and entering into the room, the provoſt immediately knew Mr. Durham, and ſaluted him as laird of Eaſter Powrie, craving him pardon for their miſtake; and turning to the parſon, aſked him, where the gentleman was whom he called the Jeſuite, Mr. Durham ſmiling, the parſon was aſhamed, and begged both of them pardon, but was rebuked by the provoſt, ſaying, Fy, fy, that any country gentleman ſhould be able to put our parſon to ſilence.

He was one of great integrity, authority and reſpect in the country where he lived, and among all his neighbour gentlemen; inſomuch that in all debates and differences that fell out betwixt any, Mr. Durham was always choſen by both parties as their great referee, arbitrator and judge, to whoſe ſentence all parties ſubmitted. He was the great tryſter and peace-maker, yea, what Job ſaid of himſelf, chap. xxix. 7, 21. was applicable to this great and holy man Mr. Durham, while a private gentleman in the country. *Unto him men give ear, and waited, and kept ſilence at his counſel; after his words they ſpake not again: he choſe out their way, and ſat chief, and dwelt as a king in the country, and as one that comforteth the mourners.*

In the time of the civil wars, many gentlemen were in arms for the cauſe of religion, amongſt whom Mr. Durham was choſen and called to be a captain; in which ſtation and character he behaved himſelf like another Cornelius, being a moſt devout man, and one that feared God with all his houſe, and prayed to God always with his company. Yea, he ſometimes acted more like a miniſter than a captain, ſtanding on the head of his company, and giving them many ſerious exhortations, advices and counſels for their ſouls, and prayed before them ſo powerfully and effectually, that not only all his company, but ſtrangers who paſſed by and heard, were greatly affected and ſurprized, looking on him not only as a good man, but a great man, in whom much of the Spirit of God was.

His call and coming forth to the holy miniſtry, was truly remarkable, which was this. The Scots army being to engage with the Engliſh army in fight, he judged it meet to call his company and ſoldiers to prayer before the engagement. And as he was beginning to pray, it happened that the reverend Mr. David Dickſon profeſſor of divinity then at Glaſgow, came riding by the army, who ſeeing the ſoldiers addreſſing themſelves to prayer, and hearing the voice of one praying, drew near and lighted from his horſe, and joined with them, who was ſo much taken with Mr. Durham's prayer, that, after prayer, Mr. Dickſon called for the captain, and having converſed with him a little, he did ſolemnly charge him, that ſo ſoon as this piece of ſervice he was engaged in was over, he ſhould devote himſelf to ſerve God in the holy miniſtry, for to that he judged the Lord called him. But though as yet Mr. Durham had no clearneſs to hearken to Mr. Dickſon's deſire, yet two remarkable providences falling out juſt upon the back of Mr. Dickſon's ſolemn charge, ſerved very much to clear his way to comply with Mr. Dickſon's deſire. The firſt was, in the engagement his horſe was ſhot under him, yet he himſelf was mercifully preſerved. The ſecond was, in the heat of battle, an Engliſh ſoldier was ready to ſtrike him down with his ſword, but apprehending him to be a miniſter by his grave carriage, black cloaths and band, as was then in faſhion with gentlemen, aſked Mr. Durham, if he was a prieſt? to which Mr. Durham anſwered, Yes, and ſo his life was ſpared by the ſoldier. Upon after reflection, Mr. Durham conſidering with himſelf, how wonderfully the Lord had ſpared him, and preſerved his life, and that his ſaying he was a prieſt, had been the mean of his preſervation, reſolved therefore, as a teſtimony of his grateful and thankful ſenſe of the Lord's goodneſs and mercy to him, henceforth to devote himſelf to the ſervice of God in the holy miniſtry, if the Lord ſhould ſee meet to call and qualify him for the ſame.

Accordingly in purſuance of this his reſolution, he very quickly after went to Glaſgow, and

ſtudied divinity under Mr. Dickſon, then profeſſor there, and made ſuch proficiency in his ſtudies, that, in a ſhort time, (being called thereto) he humbly offered himſelf to trials, *anno* 1646, and was licenſed by the preſbytery of Irvine to preach the goſpel.

NEXT year, upon Mr. David Dickſon's recommendation, the ſeſſion of Glaſgow appointed Mr. Robert Ramſay, one of their miniſters, to entreat Mr. Durham to come and preach in Glaſgow. Accordingly he came and preached two Lord's days, and one week day. The ſeſſion being abundantly ſatisfied with Mr. Durham's doctrine, and the gifts beſtowed upon him by the Lord, for ſerving him in the holy miniſtry, did unanimouſly call him to the miniſtry of the Black-friar church then vacant. In conſequence of which, he was ordained miniſter there, in November 1647. The tenor of the call given him was as follows,

Right Reverend and Well-beloved Sir,

THE report we heard of the grace of God in you, bred in us a longing deſire to hear you ourſelves; and now having heard, we acknowledge that the fame concerning you, which came to our ears, was well grounded, and that we are ſo abundantly ſatisfied with the gift beſtowed upon you by the Lord, that we have reſolved, and by thir preſents, do call and invite you to come and undertake the miniſterial charge of word and ſacraments among us, in that our church, commonly called the Black-friars: whereunto we unfeignedly profeſs, that we are moved by no carnal conſideration, but by the reſpect we have to the glory of God, and the edification of our own ſouls allenarly; which great ends we are confident ſhall be procured by your following of this invitation as from God, who has put this motion ſo harmoniouſly without contradiction in all our hearts and mouths. And for your better encouragement hereto, although we neither dare nor will promiſe great things of ourſelves, yet, by the grace of God, you ſhall have here a people to render to you all the duty and reſpect which a flock ought to a faithful paſtor; and what encouragement we can afford ſhall not be wanting. And (that which we know you will regard moſt) our aim ſhall be, by the Lord's aſſiſtance, to receive the word of God for reproof, as well as for conſolation, in private and in public, readily at your mouth yea, and church cenſure alſo, if our failing ſhall be found ſo to deſerve. Let us therefore make bold to obteſt you, in the Lord, not to ſhun this matter, which providence is of God, but make your addreſs hither with all conveniency, that in an orderly way we may enjoy the benefit of your labours, for which we ſhall bleſs God, and are yours ſubſcribing in name of the haill ſeſſion by the moderator and clerk.

BEING ſettled there, he did apply himſelf to the work of the miniſtry with great diligence; meditating on theſe things he had received in charge, he gave himſelf wholly to them, ſo that his profiting did quickly appear to all. But he conſidering, that no man that warreth, entangleth himſelf with the affairs of this life, that he may pleaſe him who hath choſen him to be a ſoldier, deſired and obtained leave of his people to return to his own country for ſome little time, to ſettle his worldly eſtate and affairs there. Whilſt he was there, he was not idle, but preached every Sabbath day. The firſt Sabbath he preached in Dundee, where he had a great audience, the moſt of the inhabitants of any note in the town; and all the gentlemen in town, and ſome miles about it, being of Mr. Durham's old acquaintance, hearing of his being come to the country, and that he was to preach, did out of their curioſity come to hear him; he preached from Rom. i. 16. *I am not aſhamed of the goſpel of Chriſt.* And ſhewed them, that it was no diſparagement for the greateſt to be a preacher and a goſpel-miniſter. The ſecond Sabbath he was in this country, he preached in Fealing, at the deſire of the miniſter there. It is the next adjacent pariſh to the place where his intereſt lay in the country, where ſeveral of the neighbour gentlemen of his old acquaintance did come and hear; he preached from 2 Cor. v. 18, 19. *He hath given to us the miniſtry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelf,* &c. The third Sabbath he was in this country, he preached in Monufeith, at the deſire of the miniſter there, the place where all his relations and intimate acquaintances had their dwellings; he preached from 2 Cor. v. 20. *We then as ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us, we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled to God.* In both

which places, he acted indeed like an ambaſſador for Chriſt, and managed the goſpel treaty of peace to very good purpoſe. The fourth Sabbath he deſigned to have preached in Murroſe, his own pariſh church, where he was a conſiderable heritor. But whilſt he was thus employed in preaching, and ſettling his worldly intereſt and affairs here in the country, he received an expreſs from Glaſgow, to return in all haſte, his wife being dangerouſly ſick. Upon which he made for his journey, and returned to Glaſgow, leaving his affairs to the care of his friends. In a few days his dear wife, who was the deſire and delight of his eyes, died.

His Chriſtian ſubmiſſion under this afflicting diſpenſation was remarkable. After ſome time ſilence, he ſaid to thoſe about him, who came to viſit him, and ſympathize with him in his affliction and loſs, now who could perſuade me that this diſpenſation of God's providence were good for me, if the Lord had not ſaid it was ſo? He was afterwards married to Margaret Mure, relict of Mr. Zacharias Boyd, miniſter of the Barony of Glaſgow.

In the year 1650, Mr. David Dickſon, profeſſor of divinity in the college of Glaſgow, being called to a profeſſion of the ſame nature in the univerſity of Edinburgh, the commiſſioners of the general aſſembly authorized for viſiting the univerſity of Glaſgow, moſt unanimouſly deſigned and called Mr. Durham to ſucceed Mr. Dickſon as profeſſor of divinity there: but in a little time thereafter, before he was admitted to that charge, the general aſſembly of this church being perſuaded of his eminent piety, ſtedfaſtneſs, gravity, prudence, moderation, and other great abilities, they did that ſame year, after mature deliberation, very unanimouſly pitch upon him, though then about eight and twenty years of age, as amongſt the ableſt and moſt accompliſhed miniſters of this church, to attend the king's family as chaplain. In which ſtation, though the times were moſt difficult, as abounding with temptations and ſnares, with jealouſies, heart-burnings, emulations and animoſities, and flowing with high tides of many various, and not a few contrary humours, he did ſo wiſely and faithfully behave and acquit himſelf, that there was a conviction thereof left upon the conſciences of all who obſerved him, and ſo as he had peace through Jeſus Chriſt as to that miniſtration. During his attendance upon the king and court, ſuch was his authority and gravity, and ſuch a majeſty and awe in his countenance, as did conciliate, yea, command reverence and reſpect from all in the court toward him: in ſo much that it was obſerved, that whatever lightneſs and profanity had been uſual in former times by ſome in the court, and great contempt ſhewn by them to ſome formerly in that character; yet during his preſence in the court, and whenever he went about the duty of his place, they did all carry gravely, and did forbear all lightneſs and profanity: and there were none that durſt allow themſelves to do or ſpeak any thing offenſive before him.

While he ſerved the Lord in the holy miniſtry, and particulary in that poſt and character of king's chaplain, his great labour and ambition was, to be accepted of God, and have God's favour and not the favour of great men; therefore he ſtudied more to profit and edify their ſouls, than pleaſe and tickle their fancies, as ſome court paraſites do in their ſermons. One inſtance whereof was this. Being called, at a certain time, to preach before the parliament, where many rulers were preſent, he preached from John iii. 10. *Art thou a maſter of Iſrael, and knoweſt not theſe things?* That which he moſtly inſiſted on before this auguſt meeting, was, that it was a moſt unaccountable thing for rulers, nobles in Iſrael, (a land of light, where divine light and revelation was, and where a great plenty of the means of knowledge was) to be ignorant of, and unacquainted with theſe great and neceſſary things of regeneration, and being born again of the Spirit. And did moſt ſeriouſly preſs upon all, from the king to the beggar, to ſeek to know experimentally theſe things. An excellent pattern for all court miniſters, and ſuch as are called to preach at ſuch public occaſions. He continued with the king till he went to England.

Towards the latter end of January 1651, the common ſeſſion of Glaſgow appointed Mr. Patrick Gilleſpie to write a letter in their name to Mr. James Durham, concerning Mr. Robert Ramſay's being profeſſor of divinity in place of the ſaid Mr. James, in the univerſity of Glaſgow. And likewiſe Mr. Patrick Gilleſpie, John Graham provoſt, James Hamilton, Thomas Brown, and William Lightbody bailies, William Dunlop dean of guild, Peter Johnſtoun deacon conveener, and Mr. John

Spreul town clerk, were appointed to confer with the maſters of the college thereanent. In February next, Mr. Durham wrote a letter to the ſeſſion of Glaſgow, teſtifying his entire affection to them, and and bearing that the general aſſembly had left him a door for his entry there. Upon which a letter was ſent from the common ſeſſion, ſubſcribed by all the members of it, to Mr. James Durham, and James Hamilton, and Mr. John Spreul, appointed to carry the ſame, and to preſent their deſire to him, ſignified by the ſaid letter, whereof the tenor followeth.

Right Reverend,

WE received yours, wherein you ſpeak of the commiſſioners liberating you for ſome time from your attendance upon the king's family, and of your purpoſe to viſit us here, which did not a little refreſh us. The obſtruction of the accompliſhment of a former reſolution for this, and the diſappointment of our longing expectation therein, did much ſadden our ſpirits; and if the Lord ſhould ſo diſpoſe, that yet your coming hither ſhould be impeded, it is like, it would exceedingly add to all the affliction that lies upon us. We hope no diſcouragement from this place ſhall prevail ſo far, as to work the leaſt alteration of your declared purpoſe and reſolution. We cannot tell how much and how earneſtly we long once more to ſee your face, and to hear a word from you, from whoſe mouth the Lord has often bleſſed the ſame, for our great refreſhment, edification and confirmation. We do therefore, with all earneſtneſs, requeſt and beſeech you, that you would, in the interim of your retirement from attendance upon that charge, let the town and congregation once and yet dear to you, who dare not quit their intereſt in you, nor look upon that tie and relation betwixt you and them as diſſolved and null, enjoy the comfort of your, ſometimes, very comfortable fellowſhip and miniſtry. We do not think of the deferring of our hope any longer in this. We have, therefore, hearing that you were at Stirling, ſent two of our number, James Hamilton, bailie, and Mr. John Spreul, to preſent and follow forth this our moſt ſerious and earneſt requeſt. Not further, but longing, praying, and hoping to ſee you in this place, we reſt, &c.

In conſequence of this preſſing letter, Mr. Durham ſometime after came to Glaſgow; for he is mentioned preſent in the ſeſſion in the beginning of April next, at the ſame time Cromwell and his army were in Glaſgow: and, on the Lord's day Cromwell heard Mr. Durham, who preached againſt the invaſion to his face. Next day Cromwell ſent for Mr. Durham, and told him, that he always thought Mr. Durham had been a more wiſe and prudent man, than to meddle with matters of public concern in his ſermons. To which Mr. Durham anſwered, That it was not his practice to bring public matters into the pulpit; but that he judged it both wiſdom and prudence in him to ſpeak his mind upon that head, ſeeing he had the opportunity of doing it in his own hearing. Cromwell diſmiſſed him very civilly; but deſired him to forbear inſiſting upon that ſubject in public. And at the ſame time ſundry miniſters, both in town and country, met with Cromwell and his officers, and repreſented, in the ſtrongeſt manner, the injuſtice of his invaſion.

It would ſeem, that ſome time after this, Mr. Durham had withdrawn from Glaſgow; and, therefore, in Auguſt next, a letter is ordered to be ſent him, that he would come and viſit them, and preach here. And in September next, there being a vacancy in the Inner-kirk, by the death of Mr. Robert Ramſay, the common ſeſſion gave an unanimous call (with which the town council agreed) to Mr. Durham, to the miniſtry of the Inner-kirk, whereof the tenor followeth.

Right Reverend,

WE the miniſters and ruling elders of the common ſeſſion of Glaſgow, according to the truſt that lies upon us, caſting our eyes about, where we could find a man that might ſerve in the miniſtry of the goſpel, in that congregation now vacant amongſt us, through the removal of our late miniſter, Mr. Robert Ramſay, we were led (and as we conceive, not without a ſpecial providence, and the good hand of our God upon us (towards thoughts of you; of whoſe ability, grace, integrity, and faithfulneſs, we have abundant experience, with whoſe miniſtry and fellowſhip, we, and the Lord's people in this place, have been often and much refreſhed, edified, ſtrengthened, and comforted, our own

and the affections of this people being withal exceedingly joined to you, which makes us all long much for you in the Lord, and ſeems to ſay, that your miniſtry may be more uſeful here, and more commended to the hearts of this people, than any where elſe, that you ſhall have an open door, and be here, as you have been formerly amongſt this people, the firſt-fruits of your miniſtry, with the fulneſs of the bleſſings of the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt. There being alſo ſome more than ordinary, at leaſt, ſtanding tie and relation betwixt you and us, never as yet declared, nor accounted by you or us to be altogether diſſolved, null and void. We do therefore, in our own name, and in the name of that particular congregation, moſt ſeriouſly beſeech, exhort, yea, obteſt you in the Lord, that you would hearken to our earneſt and cordial call and invitation of you, to labour in the work of the goſpel amongſt us in that congregation, and not refuſe, ſhift or delay, to follow and embrace the ſame, as you would not add to all the affliction that has come, and may come upon us. And we are hopeful, that you ſhall find the people deſirous and willing to receive and make welcome the word of the Lord from your mouth, and to ſubject themſelves to any cenſure of Jeſus Chriſt, drawn forth by you. We do alſo, for ourſelves promiſe, that we ſhall, through the ſtrength of his grace, endeavour to carry ourſelves to you in all things, as it becomes brethren and fellow-labourers in the work of the Lord, ſubſcribed by our moderator and clerk, in our name.

The ſeſſion appointed Mr. John Carſtairs, George Porterfield, and John Hamilton, to intimate and give the ſaid call to Mr. Durham. Accordingly Mr. Durham was, ſometime after this, received miniſter in the Inner-kirk: Mr. John Carſtairs, his brother-in-law, was his colleague in that church.

In the whole of his miniſtry, he was a burning and a ſhining light; he ſhined in all Chriſtian and miniſterial gifts and graces, and particularly, he did exemplarly ſhine in humility and ſelf-denial: one inſtance of many was this. Upon a certain day, when Mr. Andrew Gray and he were to preach, as they were walking together, Mr. Durham obſerving multitudes thronging into that church where Mr. Andrew Gray was to preach, and but here and there one dropping into that church where he himſelf was to preach, ſaid to Mr. Gray, Brother, I perceive you are like to have a throng church this day. To which Mr. Gray anſwered, Truly, brother, they are fools to leave you and come to me. To which Mr. Durham replied, Not ſo, dear brother; for a miniſter can receive no ſuch honour and ſucceſs in his miniſtry, except it be given him from heaven. I rejoice that Chriſt is preached, and that his kingdom and intereſt is getting ground, and that his honour and eſteem doth encreaſe, though my eſteem in people's hearts ſhould decreaſe, and be diminiſhed; for I am content to be any thing, ſo that Chriſt may be all in all.

He was a perſon of the utmoſt compoſure and gravity, and ſcarce ſmiled at any thing. When Mr. William Guthry and he were together at dinner in ſome gentleman's houſe, Mr. Guthry was exceeding merry, and made Mr. Durham ſmile, yea, laugh, with his pleaſant, facetious converſation. It was the ordinary cuſtom of the family to pray after dinner; and Mr. Guthry was deſired to pray, which he did with the greateſt meaſure of ſeriouſneſs and fervency, to the aſtoniſhment of all preſent. When they roſe from prayer, Mr. Durham came to him, and embraced him, and ſaid, O William, you are a happy man; if I had been ſo merry as you have been, I could not have been ſerious, nor in any frame for prayer, for forty-eight hours.

As Mr. Durham was devout in all the parts of his miniſterial work, he was more eminently ſo at communion occaſions; then he endeavoured through grace to rouſe and work up himſelf to ſuch a divineneſs of frame, as very much ſuited the ſpiritual ſtate and majeſty of that ordinance; greatly fearing leſt himſelf, or any of the people to whom he diſpenſed the ſame, ſhould fall under the grievous guilt of the body and blood of the Lord: then, in a manner, his face ſhone, as being in the mount of communion and fellowſhip with God. And at ſome of thoſe ſolemn and ſweet occaſions, he ſpake ſome way as a man that had been in heaven, commending Jeſus Chriſt, making a glorious diſplay of the banner of free grace, holding forth the riches of it very clearly and convincingly, and bringing the offers thereof very low, wonderfully low; ſo that, in the hearing of ſome of his ſermons at thoſe occaſions, particularly, that on Matth. xxii. 4. ſome of his hearers were made to think, that the rope or cord of the offer of ſalvation was let down and hung ſo low to ſinners, that thoſe of the

loweſt ſtature amongſt them all, might have catched hold of it, who, through grace, had any mind to do ſo; and ſo home, ſo vehement and urgently preſſed, on ſo ſweet and eaſy terms to be embraced, that it was a wonder to ſome, how they could refuſe or ſhift them.

Mr. DURHAM gave himſelf much to meditation, and uſually ſaid very little to perſons that came to propoſe their caſes to him, but heard them patiently, and was ſure to handle them in his ſermon.

HIS healing diſpoſition, and great moderation of ſpirit, remarkably appeared, when this church was greatly divided betwixt the Reſolutioners and Proteſters. As he would never give his judgment upon either ſide; ſo he uſed to ſay, That diviſion was by far worſe than either of the ſides. He was equally reſpected by both parties; ſo that, at a meeting of the ſynod in Glaſgow, when thoſe of the two different ſides met ſeparately, each of them made choice of Mr. Durham for their moderator; but he refuſed to join with either of them, until they would both unite together, which they accordingly did. At this meeting, Mr. Durham gave in the following overtures for peace.

BEING ſtill more and more convinced of the neceſſity of union among the miniſters of this church, by the many evils that accompany theſe differences, do therefore think it expedient to endeavour ſome way of healing, at leaſt of preventing the growing of the ſame. And though they neither intend hereby, judicially to condemn or reflect on any acts or proceedings of any of them, either on the one ſide or the other, preceding this time, but do leave both ſides without prejudice either by this agreement. Yet, for the ends foreſaid, they do voluntary condeſcend mutually in the things controverted, in as far as concerns their practice for the interim, as follows:

1. THAT they ſhall eſchew all public wakening or lengthening theſe debates, by preaching or ſpreading papers, either in favours of the one ſide or the other.

2. THAT they ſhall forbear the practiſing, executing or preſſing of all acts concluded in the laſt aſſemblies at St. Andrews and Dundee, and alſo, the preſſing or ſpreading appeals, declinators or proteſtations againſt the ſame: and that both theſe foreſaids, together with a ſentence intended or followed thereupon, ſhall be, for the time, as to practice, and our uſe-making of them in any thing, as though they had not been; this being always ſo underſtood, as inferring no actual condemning of either of them, as ſaid is.

3. THAT none of thoſe be to any whatſoever rank, miniſter or elder, or expectant, a ground or aggravation of challenge, or cenſure, or of exception againſt their being admitted to office, they being otherwiſe found qualified.

4. THAT ſome be named as correſpondents, who may carry theſe overtures to be conferred with, and recommended unto brethren of other ſynods, who are to be written unto, to ſend ſome of their number to meet at a convenient time and place for that end.

5. LIKEAS, it is their purpoſe, if God ſhall give a free general aſſembly, to endeavour a full and judicial ſettling an oblivion of the foreſaid differences, and all conſequences that have followed on them; and, in the mean time, to proceed in all affairs according to the uncontroverted rules and acts of our church.

So earneſt was Mr. Durham for peace and agreement betwixt miniſters on both ſides at this time, that he went to St. Andrews with Meſſrs. Samuel Rutherford, Robert Trail, Alexander Levingſtone, and Patrick Gilleſpie, who had a conference there with Meſſrs. Robert Blair, David Farret, and James Wood, about their different judgments at that time, and was preſent with them at their reaſonings three days, where the ſubſtance of the foreſaid overtures were inſiſted upon.

So weighty was the miniſterial charge upon Mr. Durham's ſpirit, that he uſed to ſay, That if he were to live ten years longer than he had done, he would chuſe to live nine years to ſtudy for preaching the tenth year. And it was thought his cloſe ſtudy and thoughtfulneſs caſt him into that decay whereof he died.

WHEN on death-bed, he was under conſiderable darkneſs about his ſtate, and ſaid to Mr. John Carſtairs, Brother, for all that I have preached and written, there is but one ſcripture I can remember or dare grip unto it; tell me, if I dare lay the weight of my ſalvation upon it, *Whoſoever cometh to me, I will in no ways caſt out.* Mr. Carſtairs anſwered him, You may depend on it, though you had a thouſand ſalvations at hazard.

About a month before his death, the miniſters of the town prevailed with the magiſtrates, who had a great veneration for Mr. Durham, to leave the nomination of his ſucceſſor to himſelf; and accordingly they drew up a paper, wherein they obliged themſelves to call the miniſter whom Mr. Durham ſhould recommend. This bond was lodged in Mr. Durham's hand, who pro ſed to give his advice therein. Some few days before his death, he called for the magiſtrates and miniſters, and told them he had been conſidering their propoſal, and named three to them; Mr. Ralph Rogers, one of the three that he named, ſucceeded him.

He died on the 25th of June, 1658, in the thirty and ſixth year of his age. His death was the more to be lamented, that he died thus in the very flower and vigour of his grace, gifts and age. Mr. John Carſtairs, his colleague in the Inner-kirk, preached next Sabbath upon Iſaiah lvii. 1. *The righteous periſheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none conſidering, that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come.* Where he gave him a large character, and repreſented the great loſs of ſuch an eminent man. And not only the miniſters in town, but in the country, greatly lamented Mr. Durham's death in their preachings and prayers next Sabbath, particularly, Mr. David Veitch, miniſter of Govan, in the forenoon; and in the afternoon took farewel of his pariſh, and died that very day Mr. Durham was buried; which is the more remarkable, becauſe Mr. Durham once deſigned to have recommended him for his ſucceſſor, as he told Mr. Carſtairs, ſometime before he intimated his nomination to the magiſtrates and miniſters.

Thus died the eminently pious, learned and judicious Mr. James Durham, whoſe labours did always aim at the advancement of practical religion, and whoſe praiſe is in the goſpel, throughout all the churches of God both at home and abroad. He was a burning and a ſhining light in his day, a ſtar of the firſt magnitude; and of whom it may be ſoberly ſaid, without derogating from any, *He attained unto the firſt three, and had a name amongſt the mighty.* His memory, though long ago called home from his maſter's vineyard, is ſtill recent and ſavoury in the hearts of all that are really godly, and ſhall continue ſo whilſt Chriſt hath a true church in theſe lands; which is the ſame as to ſay, *He ſhall be had in everlaſting remembrance.*

Though Mr. Durham be now dead, he yet ſpeaketh in the ſingularly pious and ſavoury works of his, which are moſtly reviſed and publiſhed by his brother-in-law, Mr. John Carſtairs. Mr. Durham being wholly taken up with the importance of his ſubject, did always dive into the heart of matter, and was leſs curious about ornamental circumſtances, which yet were never deſiderated in his diſcourſes, whilſt enlivened with that zealous fervour, pungency and weightineſs wherewith himſelf delivered them: but the air and life of expreſſion, not being communicable to paper, and being a little wanting to theſe notes which had been taken from his mouth by one of his ordinary hearers, no ſcholar, a ſupply was thereto made, not without much induſtry and pains by the accurate and polite pen of his worthy brother.

His lectures upon the book of the Revelation, appear to have been printed a little after his death, Mr. Carſtairs' epiſtle to the reader, prefixed to that work, bearing date the 23d of September, 1658. It was prepared for the preſs in Mr. Durham's own life-time; and he was by many importuned to publiſh it; for which end, to make it more complete, (at the importunity of his friends) he added diſcourſes upon twenty-five ſubjects, by way of digreſſion, interſperſed through the book, which ſhew his deep reach, in the profoundeſt and moſt intricate points of divinity: in doing whereof, (as he declared in his ſickneſs) he could not deny, but that ſometimes in them and other parts of the book, he had found God ſenſibly aſſiſting and carrying him through beyond his own expectation. All the while he was lecturing upon this ſcripture, he kept two days a week for faſting and prayer, for diſcovering the Lord's mind therein.

There is a manuſcript copy of theſe lectures on the Revelation ſtill preſerved, which appears to be in the ſame words as he delivered them, and is the ſame in ſubſtance with that in print; only it hath ſundry obſervations, here and there, which are not in print; the moſt material one, it is preſumed, will not be unacceptable to ſome readers to be here inſerted. After explaining theſe words, Rev. ii. 5. *Nevertheleſs, I have ſomewhat againſt thee, becauſe thou haſt fallen from thy firſt love,* it follows.

WONDER not why God quarrels with Scotland; we need not ſay it is for corruption in doctrine or diſcipline, nor for our zealous going about it; that was not his quarrel with Epheſus; therefore he commendeth them for hating the deeds of the Nicolaitans, neither is it his quarrel with us: but as it was his quarrel with Epheſus, that ſhe was fallen from her firſt love; ſo it is with us. There has been much profeſſion of love to God, and zeal for him in profeſſors, and in the outward face of judicatories, which we are not to call in queſtion, nor lay the quarrel on it; our Lord Jeſus would never have quarrelled Epheſus nor us for zeal and faithfulneſs: but if we look to his quarrel with Scotland, it is defection, not an outward defection from the truth and purity of doctrine, nor from the external duties of religion; but an inward defection, a declining in the exerciſe of grace; we have not been ſo careful to keep up the exerciſe of grace before God, as to be ſeen of men. 2. There is a declining in love, eſpecially love to God, and love to one another, which may be ſeen in our walking uncharitably and untenderly. 3. A defection, in the manner of performing duties; our faſts have not been from a right principle, our cenſures not in love to the ſouls of people, much roughneſs and untenderneſs in drawing them forth. The duty may be commendable, but the principle from which it flowed may be a ground of quarrel. Therefore look upon this epiſtle, as if Chriſt were writing a letter to Scotland; and in his letter, ſaying, for as much purity and zeal as ye have, yet ye are fallen from your firſt love; much of your love, warmneſs and tenderneſs is away; there is a declining and defection from grace in the exerciſe of it, or from that which ſeemed to be grace: this will be found to be our ſin before God. The ſtate we are in, looks ſo like Epheſus, whether we compare the outward ſtate of our church with that before theſe late confuſions came in, ſome things among us being commendable, like unto the things commendable here; or whether we look to our inward diſtemper, or whether we look to God's threatening, to remove our candleſtick, which is the threatening applied to this ſin of declining in love, that ſhould make us all take with our guilt, and make uſe of the warning; and would to God we could make right uſe of it. Certainly we are called to look on this letter as directed to Scotland and to Glaſgow; the ſin is ours; the duty is ours; and the threatening doth alſo belong to us. and if there be any thing commendable, it is more in outward form than reality. Believers are liable to this declining from their firſt love, though not from their ſtedfaſtneſs, and may have a deep hand in drawing on the ſtrokes here threatened; therefore let them ſo much the more guard againſt it.

THE laſt two verſes of this book of the Revelation are very briefly ſpoke to in the manuſcript copy, which in print are more fully inſiſted on; and therefore it is probable was written by himſelf; and the rather that there is a current report, that the laſt leaf upon this commentary happening to fall by; and being told thereof upon his death-bed, he ſat up in the bed, and wrote it over again; which being compared with the former, when it did ſometime after caſt up, the two were found exactly to agree together. The manuſcript copy ends with three ſhort remarks. 1. See here how wary folk ſhould be in making uſe of this book, and all ſcripture, and how thankful for this gift. 2. How neceſſary holineſs is to all that look for happineſs; they are put together here; and hereafter there will be no other entry within the city; the reſt are without, with dogs. 3. Be making right uſe of the ſcriptures ye have, and welcome the offers made unto you therein; for, by this goſpel, ye ſhall be either united to Chriſt, or ſeparated from him, and periſh.

We are told by Mr. Carſtairs, that the pious Author, before he fell aſleep, deſired one of them that ſtood by, to write for a cloſe to his commentary, theſe following words, "And now, O my ſoul, "when all ſay, Come, and concur in a ſweet harmony, ſeeing thou haſt heard, and doſt hear the call of "the goſpel, ſay, with the bride, and with the Spirit, Even ſo, come Lord Jeſus, come quickly."

BESIDES his commentary on the REVELATION, Mr. Carſtairs reviſed and publiſhed his ſermons on the LIII. chapter of Iſaiah. *His ſermons on death. His communion ſermons. His expoſition of the ten commandments. Heaven upon earth; or, ſermons on a good conſcience. His ſermons on godlineſs and ſelf-denial*, which were the laſt he publiſhed, with a large preface, upon the ſubject of exerciſing ourſelves to godlineſs; and he died before they were printed off. To which there was deſigned to have been prefixed, by another hand, an epiſtle to the reader, with the following title to the book itſelf. "The great gain of contenting godlineſs, commended in three ſermons, with that choice part

" of godlineſs, ſelf-denial, an indiſpenſible requiſite to the whole of its exerciſe, and nottably fitting " for taking up of the croſs, and bearing it after Chriſt, in ſeven ſermons." It is extant among the reverend Mr. Robert Wodrow's collection of manuſcripts. The Author, after a ſhort account of Mr. Durham, proceeds to give a large character of Mr. John Carſtairs, and recommends the preface and ſermons to the peruſal of all ſerious Chriſtians.

THE two following were written by Mr. Durham himſelf, and publiſhed after his death: *His treatiſe of ſcandal. His expoſition of the ſong of Solomon.*

BESIDES his works in print, there are ſtill preſerved in the hands of the reverend Mr. Robert Wodrow, and ſome other private perſons, his ſermons upon the whole book of the *ſong of Solomon*, and upon Eph. v. 15, 16, 17, 18. 19, 20. 1 Cor. ix. 24. Luke i. 6. Gal. v. 16. Pſal. cxix. 65, 97, 113. 1 Theſſ. v. 19, 22. 1 Pet. iii. 14. Matth. xviii. 7, 8, 9. Luke x. 41, 42.

An INDEX of the principal QUESTIONS and CONTROVERSIES which are diſcuſſed and cleared in this Treatiſe.

1. CONCERNING the holy Trinity, and object of worſhip.
2. Concerning a calling to the miniſtry, and clearneſs therein.
3. Concerning writing.
4. Of reading and hearing.
5. Concerning church-government, and diſcipline in general.
6. Concerning a miniſter's relation to a particular congregation.
7. Concerning the nature and difference of common and ſaving grace.
8. Concerning the influence the devil hath on ſome wicked men's actions, and how he carrieth on the ſame.
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10. Concerning the identity of angel, biſhop, and preſbyter.
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14. Concerning the nature of Chriſt's death; or, if it be properly a ſatisfaction.
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16. Concerning Chriſt's interceſſion.
17. Concerning learned Mede's ſynchroniſms.
18. Concerning the comfortleſs grounds laid down in Popery, for eaſing afflicted conſciences.
19. Concerning the idolatry of the church of Rome.
20. Concerning prophecy.
21. Concerning a miniſter's particular meſſage to a particular auditory, and if it may be again and again inſiſted on and repeated.
22. Concerning the Waldenſes.
23. Concerning the conſtitution of true churches by reformation, out of ſuch as have been corrupt.
24. Concerning the unity of the catholic viſible church.
25. Concerning the difficulty of ſalvation under Popery.

N. B. The reader will find the particulars, relating to each of theſe heads, together with the heads themſelves, digeſted in the following table at the end of the book, according to the order of the alphabet; with figures directing to the pages in which they are: and beſides, in the peruſal of the book, a choice variety of other concerning queſtions, ſatisfyingly though but ſhortly handled.

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AN

EXPOSITION

Of the BOOK of the

REVELATION.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *The Revelation of Jeſus Chriſt, which God gave unto him, to ſhew unto his ſervants things which muſt ſhortly come to paſs; and he ſent and ſignified it by his angel unto his ſervant John:*
2. *Who bare record of the word of God, and of the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt, and of all things that he ſaw.*
3. *Bleſſed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep thoſe things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.*
4. *John to the ſeven churches in Aſia, Grace be unto you, and peace from him which is, and which was, and which is to come, and from the ſeven ſpirits which are before his throne.*

IT may look well preſumptuous-like to read, or undertake to open this book: and indeed there is need of much humility and ſoberneſs in going about ſuch a work, and that the ſpirit of Jeſus Chriſt, who hath given this book for a benefit to his church, help us to a right uptaking of it; yet, conſidering that the ſubject matter of it, is ſo profitable and comfortable to the church to end of the world; conſidering alſo what was Chriſt's end in giving it as his laſt will and word, to his church, viz. to be a revelation, and thereby to make manifeſt his mind to them: therefore John is forbidden to ſeal it, that it might be open for the good of his church; and conſidering withal the many motives and encouragements that are given to read and ſearch into it; as ver. 3. *Bleſſed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy*: which ſaying is alſo renewed again after the prophetic part is immediately cloſed, chap. xxii. 7. 14. which ſeem to be notable encouragements, not only to undertake, but alſo to lay it on as a duty, to read and ſeek to underſtand it. We reſolve, through God's grace, to eſſay it, that it be not altogether uſeleſs to the ſervants of God to whom it is ſent, as ver. 1. It is true, many things in it are obſcure; and it is like, that the full clearing of them is not to be expected, till God in ſome ſingular way ſhall open them up; neither is that undertaken: yet, there are, 1. Many clear, edifying, and comfortable paſſages of God's mind in it; the Holy Ghoſt mixing in thoſe to be fed upon, and to ſweeten thoſe paſſages that are more obſcure; and to encourage the reader to ſearch for the meaning of them. And, 2. Though we be not clear to apply ſuch paſſages to this or that particular time, or party, or perſons; yet, ſeeing the ſcope ſets out, in general, the enmity of ſpecial enemies of the church; and, it being clear who they are, we think they may be exponed: not only according to the analogy of faith and ſound doctrine, but according to the ſcope of the place, though every thing hit not, yet nothing being contrary to it. 3. In thoſe things that are moſt obſcure, there may be found doctrines concerning the diſpoſition of enemies, and God's giving victory over them, and preſervation and outgate to his people. And, laſtly, Thoſe things that are moſt obſcure, being particulars, wherein there is no ſuch hazard for us to be ignorant, as in fundamental truths; and yet being ſuch as God hath

allowed folks by wiſdom to ſearch out: therefore, *here is wiſdom*, is prefixed to the hardeſt places in it, as chap. xiii. ver. ult. Upon theſe conſiderations, we intend, through the Lord's help, to hint at ſome things in the reading of this book to you, for your up-ſtirring to ſearch further into it. The whole ſtrain and form of it, is by way of an epiſtle; Jeſus Chriſt, by John, writing his laſt will to his church.

The preface is in the words read, to ver. 9. The body of it, from that to ver. 6. chap xxii. The concluſion is in the end of chap. xxii. where it is cloſed with the ordinary cloſe of other epiſtles. We ſhall firſt ſpeak to the preface, and then to the body, when we come to it. We need not ſtand upon the authority, nor title of it, that holds the pen-man; it being of ſuch a divine ſtamp and majeſty, doth carry authority in the boſom of it, that if any ſcripture hold forth the ſovereignty, majeſty, juſtice, mercy and truth of God, to the comfort of his people, and making the hearts of his enemies to quake, this ſcripture doth it. The author, that is, the penman, is John the Divine, as he is holden out in the title. Whether this title be authentic or not, it is not much to be diſputed. It is in ſome Greek copies, "The Revelation of the "holy Apoſtle and Evangeliſt, John the Divine." And, we think it is clear to be John, the apoſtle, honoured here to bear Chriſt's laſt meſſage to his church. He got this name in the primitive times, as being moſt full of divine revelations, and prying into the myſteries of the goſpel, and particularly of Chriſt's divinity. And, in the preface, there ſeems to be ſome things that bear this out: 1. That he is called John, without deſigning what John, importing that he was the John, that was well known and famous for an infallible and extraordinary meaſure of the Spirit 2. He is ſaid to be that John, that was baniſhed into the ile of Patmos: which, from the antient famous ſtory, is clear to be John, the apoſtle, he being baniſhed thither under the perſecution of Domitian the emperor. 3. It is further clear, ver. 2. in his deſcription, *Who bare record of the word of God, and of the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt;* which relates to his writing of the goſpel, as he ſtyles himſelf in the cloſe of it, chap. xxi. 24. *This is that diſciple, which teſtifieth of theſe things, and wrote theſe things; and we know that his teſtimony is true.* Neither doth it make any thing againſt this, that this book, being prophetical, doth differ ſomewhat in ſtyle from his other writings: for the ſtyle is not ſo unlike his; there being many words and phraſes in his goſpel, and in ſeveral chapters of this book ſo like one another; as, that Chriſt is called the *Word*, and the *Lamb*, in the one and in the other, theſe phraſes being peculiar to him.

The preface hath two parts. *Firſt*, A general inſcription of the book, ver. 1, 2, 3. *Secondly*, A particular inſcription and direction to the ſeven churches in Aſia, to which the ſeven epiſtles in the ſecond and third chapters are written, from ver. 4. to ver. 9. And there are ſeveral particulars in every one of theſe. To begin with the inſcription. *The Revelation;* that is, the making open and unfolding of ſome things obſcure: and though they be ſtill obſcure to us, yet not in themſelves, nor to us now, as they were before this. 2. It is *of Jeſus Chriſt: Firſt*, Becauſe given out by Jeſus Chriſt to John, as from the Adminiſtrator and great Prophet of his church: And, *Secondly*, Becauſe much of this Revelation concerned the governing of his church. *Thirdly*, *Which God gave unto him;* which denotes the order of the perſons in their ſubſiſting and operations; the Father working from himſelf, by the Son; and the way of Chriſt's working as Mediator, who doth the will of him that ſent him: for, as God, he underſtands all things eſſentially by himſelf, but as Mediator, he hath that given and communicated to him. *Fourthly*, The end of this work, is, *To ſhew unto his ſervants things which muſt ſhortly come to paſs*, that this Revelation may not be kept up, but made forth-coming to his ſervants: by whom is underſtood, not all creatures, nor all in the viſible church, nor only ſuch ſpecial ſervants by office, as John was; but ſuch as were and are his followers, ſubjects, and believers in him in the viſible church. *Fifthly*, The ſubject of this Revelation, *Things which muſt ſhortly come to paſs;* not things paſt; nor ſo much things preſent, (though in the ſecond and third chapter, ſuch things be ſpoken to) as mainly, things to come. And it is ſaid, *that they muſt ſhortly come to paſs;* becauſe, though the full accompliſhment of them was not to be till the end of the world, as will be clear from the prophecy; and, therefore, thoſe events cannot be confined within ſome few years; yet, the beginning of the fulfilling of

them was inſtantly upon the back of this Revelation. *Sixthly, He ſent and ſignified it by his Angel*; that is, Jeſus Chriſt made uſe of the miniſtration of his angel, to ſignify this; both to ſet out his dignity and grandeur, and to conciliate the greater credit to it. *Seventhly*, The perſon it is revealed to, is, *His ſervant John;* his ſervant by ſpecial delegation and office, in a ſpecial employment, as a ſteward in his houſe.

1. *Obſerve* the great advantage and benefit, the privilege and prerogative, that Chriſt's ſervants have beyond all others; Chriſt writes his letters to them; there is not a word written to kings and great men; but it is *to ſhew his ſervants things to come to paſs:* to be his ſervants is to be God's free-men: and they win fartheſt ben upon his ſecrets and myſteries, Pſalm xxv. 14. *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will ſhew them his covenant.*

2. *Obſerve* Chriſt's ways of adminiſtration: tho' this Revelation be ſent to his ſervants; yet not immediately: but firſt, it is given to Chriſt; and he gives it to his angel, and the angel gives it to John, and he brings it out to the churches. Jeſus Chriſt muſt have his own place; and the firſt notice of any thing, concerning the good of the church, comes to him as Mediator; and he doth nothing but he firſt reveals it to his ſervants the prophets, Amos iii. They are his ſervants of ſtate to bear his mind to his people.

Ver. 2. The ſecond thing in the preface, is a deſcription of John, *who bare record of the word of God*; which may relate to the goſpel of John, which holds out Jeſus Chriſt, who was, and is the ſubſtantial Word of God, as he begins his goſpel. 2. *And of the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt*; which may look to his epiſtles. 3. *And of all things that he ſaw:* this looks to the particular viſions God gave him in this book. John's *bearing record*, points out his faithfulneſs, according to the charge and commiſſion given him; what is given him to deliver, he keeps not up; what he receives in charge, he diſcharges.

3. We have the commendation of this book, ver. 3. to ſtir up folks to make uſe of it, becauſe he knew many would ſcar at it, and be ready to let it ly beſide them as uſeleſs and unprofitable: whereas all ſcripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable, &c. 2 Tim. iii. 16. Therefore this is added, *Bleſſed is he that readeth*; that is, this book is not a thing to be ſpoken of only, and not to be read and ſtudied; for the ſeals of it are opened; and bleſſed are they that read it. It is a happy and a good thing, ſoberly and humbly to read, and to ſeek to underſtand it: and becauſe every one cannot read, he adds, *And bleſſed are they that hear the words of this prophecy*; it may relate not only to private, but to public reading and hearing of this book, when it is read and exponed; ſo that, by Chriſt's own ordinance, this book is to be brought forth to his people: and, becauſe folks are ready to grow vain and ſecure, and to reſt upon reading and hearing, he adds another word, *And keep thoſe ſayings that are written therein*; that is, it is not the reading, nor the hearing ſimply, that will bring the bleſſing; but the obſerving and making right uſe of it. Then he adds a reaſon why he ſhould have it read and heard, and the ſayings of it obſerved and made uſe of, *Becauſe the time is at hand*, the fulfilling of the things in this book is at hand; the time haſteneth of calling folks to a reckoning, what uſe they have made of thoſe ſayings; the time of pouring out his wrath on his enemies, and of being very kind to his church and people, is at hand.

1. *Obſerve*, It is a good thing to be ſtudying the ſcripture: it is a mark of the bleſſed man, Pſal. i. It makes the man of God wiſe to ſalvation; and it is good that thoſe who want the uſe of reading themſelves, make up that want by hearing others: and particulary, it is good to be reading, and hearing this book read: thoſe that are fitted for reading, let them uſe it well; and thoſe that have not this benefit, let them take and improve other opportunities that may bring them to the knowledge of Chriſt's mind; and the more, that bleſſedneſs is given but to ſix or ſeven ſorts in this book, and twice or thrice over, to thoſe that ſtudy it, Rev. xxii. 7, 14.

2. *Obſerve*, That it is not enough to be given to reading and hearing of the word: neither would folks reſt on it: but join practice with both, Luke xi. 28. *Bleſſed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.* It is not the reader, or hearer, but the doer, that is the bleſſed man. Yea, though ye were able to open and unfold all the myſteries that are in this book, if ye be not ſuitable and conform thereto in your practice, ye are but like that man ſpoken of, James i. 23, 24. who,

beholding his natural face in a glaſs, goeth his way, and forgetteth what manner of man he was. He that is a hearer, and not a doer, deceives his own ſoul; as much hearing and reading doth you good, as is improven in practice.

Queſt. *How is this book called a prophecy, ſeeing ſome things in it concern things preſent, as in theſe epiſtles written to the ſeven churches in Aſia?*

Anſw. Prophecies are of two ſorts. 1. Prophecy, is that whereby things paſt or preſent are known by an inſtinct of the Spirit: ſo Moſes writeth of the creation of the world, and things that were before his time; ſo Ahijah knew the wife of Jeroboam; and Eliſha diſcovered the king of Syria his counſel, and the covetouſneſs of Gehazi. And, in this reſpect, as well as in reference to things to come, this book may be called a prophecy, becauſe thoſe things that are preſent are revealed by the Spirit. 2. Prophecy is of things to come: and in this reſpect, it is called a prophecy; becauſe the main drift of this book of the Revelation, is, to ſhew things to come: the firſt three chapters being introductory to the reſt.

Ver. 4. Followeth the ſecond part of the preface, and it is the particular inſcription and direction of this epiſtle to the ſeven churches in Aſia; *John to the ſeven churches in Aſia*: and it beginneth as the epiſtles ordinarily begin, *Grace be unto you, and peace.* Where we have, 1. The thing wiſhed, *grace and peace.* 2. The perſons to whom, *the ſeven churches.* 3. The perſons from whom, the three perſons of the Trinity. 4. And upon the back of this, a thankſgiving. John is the perſon wiſhing; that which is wiſhed, is, *grace and peace*; two words which comprehend all good: grace is the fountain of God's free love; and peace, the effect of that free love, which being here put together, is love, vented in its precious effects. The perſons from whom are three, or the three perſons of the Trinity; 1. From the Father, *which is, which was, and which is to come*; that is, From God the Father; deſcribed from his eternal Being, without all beginning or ending. And this deſcription of the Father, relates to that of Exod. iii. 14. *I AM THAT I AM, hath ſent me unto you*: and it is a name that God often taketh to himſelf, *The firſt and the laſt*, the beginning and the ending: and the title JEHOVAH taketh up theſe three; JE, the future time; HO, the time preſent; VAH, the time paſt. In a word, it is the paraphraſe of the word JEHOVAH. And this title is attributed to the Father, not ſecluding the Son and Holy Ghoſt; but the Father, being the fountain of the Godhead, when he is joined with the Son and Spirit, thoſe things that are eſſential to God are ordinarily attributed to him. 2. From the ſeven Spirits: theſe are not creatures, or created ſpirits: for, firſt, created ſpirits are not objects of worſhip, from whom we may wiſh *grace* and *peace*. Secondly, neither are created ſpirits ſet in betwixt the Father and the Son, as thoſe ſeven Spirits are here. Thirdly, in chap. v. verſe 6. thoſe ſeven Spirits, are called the *eyes* and *horns* of the Lamb: eyes being his omniſcience, whereby he ſees every where; and horns, being his power, working by his Spirit, and making ſtubborn ſouls ſubmit unto him: and theſe ſeven ſpirits being his eyes, which are every where; and his power or omnipotency, which here alſo are invocated; they can be no other but the Holy Ghoſt. The Holy Ghoſt is called the ſeven Spirits; not only, becauſe it is frequent in this book of the Revelation to go on the number of ſeven: but alſo, and mainly, to ſhew the manifold and various operations of the Spirit, as 1 Cor. xii. 4, 6. *There are diverſities of gifts, but the ſame ſpirit; and diverſities of operations, but the ſame God which worketh all in all.* 2. Becauſe it hath relation to the ſeven churches he is to write to, their need requiring much; and he being an infinite and powerful Spirit, he was able to let out abundance of grace and all conſolation to every one without prejudice to another, as if each of them had the Spirit wholly: therefore he is ſo deſcribed in this wiſh. *Secondly*, Theſe ſeven ſpirits are ſaid to be before the throne; that is, preſent with God; yet made uſe of by God the Father and the Son, working by the Spirit, effectually communicating what may be for the comfort of his people: and, in theſe words, the Holy Spirit is holden out in a poſture, apt to execute what is needful. The third perſon is in ver. 5. *And from Jeſus Chriſt*; *grace and peace* is wiſhed from him: he is ſet out in his three offices of Prophet, Prieſt, and King. *Firſt*, In his prophetical office, the faithful witneſs, becauſe he reveals the will of God, and that faithfully: therefore, Iſa. lv. 4. he is *given as a witneſs, a leader and commander to the people.* *Secondly*, In his prieſtly office, *The firſt begotten of the dead.* To ſhew, 1. That he

offered up himſelf to the death. 2. Becauſe he was the firſt that roſe from the dead in his own ſtrength; and made others to riſe; and he died not again: for, though Lazarus roſe, he died again: and though Enoch and Elias did not die, yet that was by virtue of his power and reſurrection, as alſo that any other did ariſe. *Thirdly*, In his kingly office, *The prince of the kings of the earth*: which title ſets out Chriſt, not only to be God, equal with the Father, but as Mediator, king of his kirk. He is called, *Prince of the kings of the earth*; not as if kings, and all great men, or others, were in the ſame manner ſubjects to him in the relation that believers are, (in which reſpect his kingly office extendeth no further, nor his prieſtly and prophetical office) but though he hath not ſuch a near relation to them, nor they to him; yet he is King over them, to reſtrain them that they prejudge not his kirk; and to judge them for any wrongs or prejudice they do to them, and to inflict temporal judgments on them here, and eternal hereafter, when he ſhall be their Judge, and the books ſhall be opened at the great day. The wiſh is from the three perſons: and though the Holy Ghoſt be here named before the Son: it is not to confound the order that is among the perſons of the Trinity, in their ſubſiſting and operations; but for this reaſon, becauſe John is to inſiſt on Jeſus Chriſt the ſecond perſon, he keeps him laſt in naming, to make the progreſs in his writing the more clear.

Obſerve, There are three diſtinct perſons of the bleſſed Trinity, the Father, Son, and Spirit, who are the ſame one God, in the name of theſe three is baptiſm adminiſtrated; and from them, grace is wiſhed and prayed for, 2 Cor. xiii. 14. For, 1. That there are three, who are diſtinctly mentioned here, cannot be denied; that the firſt is the Father; and the third, Jeſus Chriſt, really diſtinct from the Father, is clear; for, the Son, and not the Father, was incarnate: and therefore the like muſt be ſaid of the ſeven Spirits, that they ſet forth the Holy Ghoſt perſonally, ſeeing it is he who in the like places uſeth to be joined in with the Father and the Son, as 2 Cor. xiii. 13. 1 John v. 7, 8. and therefore it is ſaid in the ſeven epiſtles, to be what the *Spirit* ſaith. Theſe ſeven *Spirits*, therefore, is that one Spirit, and he a perſon that ſpeaketh to the churches. 2. That each of theſe three muſt be God, appears, 1. Becauſe the laſt two are both joined as equal with the Father, of whom there can be no queſtion. 2. Becauſe the Son, Jeſus Chriſt, afterward hath the ſame title attributed to him, which is here given to the Father. 3. Becauſe the ſame one ſuit, is prayed for from all of them; and, it being *grace* and *peace*, which only God can give, ſuppoſeth divine eſſential attributes to be in thoſe from whom they are wiſhed; yea, they are named here, as joint ſenders of this epiſtle, and authorizers of this word; therefore is it ſo often afterward ſaid, *Let him that hath ears, hear what the Spirit ſaith*: and there can no authority, but what is divine, be ſufficient here. Hence alſo, *Thus ſaith the Lord*, and, *Thus ſaith the Holy Ghoſt*, are frequently put for one another: each one therefore of theſe three muſt be God. 3. It may appear from this alſo, that all theſe three are one God; thus, this Revelation and ſalutation cometh from one God, chap. i. ver. 1. and xxii. 18, 19. and yet this Revelation and ſalutation cometh from the Father, Son, and Spirit: therefore they are that one God. Again, if the *grace* and *peace* proceed from one eſſence, which is common to all, then they are the ſame God eſſentially, though diſtinct perſons; but *grace* and *peace* looks to the ſame Godhead and eſſence, though it be wiſhed for from all; for the effect, *grace* and *peace*, is but one, it doth therefore ſuppoſe an unity in the fountain from which it comes, viz. theſe three perſons of the glorious Godhead, who are named diſtinctly, not to ſhew a different effect from the Father, which is not from the Son; but to ſhew the concurrence of theſe bleſſed three in an united way, for bringing forth of theſe; ſo that what cometh from the Father, cometh alſo from the Son and Spirit. Theſe eſſential attributes, and that moſt ſimple and infinite eſſence, being common to all the three perſons, it reſts therefore that they are three diſtinct perſons, and yet of the ſame infinite Godhead. Neither will that which the Socinians and others oppoſe to this place, have weight. Say they, *Chriſt is ſpoken of here, as dead; therefore cannot be God.* For, it is one thing to ſpeak of him who was dead, another to ſay, that it ſpeaks of him as ſuch. He that died was God, but he died not as God; and therefore this can only prove, that Jeſus Chriſt, as to his perſon, is man: but by it, we can no more deny him to be the ſe-

cond perſon of the Godhead, than afterward when he is called *the firſt*, and *the laſt*, by that, we can deny him to be man. And that the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, are equal with the Father, appeareth alſo in this, that they are both equally with him, the object of Divine worſhip here, viz. of invocation and prayer, which could not otherwiſe be.

Concerning the HOLY TRINITY *and* OBJECT *of* WORSHIP.

THERE is much ſpoken of the glory of God in this book; and no where is the diſtinction of the perſons of the glorious Godhead more frequently and clearly ſet forth. John was more full in this than any who wrote before him; becauſe that in his time, Ebion and ſome others had ariſen, who did deny the Godhead of the Son and Holy Ghoſt; and therefore, with a particular reſpect to theſe, he did write the more fully of this, for which he got the ſtile of *divine* ſingularly, as was marked on the title. It will not therefore be impertinent now, once for all, to touch that a little further: and although here curioſity would be reſtrained, full ſatisfaction in the uptaking of that myſtery, being peculiarly reſerved to that time when we ſhall ſee him as he is, as our Lord's word, John xiv. 20. *Then ye ſhall know that I am in the Father*, doth import: and therefore we would not preſume to ſatisfy ourſelves in the *dioti*, or particular manner how that is; but humbly be contented to have our faith ſolidly grounded in the *oti*, or being thereof: which may be done by conſidering theſe three, viz. 1. The truth of the thing. 2. The expreſſions uſed in holding of it forth. And 3. The neceſſity of the believing thereof.

I. We ſay, That as there is but one God eſſentially, ſo there are three diſtinct, co-equal, co-eſſential, and conſubſtantial perſons of that bleſſed Godhead, the Father, Son, and Spirit; who yet in a moſt wonderful, excellent and infinitely perfect though an inconceivable manner, have an order of ſubſiſting and working amongſt themſelves. It was a ſaying amongſt the antients, That to ſpeak of God, even that which was truth, was dangerous; (*etiam de Deo dicere verum, eſt periculoſum*) and indeed here it ought to be remembered. Yet, we may conſider the former general propoſition in theſe aſſertions.

1. *Aſſert.* There is but one God eſſentially conſidered; and in this the ſcripture is clear: and ſo in this book, chap. i. and xxii. Although there be a plurality of perſons mentioned, yet it is ever God ſpoken of as One, in the ſingular number; and thus he is ſtill oppoſed as the One living God, to the plurality of idols. And indeed, there can be no plurality in this: for, if that one God have in him all perfections, there can be no perfection beſide him; and ſo no God beſide this one true God. And, if we ſuppoſed any perfection to be beſide him, then were not he God, becauſe not infinite in perfection; and, if infinite, then that which is infinite, in that reſpect, cannot be multiplied. There is no queſtion of this, ſeeing the moſt wiſe Heathens have been neceſſitated to acknowledge it.

2. *Aſſert.* Although there be but one God, yet there are three Perſons, the Father, Son, and Spirit. There is not one of theſe epiſtles to the ſeven churches, but this may be gathered from it; 1. The Father is the ſender of them all, as from chap. i. 1. may be gathered. 2. The Son is he who immediately gives John commiſſion to write, as the titles he taketh to himſelf do clear. 3. The Holy Ghoſt is in the cloſe of all, mentioned as a joint ſpeaker, *Let him hear what the Spirit ſaith, &c.* 4. More particularly, they are diſtinctly mentioned in the epiſtle to Thyatria, chap. ii. 18. *Theſe things ſaith the Son of God*; that holds forth the Father and Son: where a Son is, there is a Father; and God here is perſonally taken as another from the Son. And ver. 29. we have the Spirit as diſtinct from both. They are put together, chap. iii. 1. *Theſe things ſaith he that hath the ſeven Spirits of God*: *he*, that is, the Son formerly mentioned; God, that is, the Father, diſtinctly conſidered as another perſon; *the ſeven Spirits*, that is, the Holy Ghoſt, in whoſe name John ſaluted the churches formerly, and who is to be heard, as the cloſe of every epiſtle ſheweth. 5. The like is, ver. 12. where the Son ſpeaketh in the firſt perſon, I and ME; the Father is deſigned by the title GOD; the Spirit again, as diſtinct from both, ver. 13. 6. The ſame may be gathered from ver. 14. with 22. where *the faithful Witneſs*, God, and the *Spirit*, are mentioned as three that are diſtinct. 7. And laſtly, ch. v. we have them moſt fully diſtinguiſhed, 1. There is the Father, on the throne, with the book in his hand, ver. 1. 2. There is the Lamb, the Son: and, 3. *The ſeven Spirits of God*, the Holy Ghoſt,

ver. 6. all of them conſidered as diſtinct perſons.

3. *Aſſert.* Theſe three, Father, Son, and Spirit, are really diſtinct one from another; and ſo are three perſons. All that is ſaid, doth confirm this alſo: for, 1. They are really diſtinct, though not ſimply in reſpect of their eſſence; yet, as they are perſonally conſidered, the Father is not the Son; and he that ſits upon the throne, is not the Lamb. The Father did not become man, nor the Spirit; but the Son, he died, was buried, &c. which can be ſaid of none but of a perſon; and yet cannot be ſaid of either of the other two. The Holy Ghoſt is the Spirit of God, as the Son is the Son of God: and if that ſuppoſe a real diſtinct perſonality, this muſt do alſo; the Son ſays, ſo doth the Holy Ghoſt or Spirit ſay to the churches. The Father is God, the Firſt, and Laſt; the Son hath the ſame title, chap. ii. 8. even he who was dead, is the *firſt*, and *the laſt*; the Spirit hath the ſame authority, and is to be heard, and hath a divine omnipreſence to be in all the earth, chap. v. 6; which can be ſaid of none, but of him that is God. Now, if the Father be God, and the Son God, and the Spirit God alſo; and if there be but one God, and yet theſe three be really diſtinct, then they muſt be diſtinct perſons in reſpect of their perſonal properties, ſeeing they are perſons, and diſtinct.

4. *Aſſert.* Although they be three diſtinct perſons, as to their perſonal properties; yet are they all three one God, eſſentially conſidered; and all have the ſame infinite indiviſible eſſence, though we cannot conceive how. This follows on the former; for, if there be three perſons, and each of them be God, and yet there be but one God, then each of theſe perſons muſt be the ſame one God, co-equal, and co-eſſential: ſo the Father is *alius*, another from the Son, and each of them from other; but he is not *aliud*, or another thing, but the ſame. Hence, the Son, is the Son of God, and the Spirit, the Spirit of God: they are upon one throne, chap. v. they concur by the ſame authority and ſovereignty to write: and he that ſends this epiſtle to the churches, is but one God, chap. i. 1. who therefore will avenge adding thereto, or diminiſhing therefrom, chap. xxii. yet, that *one* God, is the ſame *three perſons*, chap. i. ver. 4.

5. *Aſſert.* Theſe three bleſſed perſons, who are one moſt glorious Being, have yet an inconceivable order in their ſubſiſting and working; which, being to be admired rather than to be ſearched, we ſhall but ſay, 1. They have all the ſame one eſſence and being, as is ſaid. 2. They all have it eternally, equally and perfectly: none is more or leſs God, but each hath all the ſame Godhead at perfection; and therefore muſt have it equally and eternally: for, the Godhead is the ſame, and the Son is the firſt and the laſt, as the Father is; and the Father and Son, were never without the Spirit, who is the Spirit of God, and each of them is God. It doth confirm all theſe, that they have one throne, name, and authority attributed to them. Yet, 3. The Father ſubſiſts of himſelf, and doth beget the Son by an inconceivable and eternal generation: the Son doth not beget, but is begotten, and hath his ſubſiſting, as the ſecond perſon, from the Father. So much the titles of Father and Son import here: the Spirit proceeds both from the Father (therefore he is the Spirit of the Father) and from the Son; therefore is he ſaid alſo to have the *ſeven Spirits of God*; and the Spirit doth neither beget, nor is begotten, but doth thus, in an inexpreſſible manner, proceed from them both.

II. If any ſhould wrangle for the expreſſions that are uſed by divines in this myſtery; we confeſs that many of the ſchoolmen have exceeded and have taken too much liberty in this wonderful myſtery; yet, it is the thing that we eſpecially ſhould be eſtabliſhed into, and from ſcripture that is clear, that there is but one God, and yet Three, who being denominated in the concrete, muſt imply three different real relations, or ſubſiſtances, or perſons: and this eſſence being infinite and communicable, there is no warrant to bound it to the rules and properties of created beings, who are but finite; and in that reſpect alſo incommunicable. And we conceive that the names here given (and elſewhere in ſcripture) will amount clearly to the equivalent of eſſence and perſons, which are moſt obviouſly made uſe of in this matter: for what is that, *I am Alpha and Omega, who was, is, and is to come*, but that ſame, Exod. iii. 14. *I AM THAT I AM*, which denoteth his being or eſſence, as that which is ever a being. And idols being differenced from the true God by this, that they are by nature no gods, Gal. iv. 8. it implies on the contrary, that by nature he is God. and ſo God in reſpect of his eſſence: and therefore that God may be eſſentially conſidered, and in that reſpect of his eſſence. Again, theſe expreſſions, that the one is called the Father, and the other the Son, and yet both one God, do clearly hold forth

that there are real relations in that Godhead, ſubſiſting in a diſtinct manner; and ſo there muſt be perſons, as Heb. i. the Son is called, *the expreſs image of the Father's perſon*; which plainly ſays, that the Father, conſidered as diſtinguiſhed from the Son, is a perſon, and ſubſiſts; and that the Son, as diſtinguiſhed from the Father, and as ſo lively and expreſly repreſenting his perſon, muſt be a perſon alſo, having this from the Father: and what is ſaid of the Father and Son, muſt alſo be true of the Holy Ghoſt, who is God equal with both, yet different from them both, as they differ from each other, though not in reſpect of that ſame incommunicable property; yet he who proceedeth, muſt differ from thoſe from whom he proceeds, as he who is begotten, muſt differ from him that begat him.

For their operations, we may find here, that in ſome things they concur jointly, yet ſome way differently. Some things again are attributed to one, which cannot be to another, as their perſonal properties; the Son is begotten, and not the Father, or the Spirit: therefore he is allenarly the Son; the Father begets, and the Spirit proceeds. Theſe are called their perſonal properties, and their works *ad intra*, or amongſt, or in reference to themſelves: of this kind is the incarnation of the Son, which can neither be ſaid of the Father, nor of the Holy Ghoſt. Again, in things, *ad extra*, or that relate to the creatures ſimply, whether in making, or governing of the world, they jointly concur: the Father createth all, ſo doth the Son, and Holy Ghoſt; the Son, from the Father, by the Holy Ghoſt; the Holy Ghoſt, from the Father, and the Son; as thoſe expreſſions of God ſending his Son, the Son's ſending the Spirit from the Father, &c. do declare, John xiv. 26. and xvi. 7. Gal. iv. 6.

III. This truth concerning the bleſſed and glorious Trinity, being ſo often inſiſted on here, and coming ſo near to the nature of God himſelf, it cannot but be exceedingly neceſſary for Chriſtians to be thorough in the faith thereof: yet it is queſtioned of late, whether it be to be accounted a fundamental point of faith or not? I ſay, this of late is queſtioned by Socinus, and the favourers of a boundleſs untolerable toleration: for, of old, it was moſt ſacredly received as ſuch, amongſt the antients, as the creeds that are called Apoſtolic, Nicene, and that of Athanaſius, do manifeſt: but this engine the devil drives firſt, to make the moſt neceſſary truths indifferent, that then he may the more eaſily engage oppoſers to quarrel the very truth of them itſelf: but we conceive, whatever it was of old before Chriſt, yet now it is to be looked on not only as a truth, which is clear from the word, but alſo as a fundamental truth; which being ſhaken, would overturn Chriſtianity, and the way of ſalvation that the Lord hath revealed in his goſpel. This is not to be extended to a rigid degree of knowledge in this wonderful myſtery, but to ſo much clearneſs in this truth from the word, as may be a ground of faith in the thing itſelf. And that this is neceſſary, as a fundamental, we think ariſeth clearly from theſe three grounds: 1. That truth, without which the true God cannot be taken up, believed in, and worſhipped, is a fundamental truth; but, this truth of the Trinity of perſons, and Unity of the Godhead, is ſuch, that without it, that God, which is propoſed in the word, and is the only true God, and the object of all worſhip, can neither be taken up, believed in, nor worſhipped rightly: *Ergo*, &c. becauſe the true God is one, and yet three perſons; and, as ſuch, hath propoſed himſelf to be known and worſhipped. 2. That truth, without which the work of redemption would be overturned, is fundamental: but this is ſuch; for, by taking away the myſtery of the Trinity, they take away the Godhead and perſonality of the Mediator, and ſo enervate his ſatisfaction. And, as on the former account, the true God is otherwiſe conceived than he is in himſelf; ſo, in this reſpect, the Mediator is made a quite other thing. And, can any thing be fundamental, if this be not? 3. The way that God hath laid down in his worſhip, requireth this, ſeeing in baptiſm there is a particular and expreſs mentioning of theſe Three, the Father, Son, and Spirit, as the ſuperior, to whom they that are Chriſtian ſoldiers, ſhould be liſted and inrolled: and ſo we may account of all after-worſhip; ſeeing God requires us to honour the Son, as we honour the Father; and ſeeing theſe three equally witneſs from heaven, 1 John v. the *Father*, *Word*, and *Spirit*; all which Three are One: can their teſtimony be received, as of Three, or can they be accounted as *one* God without this? And yet there can neither be *one*, in faith, engaged unto in baptiſm, or *one*, whoſe teſtimony we may receive, but he who is God; and can any think but it is neceſſary for a Chriſtian, and, that, fundamentally, to know to whom they

are devoted; whom they are to worſhip; whoſe teſtimony it is that they receive; whoſe operations they feel; whom they are to make uſe of? &c. And therefore it is neceſſary to know the Trinity of perſons in that *one* Godhead.

It may be the exerciſe of ſome tender ſoul, that they know not how to apprehend this object rightly, when they come to worſhip; and that often they are diſquieted, while their minds are unſtable: concerning this, there is need here to diſtinguiſh betwixt what may ſatisfy us as to the object in itſelf, and what may be ſufficient to us in directing of our worſhip to that object: if we take up God, as in himſelf, here is a depth that cannot be ſearched out to perfection: *He is broader than the ſea, who can know him? higher than the heavens, what can we do?* Job xi. 8. But yet we have footing in his word, how to come before this God with fear, reverence, holy admiration, &c. and ſuch affections and qualifications as a true worſhipper, that worſhips in ſpirit ought to have; and, in this, the pure worſhippers, who believe this truth of one infinite God, and three perſons ought to be taken up, rather that they may be ſuitable in their worſhipping, and have becoming effects on their own hearts, than to be diſquieting themſelves by poring too curiouſly on the object worſhipped; except in ſo far as may ſerve to transform the heart into a likeneſs to him. And, it is not aiming to comprehend the myſteriouſneſs and manner of theſe incomprehenſible myſteries, that doth work this; but the real, thorough and near impreſſion of the general, which is revealed clearly in his word. We would therefore commend theſe three in worſhip. 1. That folks would ſatisfy themſelves in the general with the ſolid faith thereof, without deſcending to particular conceptions or notions concerning the perſons of the bleſſed Godhead: this particularneſs is often that which both confuſes the mind, and diſquiets the conſcience, and cannot but do ſo in thoſe who would be at the looking upon God immediately here, without making uſe of the expreſſions, titles, names, &c. whereby he hath manifeſted himſelf to us, and wherein, we conceive, it is ſafeſt to reſt, and to bound all our curioſity within thoſe; for, they muſt be the moſt ſolid notions of God, which himſelf hath taught: thus, Exod. xxxiii. and xxxiv. the Lord did anſwer Moſes his deſire of ſeeing his glory, by ſhewing him his goodneſs in proclaiming of his attributes to him that are manifeſted in his word: thereby teaching men to conceive of God, according as he hath revealed himſelf in his word, in the plain and comprehenſive attributes that deſcribe his nature, wherein God's goodneſs is ſufficiently holden forth to ſinners, which ought to be a ſufficient manifeſtation of God to them here, without diving immediately into his eſſence, which could no otherwiſe be manifeſted to Moſes than by that proclamation. 2. We would beware of forming ideas, repreſentations, or ſhapes of that one God and three perſons in the heart, or in the head: theſe cannot but be derogatory to him, being a likeneſs to him of our own upſetting in our hearts, and cannot but diminiſh that authority, which the true God ſhould have in our hearts. We would remember, therefore, that he is purely ſpiritual, whom no eye hath ſeen, nor can ſee: and therefore all ſuch imaginations are to be abandoned and abhorred. 3. We would beware of dividing the object of worſhip, or ſeparating the three bleſſed perſons in our worſhipping of them, even in our imagination; as if when one is named, we were not praying unto, and worſhipping both the other; and as if the Son were an other God than the Father or Spirit, &c. but ſtill this would be remembered, that whatever perſon be named, he is God, and that ſame one God with the other two; and therefore the object of worſhip, is ever the ſame one God, Father, Son and Spirit, that are but one God. We worſhip the Father, the Son, and the Spirit; but we do not worſhip the Father, or the Son, or the Spirit, as if he, who is not named, were leſs worſhipped than he who is named: and, ſeeing the Son and Holy Ghoſt, are the ſame God with the Father, (the former ground being laid) it is all one thing whatever perſon be named, though in ſcripture ſometimes reſpect is had to their order of ſubſiſting and operating; and ſo the Father is only named; and ſometimes to be the ground upon, and by which, we have acceſs to God; and ſo, the Son only is named.

Now, by what is ſaid, it doth alſo appear, that the Holy Ghoſt may be expreſly prayed unto, as the Father, and the Son, although it be not ſo uſual in ſcripture, becauſe of the reaſons formerly hinted at: for, this will follow, he that is God, may be invocated, &c. And where petitions do eſpecially reſpect the increaſe of grace, which is the work

of the Spirit, we will find him expreſly mentioned with the Father and Son, as here ver. 4, 5. *grace be unto you, &c.* And 2 Cor. xiii. 14. *the communion of the Holy Ghoſt* is ſubjoined, as a diſtinct petition, to the love of the Father, and grace of the Son; and theſe firſt two petitions, being directed to the Father and the Son, this third muſt be to the Holy Ghoſt in like manner: and therefore to plead againſt the Godhead of the Holy Ghoſt, upon this ground, that he is not expreſly prayed unto in ſcripture, is both inconſequent, and falſe: and the apoſtle's taking the *Holy Ghoſt* to be his witneſs, Rom. ix. cannot be done without invocating of him: and the general commands of glorifying God, muſt infer ſo much, ſuppoſing the Spirit to be God. There is no weight therefore to be laid on that argument.

If it be objected againſt the neceſſity of believing this doctrine of the Trinity, or againſt the ſinfulneſs of tolerating what oppoſeth the ſame, that the light of nature doth not diſcover it; and that the Godhead of the Holy Ghoſt hath ſometimes not ſo much as been heard of by diſciples, as in Acts xix. Therefore, *&c.*

To the firſt, we anſwer, That now nature being corrupted, it can be no good rule to try what is truth concerning God by it; it can hardly be denied, if nature be conſidered as in Adam at the beginning; but to him there was clearneſs in this myſtery, there being expreſs mention of the bleſſed Trinity in his creation, as the word, *Let us make man according to our image*, doth import: which is not for nought mentioned then, more than formerly, eſpecially, conſidering that excellent knowledge that Adam was furniſhed with, which was a part of the image of that one God, who is Father, Son and Spirit. But not to inſiſt on this, we ſay, 2*dly*, That, if by nature, as it is now corrupted, what is tolerable or intolerable in the matters of religion were to be tried, then were the whole doctrine of the goſpel, and redemption through the Mediator, to be accounted no fundamental thing; and, conſequently, no error deſtroying it, were to be reſtrained, becauſe nature hath not diſcovered that: that therefore muſt be an unſafe rule to walk by. And indeed, if a maſter of a family and father, who yet, as ſuch, is (to ſay ſo) a ſervant of nature, is not by that exempted from the obligation of bringing up his children and ſervants, in the knowledge of God according to the goſpel; but is notwithſtanding to exerciſe his authority, in the reſtraining of every thing contrary thereunto, according to his ſtation. Can it be thought, that a magiſtrate, who muſt account for his authority over a people, as a maſter muſt do for his over a family, is leſs obliged thereunto? for Chriſtians are to be Chriſtians, in their ſtations, as in their perſonal carriage; and ſo to ſeek the promoting of the goſpel, and the reſtraining of what may mar it according to their ſtation. 3*dly*, That even this may be drawn from the moral law of God; wherein not only the true God is alone to be worſhipped, as in the firſt command; but alſo accordingly as he hath preſcribed and revealed in his word, which is the ſum of the ſecond command. Now, this being true, that the Lord hath thus revealed himſelf to be worſhipped according to the goſpel, it becomes no leſs neceſſary to worſhip God in that manner, than to worſhip him, who is the true God; and ſo, if by the firſt command, and according to the light of nature, magiſtrates ſhould reſtrain, and not ſuffer what is inconſiſtent with the worſhipping of the one true and living God; ſo is he, by the ſecond command, and that ſame light of nature, obliged to reſtrain all manner of doctrine and worſhip, that is inconſiſtent with what he hath revealed, according to the ſecond.

To the laſt part of the objection, from that inſtance, Acts xix. we ſay, 1. That, ſuppoſe there had been great ignorance then of the Godhead of the Holy Ghoſt, while that myſtery of the glorious Trinity was more obſcurely revealed, yet it will not follow, that it is equally excuſable and ſufferable now, when it is ſo plainly diſcovered: yea, can it be ſaid, that they had been excuſable, if, after Paul's teaching of them the true nature of baptiſm, and of the Holy Ghoſt, they had continued not to believe the ſame, as they were before he did it; or, that we can be ſo now, having his leſſon to them for our inſtruction? Yet, 2. It ſeemeth that the perſon of the Holy Ghoſt is not intended there, but the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, which often get that name in the New Teſtament: for, the *Holy Ghoſt*, which is to be underſtood in that place, is ſuch as was to be communicated to believers, and ſuch as theſe afterward did receive, as from ver. 2, 6. is clear, Now there is great odds betwixt the neceſſity of the diſtinctneſs of knowledge of theſe gifts, and of the Holy Ghoſt himſelf, who is not, nor cannot be communicated by the laying on of hands, except in reſpect of his gifts: this place there-

fore, doth not meet the concluſion formerly laid down, which was in reference to the faith of the Holy Ghoſt himſelf, and not to the knowledge of his gifts.

Theſe generals being granted, there do ariſe, from this practice of John's, ſeveral queſtions, concerning the object of divine worſhip: which, upon this occaſion, it may be, were not unworthy to be more particularly conſidered, ſo far as the nature of the place calleth for, and doth become our ſcope. As, 1. We ſee in this prayer, John doth diſtinctly name all the three bleſſed Perſons, for their inſtruction and conſolation, to whom he ſends this meſſage. 2. When he names the Son, he doth name him by ſuch titles as agree to him only as Mediator; yea, and in this ſong, ver. 6. doth reſpect that, particularly, which is only applicable to him as man, and as Mediator, to make them welcome it the more heartily, and thereby alſo the more to commend him to them, and engage them to aim, by remembering them what he is, and what he hath done, that doth thus ſalute them. 3. He hath a peculiar thankſgiving unto the Son, conſidered under ſuch deſignations, as expreſs his wonderful love that appears in his ſufferings, which cannot be applied to the Father or Spirit: which is indeed divine worſhip, being the ſame which is here given to the Father and Spirit. All which giveth occaſion to inquire into theſe four. 1. Concerning the object of divine worſhip in general. 2. In what reſpect it is to be given to the Mediator. 3. In what form petitions may be directed to him; or, if in any peculiar form. 4. Why the Mediator Chriſt, is ſo much, and ſo warmly, under theſe conſiderations of his incarnation and ſufferings, inſiſted upon in the New Teſtament; and what may encourage and help in the improving of thoſe grounds. Theſe things being depths, are rather to be admired and believed, in the general, (ſo far as we ſee clear in this precedent (than curiouſly to be pried into; yet, that they go not altogether without anſwer, we ſhall lay down ſome generals in reference to all theſe, which will yield ſome practical and comfortable concluſions. To the firſt, we ſay,

1. God is the alone object of divine worſhip; and there is no object thereof but God: becauſe there is none who hath theſe infinite attributes and excellencies, which are requiſite in the object of divine worſhip, but God, ſuch as omniſciency, omnipotency, infiniteneſs, ſupreme majeſty, glory, &c. from which, to ſpeak ſo, reſults adorability, an eſſential attribute of the majeſty of God, as immutability and eternity are; he being adorable, becauſe infinite, immenſe, omniſcient, &c. And therefore it cannot be communicated to any other, more than theſe incommunicable properties can be; and yet none can be worſhipped, who is not, ſo to ſpeak, adorable.

2. There is but one kind of divine worſhip, viz. that which is ſupreme, and becoming this infinite majeſty of God: and, in a word, that which is required in the firſt table of the law, as that which is competent to this glorious excellent God. And this follows on the former; for, if there be but one object, there can be but one manner of worſhip. Therefore, in ſcripture, to worſhip God, is always oppoſed to the worſhipping of any other, and to the admitting of any worſhip, which is not competent to God, as Rev. xix. 9, 10. and xxii. 9.

3. Although there be three perſons of the glorious Godhead, and all are to be worſhipped; yet, there are not three objects of worſhip, but one: nor three kinds of worſhip. Not three objects, becauſe theſe three perſons are the ſame one infinite God, who is the object of worſhip. For, *1ſt*, Though the three perſons, be really diſtinct each from other; yet, none of them are really diſtinct from the eſſence of the Godhead: therefore, the Father, is that ſame object of worſhip with the Son, becauſe the ſame God. And, *2dly*, Though the Father be infinite, and the Son infinite, &c. yet, there are not two infiniteneſſes, but the ſame infiniteneſs and immenſeneſs; that which is the Father's, is the Son's alſo; becauſe theſe are eſſential properties, and ſo common to all the perſons. And therefore, though their perſonal properties be diſtinct; yet, their eſſential attributes being common, they are not diſtinct objects, but the ſame one object; ſeeing, ſtill, in worſhip, reſpect muſt be had to their eſſential attributes, and ſo to the Godhead, which is common to all: and therefore, conſequently, to them, as they are one object, it being the Deity, which is one, that is the formal object of worſhip. And, though ſometimes theſe three perſons be named together, as here; yet, that is not to propoſe them as diſtinct objects, but to ſhew who this one object, God is, viz. the Father, Son and Spirit, three perſons of the ſame one indiviſible Godhead. Hence, the unity of the Godhead,

is inculcated, for this end; *The Lord thy God, O Iſrael, is one Lord.*

From which it followeth, 1. That the mind of the worſhipper is not to be diſtracted in ſeeking to comprehend, or order, in his thoughts, three diſtinct perſons, as diſtinct objects of worſhip; but, to conceive reverently of one infinite God, who is three perſons. 2. That whatever perſon be named, he is not to think that the other is leſs worſhipped; but that in one act he worſhips that one God, and ſo the Father, Son, and Spirit. 3. That by naming one perſon after he hath named another, (ſuppoſe he name the Father at firſt, and afterward the Son) he doth not vary the object of worſhip, as if he were praying to another than formerly; but that ſtill it is the ſame one God. 4. Becauſe our imagination is ready to foſter ſuch divided conceptions, we conceive, it is ſafeſt not to alter the denomination of the perſons in the ſame prayer, eſpecially, where it is in the hearing of others, who poſſibly may have ſuch thoughts, though we have none: and, I ſuppoſe, this way is moſt ordinarily taken in ſcripture.

For anſwering to the ſecond, viz. How the Mediator is the object of divine worſhip: we ſhall, firſt, diſtinguiſh this title *Object*, then anſwer. By divines, there is in this caſe a threefold object acknowledged (all agreeing to the Mediator in ſome reſpect.) 1. There is *objectum materiale*, or, *quod;* that is, the object, or perſon to whom worſhip is given. 2. There is *objectum formale*, or, *quo*; that is, the account upon which it is given to that perſon, or object. 3. There is *objectum conſideratio-nis;* that is, the conſideration that the worſhipper hath of that object in worſhipping of him; and is as a motive thereto, or is (as the learned Voetius calls it, *Specificatio Objecti*) the ſpecification of the object, whereby the heart of the worſhipper, by taking up the object worſhipped under ſuch a conſideration, is warmed with love and thankfulneſs, and ſtrengthened in his confidence, to worſhip that object. Thus the relations that God took on him to be the Redeemer of his people from Egypt, and from the land of the North, did give no new object of worſhip: yet did they give ſome external denominations or ſpecifications of that object, God, to them: the conſideration whereof, in their worſhipping, did much qualify the object to them; ſo that, with the more thankfulneſs and confidence, they might approach to him: and thus we diſtinguiſh between the object worſhipped, and the conſideration which may be had of him in our worſhip. And this doth not make him adorable ſimply and in himſelf, becauſe he was ſo naturally; but, it is the ground upon which he is acceſſible to us, who are ſinners and enemies: from which, we may lay down a threefold diſtinction. 1. Betwixt the material and formal object of worſhip. 2. Betwixt the object of the act of worſhip, and of our conſideration in worſhipping. 3. Betwixt that which is the ground of worſhip, ſuppoſe prayer, faith ſimply conſidered in itſelf, and that which is the ground of our acceſs, conſidered in ourſelves, to pray unto, or believe in.

To anſwer, then, the queſtion, we ſay. 1. That the Mediator is the object of divine worſhip, is fixedly to be acknowledged; even the man, Chriſt, is to be honoured with divine worſhip, prayed unto, &c. as in ſcripture is clear. Thus the mediator is the material object of divine worſhip, or, the *Objectum quod:* for we worſhip and invocate him who is the Mediator; and there is no queſtion of this.

2. Chriſt, conſidered as Mediator, and in the virtue of his mediation, is the only ground upon which we have right to expect to be accepted in any part of our worſhip: or, to have prayers granted, which we put up to God under whatever deſignation or title: for, ſo he is the *door* and the *way*, John x. 9. and xiv. 6. and, in this reſpect, though he be not, as ſuch, the formal object of divine worſhip; yet, he is the foundation whereupon it is now built; the *way*, by which it muſt be addreſſed to God; and he is the High Prieſt, Heb. vii. 25. This was typified by the temple, ark, and High Prieſt, under the law: for ſinners have not acceſs to God, but by him; and this ſtrengthens faith to approach, that God is manifeſted in our nature, and that ſo we have, by his ſuffering, entry through the vail, to the throne of grace, which formerly, without reſpect to this, was ſhut.

3. Our Lord Jeſus, who is God, in our worſhipping of him, may be conſidered as Mediator; and, upon that ground, the heart may be emboldened to approach unto God: becauſe he that is God, is alſo man and Mediator. Thus, we praiſe and pray to him that died; and, conſidering him as once dead, in our uptaking of him; yet ſo, as it is, becauſe he is God: for, had it been poſſible that the Mediator could not have been God, there

had not been ground for giving of this worſhip unto him; yet, this conſideration warms the heart with love to him, and gives confidence and chearfulneſs in praying to him, or praiſing of him, as in this ſame place; and afterward, chap. v. becauſe, ſeeing we have a Man to do with, who hath ſo experimentally felt ſinleſs infirmities, of purpoſe to be the ground of a ſympathy with his members; and ſeeing he hath ſtill humane affections, by having a glorified body, ſtill united in one perſon with his divine nature, which wants not humane feeling, though in an inconceivable manner; and ſeeing alſo, that that is given in the word, as an encouragement for us, to ſtep forward, to expect grace and help in the time of need, Heb. ii. 18. and iv. 15, 16. and that even from him: there is no queſtion, but by the actual conſidering of this, a ſoul may, and ought to ſtrengthen itſelf in its approaching unto God.

4. Yet, this divine worſhip is given to him, as he is God, and becauſe he is God; and ſo Chriſt-God is the *Objectum formale*, or, *quo* of this divine worſhip, becauſe it is the Godhead that is the alone formal object of divine worſhip, as is ſaid; and Chriſt only, as God, hath theſe eſſential attributes of *Omniſcience*, *Supreme Majeſty*, *Adorability*, &c. which are requiſite for the object of divine worſhip. And therefore, in this place, although he be ſet out in what is peculiar to him as Mediator; yet, his being reckoned with the other two bleſſed perſons, doth prove, that, notwithſtanding thereof, he is conſidered in his perſon as God. It is then thus, as we ſay, Chriſt-God died, yet as man; ſo, the man, Chriſt, is worſhipped, yet as God: for, though he be one perſon, yet the properties of the two natures are diſtinct. Hence, as the Fathers did prove Chriſt's Godhead againſt the Arians, from this, that he was worſhipped with divine worſhip; and account them idolaters for worſhipping him thus, whom they did not eſteem to be God; ſo do the latter divines in reference to the Socinians.

5. Therefore this worſhip that is given to Chriſt, the Mediator, is of the ſame kind that is gived to God, viz. Supreme, divine worſhip: for, there are not two ſorts of divine worſhip. And to give the Mediator, who is God, an inferior kind of worſhip, would, 1. Wrong him who is God: for, by taking to himſelf that external relation, he hath not diminiſhed his eſſential glory and majeſty. 2. It ſuppones two objects of worſhip, and two kinds of divine worſhip; which is falſe: therefore divines have ever cenſured that aſſertion in the Remonſtrants confeſſion, anent giving a peculiar and middle-kind of worſhip to Chriſt, the Mediator, as of itſelf unſafe, and as making way for the Socinians ſubterfuge, which is to allow a worſhip to the Mediator, as Mediator, inferior to that which is given to God; and ſo, that it ſhould not follow from this, that *Chriſt is worſhipped*, Therefore, *he is God equal with the Father*. Now, the ſcripture giveth him that ſame worſhip, and not any other, even when it is denied to all creatures; yea, when he is worſhipped in the days of his fleſh, he is conſidered as the *only begotten of the Father*, as *Lord* and *Almighty*, having all creatures as ſervants under him, &c. and yet he is ſtyled the *Son of David*, *he that was to come*, &c. even at that time; to ſhew, that both conſiderations have place in worſhipping of the ſame perſon, who is God, and alſo Mediator, and not to bring in a new worſhip: for, none can be more glorious, than what is due to God; but to lay a new ground of having acceſs to give him the worſhip which is due, and, by a new relation, to give a kindly qualification of the object, whereby the heart may be provoked lovingly and thankfully to give the ſame.

6. When this worſhip is given to him, it is given to the perſon who is Mediator, and that in one individual act: for he, as God, is not worſhipped one way, and, as man, another way; nor is there a diviſion of his natures to be conceived; but the perſon, who is man, is worſhipped with this divine honour in the ſame act, becauſe he is God: therefore there is no ſuch preciſion called for in the intent of the worſhipper, as if one nature of Chriſt's were to be worſhipped, and not the other: for, it is the perſon, who is worſhipped, now, conſiſting of two natures.

7. When the Mediator is thus worſhipped, there is no diſtinct object of divine worſhip worſhipped; but as, whatever perſon be named, it is the ſame God: ſo, however the Mediator be named, or conſidered, it is the ſame perſon: for, though the ſecond perſon of the Godhead, conſidered in himſelf, be not *unum*, or, the ſame thing with the Mediator, (*ſenſu ſcil. formali*, as divines ſay) yet is he *unus*, the ſame perſon; and the ſecond perſon of the Godhead, being *unus*,

viz. the ſame God with the other two glorious perſons eſſentially conſidered, although he be not *unus* with the Father and Spirit, conſidered perſonally: for, the Godhead, eſſentially taken, is the ſame thing with the Father, Son and Spirit, as hath been ſaid. Then it will follow, that even when the Mediator is worſhipped, there is but ſtill the ſame one formal object of divine worſhip, viz. God; they being ſtill the ſame eſſential properties, which alone give ground for a creature to worſhip all the perſons of the glorious Trinity, conſidered in themſelves; or, the Son, conſidered as Mediator, in the manner expreſſed. Again, it appears thus, the Son, who is Mediator, is the ſame object of worſhip, that the Son, the ſecond perſon of the Godhead is: for, now, he being one perſon, cannot be conceived as two diſtinct objects of worſhip: but the Son, as the ſecond perſon of the Godhead, is the ſame object of worſhip with the Father and Spirit, as hath been ſaid. Therefore, the Son, who is Mediator, when worſhipped with divine honour, is the ſame formal object of divine worſhip alſo. And this alſo doth confirm, that divine worſhip is given to him as God: for, ſo only is he the ſame object with the Father and Spirit.

8. When the Son is worſhipped, there is no leſs reſpect to be had to his mediation, than when the Father is expreſſed; ſo that whoever be named, the Son, ſtill as Mediator, is to be made uſe of, and that in the ſame manner: for, as there is but one God, ſo there is but one *Mediator betwixt God and man*, 1 Tim. ii. 3. without whom there is no acceſs for a ſinner to approach unto, or worſhip acceptably, this one God. Thus God, is the formal object of worſhip; the Mediator, conſidered, as ſuch, is the ground upon which with confidence we may approach to that God: therefore is he the Way, and Truth, and Life; there is no going to God but by him: ſo that in our worſhip, God and the Mediator are not to be ſeparated; yet are they not to be confounded; for we worſhip God, in and by the Mediator; in which reſpect, the Mediator is called the Door, Altar, Way, &c. becauſe it is by the virtue and efficacy of his mediation, that the ſinful diſtance betwixt God and us is removed, and acceſs made for ſinners to worſhip him, as was typified by the temple, and tabernacle, in which the Mercy-ſeat was placed; and in looking to which, the people were to worſhip God.

From all which, it will follow, in reference to the third, 1*ſt*, That our prayers may be directed to Jeſus the Mediator expreſly, as Acts vii. 59. 2dly, That he may be named by titles, agreeing only to him as Mediator, viz. *Mediator*, *Jeſus*, *Thou who died*, *Advocate*, *&c.* becauſe theſe, being given him, *in concreto*, deſign the perſon. 3dly, That the heart may be in the inſtant ſtirred and affected with this, that he is Mediator, ſo as to ſpecify him, or to make him the object of our conſideration, as ſuch, in that act, as hath been ſaid. Thus a ſoul may pray to Jeſus, who died, who made ſatisfaction, who interceeds, &c. and, upon that conſideration, be affected with love, ſtrengthened in hope and confidence in its prayer, which yet is put up to him, becauſe he is God. 4thly, We may aſk from him what peculiarly belongs to the office of mediation; as, that he may guide his church, pour out the Spirit, gift miniſters, intercede, &c. becauſe the perſon to whom theſe belong, is God. And that extrinſic relation, or denomination, of being Mediator, doth not mar us to pray to him; as his being God, hinders not but that he ſtill executes that office by performing of ſuch acts: but both give ground, that confidently we may pray to him for theſe things; yet, in that, ſtill his Godhead is the formal object of our prayer, though the things we pray for, belong to his mediation: for we could not ſeek theſe from him, were he not God: and becauſe he is God and man, we are emboldened to ſeek them, and to expect them. See Pſal. xiv. 3, 4. &c. for, the matter, ſought, viz. riding proſperouſly, &c. belongeth to his mediation, as the ſcope clears; yet, the account upon which, is, that he was God moſt mighty. For (as they ſay) it is not *mediatio*, *but Deitas*, that is the *ratio formalis* of divine worſhip; or his mediation, as it includes his Deity, by the wiſe grace of God, theſe two being now inſeparably joined together: For, certainly, Chriſt, the Mediator, was to be made uſe of with reſpect to his future ſatisfaction, before he actually became man; as it is ſince to be done, with reſpect to his incarnation and ſuffering; (for he was Mediator, and ſtood in that relation before he was man) yet, it cannot be ſaid, that he was then, as ſuch, conſidered as the formal object of their worſhip, (even when they did explicitly conſider him with reſpect to his mediation) becauſe he did not then

actually exiſt in two natures; and, therefore, behoved to be the formal object of worſhip, in reſpect of that nature, which alone did then exiſt. 5thly, As any of the perſons may be named in prayer; ſo, for ſtrengthening of our faith, may the Mediator be named and prayed unto under ſuch titles and relations as agree only to him, and not to any other perſon; yet, then we would beware, 1. Of conceiving that we are praying to a different object, or that the Mediator is leſs glorious, juſt, holy, &c. unto whom we pray, than when God is expreſly named. We would alſo beware of conceiving, that by ſo doing, Chriſt is any way more engaged to, or employed by any, than when any other perſon of the Godhead is named; or, when other expreſſions are uſed, though we ourſelves may be more ſtrengthened by ſuch conſiderations. 2. When there is an alteration of the expreſſion, we would beware of conceiving that we alter the object; but, would mind, that it is the continued worſhipping of the ſame object, GOD, however he be deſigned: or, whatever be the expreſſions or different helps, which we ſeek to ſtrengthen our faith by. 3. We conceive, that in public, eſpecially, that change ſhould be warily uſed, leſt it breed, or be apt to breed any ſuch thoughts in others, the generality of people being prone to imagine different objects of worſhip in ſuch caſes.

From what is ſaid, we conceive, that the different expreſſions among divines in this matter, may be eaſily agreed; for example, ſome call him, as Mediator, *objectum materiale*; as God, *objectum formale*: ſome ſay, as Mediator, he is *objectum quod*; and, as God, *objectum quo*: ſome ſay, *perſona, ſeu is, qui eſt Deus, eſt invocandus, quia Mediator, ſed qua Deus*: ſome again ſay, *Chriſtus qua Mediator, eſt invocandus, ſed quia Deus*: For, when ſome ſay, *qua Mediator*, he is not the object of worſhip, they underſtand the formal object; which is that, that is underſtood by others, when they ſay, *quia Deus*. Again, when others ſay, *qua Mediator*, he is to be Worſhipped, they underſtand it as he is the object of conſideration: which is expreſſed by others when they ſay, *quia Mediator, Chriſtus Deus eſt invocandus*; or, as ſuch, he is *objectum materiale* of our worſhip.

It may then be aſked, What may be thought of ſuch a form of prayer, *O Mediator*, or, *O Advocate, plead for me*, which ſome may be apt to put up as being comfortable to them? We anſwer in theſe five aſſertions:

Aſſert. 1. It cannot be ſimply condemned, if well underſtood with theſe and ſuch like qualifications; that is, 1. If the Mediator prayed unto, or he who is to plead or interceed, be not conceived to be any *different object* of worſhip from God, with whom he interceeds; otherwiſe there is no keeping of the unity of the object of divine worſhip; much leſs is he to be prayed unto as if he were *inferior to God, as eaſier to be dealt with*; or, as if *he might be ſpoken unto, when yet we are not praying unto the Father, and worſhipping him, in that ſame act*: for, as Chriſt-God, reconciled us to himſelf, by his own ſatisfaction; ſo, is himſelf, prevailed with, to make the benefits purchaſed, forth-coming to us by the virtue of his own interceſſion; and the perſon is the ſame, though the conſideration of him in theſe, is diverſe. 2. If there be a right up-taking of his interceſſion, that in the time while he, as God, is prayed unto, faith be exerciſed on the virtue of his interceſſion, for attaining what is prayed for; ſo, that expreſſion is but made uſe of for ſtrengthening of faith, without any new, or different act of faith, but ſuch as is uſed with other expreſſions. 3. If the object prayed unto, be diſtinguiſhed from the ſuit or matter prayed for: for, ſo it is as if we prayed unto him that is king of his church, and hath received the government to manage the ſame for his church's behoof: becauſe, though the thing ſought, viz. Chriſt's interceſſion, be peculiar to the ſecond perſon of the Godhead, and that as Mediator; yet he, from whom it is ſought, is God; and ſo the object is the ſame. 4. It muſt be one in the matter, as if, in different expreſſions, by naming the Father, we ſhould pray, *O Father, make me partaker of all the benefits of Chriſt's interceſſion*: for, if it be thought that that expreſſion cometh more nearly to the improving of Chriſt's interceſſion, (or, ſo to ſay) to the employing of him, than any other expreſſion doth, then it is not to be admitted; becauſe it placeth the improving of his interceſſion, rather in words, than in faith.

Aſſert. 2. We grant, that ſometimes, *de facto*, it may be uſed in ſincerity, and accepted by God, when there is much confuſion in reference to theſe qualifications in the perſon: becauſe it may have what is eſſential, viz. an adoring of God, and an

exerciſe of faith in Chriſt, under that expreſſion; ſo that their meaning is, to obtain what they ſeek from God, through the virtue of Chriſt's interceſſion, though themſelves be unworthy. Thus, no queſtion, many prayers of the ſaints, where faith hath been in the Mediator, have been accepted, although there hath been much indiſtinctneſs, as to the object, in many things: ſuch were Cornelius's prayers, Acts x. And the apoſtles no queſtion, prayed, and were accepted; yet, had defect here, John xvi. 24.

Aſſert. 3. Again, we anſwer, that ſuch a form is not neceſſary ſimply to the uſe-making of his interceſſion, either as if that were limited to this expreſſion, or, as if it were a way more proper, compendious, weighty, or acceptable, in the uſe-making of Chriſt, than another; even though all theſe qualifications concur: for, no queſtion, in the prayers that are regiſtrated in the ſcripture, Chriſt's interceſſion is made uſe of; yet no ſuch form is recorded therein.

Aſſert. 4. We ſay further, that it may be abuſed, and we are afraid, often is; and that it hath ſome aptneſs to foſter miſtakes concerning the object of worſhip, or our act in it, as, 1. That the Mediator is one object, and the Father another; as if we might pray to the Mediator before we pray to God, and not be in that ſame act worſhipping the Father; or, as if the Mediator that intercedes were an object different from God, with whom he is to intercede. If it be ſaid, that he is another thing than God. *Anſw.* Formally conſidered, as is ſaid, he is another thing than the ſecond perſon of the Godhead; but he is not any other perſon, nor any other God: and ſo not an other object of worſhip. 2. It tendeth to propoſe Chriſt as more eaſy to be dealt with than God; and God, viz. the Father, as more rigid, and ſevere than the Mediator, whereas, the divine attributes are the ſame in both. For, if Chriſt-God, be conſidered without reſpect to his own mediation, there is no acceſs to him more than to the Father: and, if reſpect be had thereto, there is equal acceſs to the Father, there being the ſame covenant and promiſes. And, it is certain, ſome will think they may pray to Chriſt, when they dare not pray to the Father. 3. It obſcures the way of the uſe-making of Chriſt's interceſſion, which is a moſt ſublime-thing; and being the ſame with praying in his name, and in faith muſt be conceived to be done ſpiritually by faith; whereas thus Chriſt is repreſented as a Mediator amongſt men; to whom firſt addreſs is made, and then by him to the principal party; and ſo it conſtitutes two addreſſes, which brangles the unity of the object of worſhip. 4. It ſome way leſſens the glory of the Mediator, at leaſt, in appearance, as if he, even the perſon, were not ſupreme, but had another to plead with. It is true, it is ſo, as he is Mediator; but ſtill it would be adverted, that he is alſo God; and ſo he may, and can confer what his mediation procures; and expreſſions in prayer, would beſit that, and would not be as if he were not God as to his perſon, ſince his incarnation. 5. It ſeemeth, if not to repreſent two objects of worſhip, yet two kinds of worſhip, viz. one to the Mediator, or to Chriſt, as Mediator; and another as to God. For, who readily will think, that he who is a diſtinct party, entreated to plead, is to be equally honoured, and that in the ſame act with him with whom he pleads, or, at leaſt, a twofold manner of the ſame worſhip, viz. one in this manner, and another when this form is not uſed. 6. It is hard thus to conceive rightly of Chriſt's perſon: for, when we pray to him, we muſt conſider him as God, at leaſt that muſt be implied: then, he is alſo to be interceeded with by his own mediation, as the Father is, which, I ſuppoſe, few intend. If they take the Father perſonally, and ſo that Chriſt is to intercede with the Father as a diſtinct perſon, or a diſtinct party and ſo not with the Son and Spirit alſo; that will inſinuate, that the Father is not the ſame God with the Son, and infer a divided conception of the moſt ſimple eſſence of the Godhead, which is the one object of worſhip.

Aſſert. 5. Therefore, when all is conſidered, although we will not condemn it ſimply, yet we think it more fit to abſtain from ſuch formal expreſſions, or, at leaſt, to be ſparing therein, eſpecially in public: becauſe, 1. So it is difficult to preſerve that unity in the one object of worſhip, which ſhould be; for, it is not eaſy to redd things in practice, as diſtinctions may be given in doctrinal debates and concluſions: And ſhould ſouls hazard on what may confuſe themſelves? I ſay, eſpecially in public, or with others. Becauſe, if it be difficult to keep our own imaginations ſtayed in ſuch expreſſions, it will be more difficult to redd other mens imaginations, conſidering what ignorance and vanity uſually doth accompany many.

2. There is no ſuch form in ſcripture, even in the New Teſtament, when the Mediator is prayed unto; and it is ſafeſt we ſhould follow theſe that have gone before us. He is indeed prayed unto, conſidered as Mediator, but ſtill ſo as the thing prayed for, is expected from himſelf, as well as to be obtained by him.

To cloſe then as we began; here ſobriety is called for, and curioſity is to be ſhunned. And in worſhip, the heart is rather to be occupied with godly fear, reverence, and dread, than the head to be filled with imaginations.

Having theſe following things fixed in our hearts by faith, (which we conceive more ſimply neceſſary to worſhip, whatever the expreſſions be) viz. 1. An impreſſion of the holineſs, juſtice, omniſciency, and glory of God, &c. and ſuitable affections with the preſent work, viz. ſuch as the worſhipping of ſuch a God doth call for. 2. A conviction that we are praying to that one glorious God, whatever our expreſſions be; that it is he we are worſhipping; that it is our duty to adore him; and that it is from him that we expect what we pray for, whatever the deſignation in the petition be, and whatever perſon be named. 3. An impreſſion of our own ſinful diſproportionableneſs to that work, and of the utter incapacity that we ſtand in of having acceſs to God, or any ground of expecting any thing from him, in reſpect of ourſelves, if it be not obtained by virtue of Chriſt Jeſus his ſatisfaction and interceſſion. 4. An exerciſing of faith on Chriſt the Mediator, for attaining of what is prayed for, from God, by virtue of the mediation of the Mediator. All which are neceſſary, and where they are, we conceive, the ſoul is to ſilence all other queſtionings, and to hold here; and when doubtings ariſe, to put theſe two queries to a point within itſelf. 1. To whom art thou praying? or, waſt thou praying? or, from whom expecteſt thou what thou waſt ſeeking? Was it to, and from God? And, 2. For whoſe cauſe, and by virtue of what, doſt thou expect it from God? What gives thee confidence to put that ſuit to him? Is it not only through the mediation of Chriſt Jeſus alone? And where theſe two are fixedly anſwered by the conſcience, when temptation would jumble, becauſe of indiſtinctneſs in prayer, there may be quietneſs notwithſtanding, becauſe theſe two are the eſſentials of worſhip, viz. 1. That God be approached unto and adored. 2. That in and by the Mediator, addreſs only be made unto him, and this may be where there is no ſuch explicit expreſſion of either; for, where God is mentioned, the Mediator is implied as the ground upon which we approach unto him; and when the Mediator is expreſſed, it is underſtood, that God in and by him is worſhipped; and that no other God, but he who is the Father, Son, and Spirit. And if in all theſe a conſcience were poſed, that, may be, had no ſuch explicit thoughts, (nor is it poſſible, in worſhipping actually, to entertain them diſtinctly) it would anſwer, that ſo it intented and meaned, from one queſtion to another, till it reſult to this, viz. that he were praying to the one God, through the virtue of the Mediator Jeſus Chriſt, which is the ſcope. And thus, much anxiety may be prevented.

As to the fourth queſtion formerly mentioned, viz. What may be the reaſons why Chriſt is ſo much inſiſted on in particular, in the ſaint's approaching to God, ſo as the heart is eſpecially rejoiced at the mentioning of him? or, What may help to improve that ground of acceſs which we have by him? *Anſw.* To the firſt part: It is no marvel that this relation that Chriſt doth ſtand in, be much inſiſted on, in ſuch a caſe: and that thereby the heart be warmed, and made to exult.

Firſt, Becauſe, by that conſideration, there is ſome ſtaying of us in approaching to God: for the Godhead, conſidered in itſelf, is an infinite, inconceivable thing. And as there is no proportion betwixt him and us, ſo not betwixt him and our capacities of reaching him, ſo conſidered, but by this union of the Godhead with our nature, in the perſon of the Son; ſo that he who is man, is alſo God, *Having the fulneſs of the Godhead dwelling in him bodily*, Col. ii. 9. There is a condeſcendency upon the Almighty's ſide, ſhewing himſelf acceſſible to ſinners, and as appointing this, to ſay ſo, for a tryſting-place with them, viz. that, *He is in Chriſt, reconciling the world to himſelf*, 2 Cor. v. 19. whereupon the heart fixeth, there to meet God, and find him there; and is thereby emboldened, and helped to tryſt with the great and dreadful God. This was typified by the Lord's placing of the mercy-ſeat above the ark, by the giving of his anſwers from thence, and appointing the people, with reſpect thereto, to make their addreſſes to him: whence we ſee, *looking toward the temple*, Jonah ii. 4. *toward the holy hill*, and *holy oracle*, &c. frequently mentioned in the ſaints ſtraits; which

were typical of this *true Tabernacle, which God pitched, and not man;* and alſo held out their fixing in their worſhip; where God had by his ordinance tryſted them, though it was but in type. And, ſeeing they made ſo much of it, what wonder is it that the ſaints, ſince Chriſt's incarnation and ſuffering, make ſo great account of the ſubſtance and antitype itſelf?

Secondly, A ſecond reaſon, is, Becauſe in Chriſt Jeſus, the glory and riches of the grace of God, in the work of redemption, doth moſt eminently and palpably appear: which is both ſweeteſt to the ſaints, to inſiſt on; and alſo, tendeth to the advancement of the glory of God dwelling in him, and ſo furniſhing him for them. And therefore, theſe commendations that are given expreſly to Chriſt the Mediator, and whereby faith is ſtrengthened in him, do alſo ſet forth and commend exceedingly the majeſty of God, and his grace condeſcending thus to men; and, in the ſame act, do ſerve to ſtrengthen faith in him. For, honouring of God and the Mediator; and alſo, the ſpeaking to the praiſe of God, and the commendation of the Mediator, cannot be ſeparated; and what ſtrengthens faith in the one, doth it alſo in the other.

Thirdly, A third is, Becauſe there is moſt ſenſible footing, and to ſpeak ſo, gripping to be gotten, by looking to the Mediator, and mentioning of him: for, he being God, and alſo man, there is more acceſs to conceive what the affections and bowels that he as man hath, and, for this end, hath taken up to glory with him, that ſinners thereby might have confidence in approaching to, and by, an experienced High-prieſt, Heb. ii. 18. and iv. 16. than can be had to conſider God abſtractly in himſelf, of whoſe divine attributes there can be no ſuch apprehenſion. And this is not to give a new object of our faith, as if thereby it were ſurer; for nothing can be added to the fulneſs of God; but is to make that object, to ſay ſo, more diſcernible, conceivable, ſuitable, and acceſſible unto us; and to give us a new ground to ſtrengthen our faith, and a new way of having our neceſſities made ſenſible, to ſay ſo, to him; that is, when not only by his omniſcience he knows them fully, as God; but alſo, being acquainted thereby with the ſame, in reſpect of his humane affections, he, is, in an inconceivable manner, by ſympathy, affected therewith: which, though it add not to the height or degree of his love and pity; yet, doth it bring it to ſuch a channel, to ſay ſo, that hearts are more able to conceive thereof, and are more delighted and comforted therein. And therefore it is no marvel, that the ſame be moſt frequently mentioned.

Fourthly, He is, as is frequently ſaid, the ground upon which we have acceſs: for ſin made a gulph betwixt God and man; man could not ſtep over the ſame to God, but God ſteppeth over, and hath come to man's ſide, by being manifeſted in our nature, in the perſon of the Son, that ſo he might give men acceſs again to him. Hence Chriſt is, in going to God, the Door and Way; and, as it were, the Bridge by which they paſs, and that ſafely unto their former communion with God: and therefore Chriſt being God, ſo that they cannot have him, but they muſt have God; and being alſo the Way by which acceſs is given them to God, it is no marvel that the mentioning of him be ſweet.

Fifthly, The great effects of the love of God have kythed, and have been brought about in the perſon of the Son, the Mediator. And though there be no greater love, as to its extent, degree, or freeneſs in the Son, than in the Father and Spirit, as is ſaid, nor can be; yet that maketh the Mediator more obviouſly lovely to the ſinner, although, indeed, in the ſame things, the love of the other two perſons doth appear alſo. And, ſeeing this maketh the object of our love more ſenſible to us, and helpeth us to underſtand God's love the better, which otherwiſe is inconceivable: therefore God, by propoſing this as the pattern and evidence of his love, and as the object of ours, doth even allow ſinners to feed their love, and ſtrengthen their faith on this object, and on the immediate and explicite thoughts thereof; which yet is the delighting and feeding on the love of God ſo manifeſted; which cannot be ſo well read and underſtood, as by direct looking upon it, as it is manifeſted in the Mediator, who being God, became man, ſuffered, died, and is now, though glorified, yet a true man, touched in a humane manner with our infirmities; as a mother or friend are touched with the difficulties of a child, or one entirely beloved, though ſtill in a manner becoming his ſinleſs, glorified, and moſt perfect ſtate. This is a main attractive, to make ſouls look to God by this open door; and alſo, by expreſſing this, which is neareſt to their own comfort and conception, to expreſs their faith in God, or their love to him.

For encouraging and clearing of us in the im-

proving of these grounds, these things would be remembered.

1. That our blessed Lord is true man, having these affections and properties that are natural and not sinful, truly, and really: and that therefore, there is a greater nearness conceivable in our approaching to him, than to God simply considered in himself.

2. That, as he is man, having such properties, so he is affected suitably thereunto; that is, he hath a humane affection to, and sympathy with these he loveth; and hath the experimental remembrance of his bypast sufferings: which also hath its own affecting influence on his soul, for awakening of such pity as is consistent with his inconceivable glorified state.

3. That he who is man, and thus affected, is also God; and so by his omniscience, acquainted with every need and strait of his people, and with every petition of theirs; whereby his former affections are stirred, to say so, and his sympathy awakened, to make his divine attributes forthcoming for their good.

4. It would be considered, that the scripture allows these considerations of Christ to believers, for helping them up to communion with him, and so with God in him; and for strengthening them to approach to him with confidence on that ground.

5. As there is an exercising of faith in God, and thereby, a keeping of communion with him; so there is a proportionable sympathizing, heart-warming, and bowel-moving affection, allowed us, even towards the very man Christ, as one hath to a dear friend, or most loving husband: that so, in a word, we may love him, who is man, as he, who is man, loves us. And, this kind of communion, is peculiar to the believer, with the second person of the Godhead, as it is peculiar to the second person of the Godhead, as man, by humane affections, to love him. And thus we are not only one spirit with him, as with the other persons of the Godhead, 1 Cor. vi. 17. but we are one body with him; *of his flesh, and of his bone*, Eph. v. 30. in respect of this union and communion that is betwixt a believer and the man Jesus Christ.

Hence, 6. As we have most access to conceive of Christ's love to us, who is man; so we are in the greater capacity to vent our love on him, and to have our bowels kindled upon the consideration of his being man, and performing what he did in our nature for us; so the object is most suited to be beloved by us, in his condescending to be as a brother to us. And this doth confirm what is said, and is a reason also, why believers vent their love to God by flowing in its expressions directly concerning Christ: because he is both the more sensible object of our faith and love; and also because there is more possibility to conceive and mention what he, in our nature, hath done, than to consider God, and his operations, in himself abstractly.

7. Hearts would always remember that he is God, and so that they love and keep communion with him that is God. That makes the former the more wonderfully lovely, as this should make souls keep up the estimation and dignity that is due to such a person, so condescending: and so, by the man Christ, both to love, and believe in God.

And in sum, having the excellencies of God dwelling in the man Christ, whose affections they are more able to conceive of, whose sufferings have made his love palpable, in whom God hath condescended to deal with us, and on whom our affections and faith also, may have the more sensible footing, by the consideration of his humane affections; there is no wonder that this way of adoring, praising, and loving of God be so much insisted upon: and yet, even then when the heart is upon this consideration delighting and feeding itself upon the Mediator, still his Godhead is implied, and God in him delighted in; without which, all other consolations would be defective. And, so it is God, in the Mediator, who is the object of this delight. Now, unto this one God, be praise in the church, by Jesus Christ, for now and ever.

LECTURE II.

Verse 4. *John to the seven churches in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;*

5. *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful Witness, and the First-begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth: unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.*

6. *And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

WE heard of the persons from whom, follows now these to whom, the epistle is sent, viz. *the seven churches in Asia;* and they are particularly named, ver. 11. and are several times spoken of in the two chapters following; therefore, at the entry, we shall speak to a doubt or two concerning this inscription to them.

Quest. 1. *Why is this Revelation, in form of an Epistle, sent to particular churches, rather than to the whole church?* 2. *And why is it sent particularly to the seven churches in Asia?* 3. *Why are they styled seven churches, and not one church?*

To the first of these: though it be sent to particular churches; yet, this excludes none from the use of it to the end of the world: for, though many particular epistles, as the epistle to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, &c. be directed to particular churches; yet, the benefit of the word contained in them, extendeth to all believers in all ages, as well as to them to whom they were directed: so those particular epistles, directed to the seven churches in Asia, in chapters ii, iii. are useful and behoveful to all the churches of Christ in the like cases, as if they had been particularly directed to them: therefore is that word cast to, in the close of each of those epistles, *Let him that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.* 2. As to the general subject matter of this book: it concerns not these particular churches more than others, as we are told at the entry. For, ver. 1. it is directed to his servants, to be made use of to the end of the world; and it is sent to those particular churches to be transmitted by them to other churches; and, in this sense, the church is called the pillar and ground of truth, 1 Tim. iii. 15. as setting forth and transmitting the truth to others.

To the second, *Why it is dedicated to the seven churches in Asia? Answ.* 1. Either because these churches were next to Patmos, where John was now banished: for, those who are skilled in geography know, that this little isle lies off Asia the Less. Or, 2. Because it is like John had particular inspection of those churches in Asia committed to him: which, though it be not particularly set down in scripture; yet, it is clear from scripture, that there was a division of inspection among the apostles, without limiting any of them. Peter was sent to the circumcision; Paul to the Gentiles; James abode at Jerusalem. And, in the ecclesiastic story it is asserted, that after Paul had planted Ephesus, John staid there, who lived last of the apostles: and so these churches being, as would seem, under his special oversight, while he is absent from them by banishment, he commends this epistle to them. 3. Jesus Christ sends it to them, partly, because of some special faults that were among them, their need so requiring; and because of some special trials they were to endure, and the need they had of consolation under these trials: partly, because they were the most famous churches then: for Jerusalem was now destroyed, this being written in the days of Domitian the emperor.

To the third, *Why writes he to them as particular churches,* To the seven churches in Asia, *and not to the church in Asia? Ans.* For clearing of this, the scripture speaks of the church in a threefold sense, 1. As comprehending the whole number of visible professors, scattered through the world; so the gospel-church is spoken of from the days of Christ to his coming again, as 1 Cor. xii. 28. *God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, &c.* where, by *church,* is not to be understood this or that particular church, nor the church in Corinth: for, the church he is speaking of, is such a church as God hath set the apostles in, and all officers; and that was in no particular church, but is the universal church, spoken of in the verse before, made up both of Jews and Gentiles: and so the word is often used elsewhere, as it is said, *Paul made havock of the church,* and that he persecuted the church. It was not this or that particular church, but all that called on the name of Jesus Christ, to whatsoever particular church they did belong. So, 1 Cor. x. 32. the church is contradistinguished from Jews and Gentiles, *Give none offence to the Jews, nor Gentiles, nor to the church of God;* that is, to the church visible, professing faith in Christ. And this church, Rev. xii. is set out under the similitude of a woman in travail, in readiness to be delivered, and afterward doth flee: which is not this or that particular church, but the mother-church, comprehending the whole visible number of professors. 2. It is taken, as comprehending a number of be-

lievers, meeting together in one place ordinarily for the worſhip of God, the ſmalleſt aſſociated part of this body of the univerſal viſible church, as 1 Cor. xiv. 34. a company of profeſſing believers met, or meeting together for preaching or prayer: and in this ſenſe, the ſcripture ſpeaks not ſo often of the church. 3. It is taken neither for the whole body of viſible profeſſors, nor yet for ſuch a part of that body, that is, a company met or meeting together; but, for a number aſſociated and combined under one government, meeting in their church-guides and officers, though under this combination and government there be many congregations and meetings: and ſo the church at Corinth, Epheſus, and Jeruſalem, is to be underſtood: not for the univerſal catholic church, nor for a particular congregation; but for a number of particular congregations under one government, ſuch as there was in Corinth and Epheſus. And yet, when he directs his epiſtle to one church, as under one government, particular congregations are included; as in Jeruſalem there were many churches and many watch-men, and they could not meet together, in one place, for the exerciſe of God's worſhip; yet it was not unſuitable to ſay, the church at Jeruſalem, (as the church at Glaſgow) as under one government, though it were not ſuitable to ſpeak of them as of one congregation met together: for there were many more congregations of people in one of thoſe towns, as 1 Cor. xiv. 34. compared with 1 Cor. i. 3. There were churches under one church: therefore, it behoved to be a mutual combination. that made up one body. In anſwer to the queſtion therefore, while he ſpeaks to them as churches in Aſia, it is becauſe he looks on them as ſo many diſtinct incorporations; parts of the whole, or, becauſe their caſes and conditions were diſtinct; and one meſſage could not agree to all; the caſe of Epheſus was one; the caſe of Smyrna another, &c. And ſeveral caſes and conditions, required ſeveral letters.

But if any ſay, *It is improper to ſpeak of a church in the New Teſtament, except of a particular congregation, becauſe it is ſaid here to the ſeven churches in Aſia, and elſewhere, the churches in Judea, &c.*

We anſwer, 1. That inference will not hold; but rather the contrary: for here, it is ſaid, *The church at Epheſus;* and in Epheſus were many particular congregations: therefore, it is meaned of a church aſſociated and combined under one government: neither ever are churches in one place mentioned, of whatſoever number they be, but as one. 2. Though *ſeven churches of Aſia* be ſpoken of here; yet, Rev. xii. the church is ſpoken of, under the ſimilitude of one woman; and theſe churches muſt be parts of that one; the ſeed of that woman, and children of that mother. See more, chap. xi. at the end.

Obſerve, That the Lord Jeſus Chriſt taketh notice of the particular eſtate of his churches: not only how it goeth with the church, in general, but how it goeth with this or that particular church; how it goeth with Edinburgh, Glaſgow, &c. which ſhews a reaſon why he diſtinguiſheth them in the inſcription.

The ſecond part of the inſcription, is, A thankſgiving, from the middle of ver. 5. to ver. 7. when he hath wiſhed *grace and peace from Jeſus Chriſt*, whom he calls *the Firſt-begotten from the dead:* becauſe, by virtue of him, all do ariſe; and becauſe he was the firſt that roſe and went to heaven (for, though Enoch and Elias be perſonally in heaven, they taſted not of death; and ſo cannot be called *the firſt begotten from the dead*; others died again, as Lazarus.) And when he hath called him *the Prince of the kings of the earth*, as ſet down now at his Father's right hand, as the Father's Lord-deputy, to point out his Mediatory and given kingdom, and his reigning for the good of the elect, and to rule others for their ſake, though not to ſubdue and make them willing ſubjects, yet to bruiſe them with his mace and iron ſceptre. When, I ſay, he is ſpeaking thus of Jeſus Chriſt, his heart beginneth to warm; and he breaketh out in a word of thankſgiving: wherein there is, 1. A deſcription of the perſon to whom the thankſgiving is made. 2. The Thankſgiving itſelf. The deſcription is excellent, and of exceeding great conſolation to the church, as holding out Chriſt's bowels, and the privileges and benefits that believers have in and through him. 1. In the fountain, they come from, *Him that loved us.* What a one is Chriſt? He is he who loved us: this is the boſom-grace, from whence all other graces and benefits do flow, Prov. viii. everlaſting love, and the firſt and chief ſtyle in all our praiſe. If believers would know who Chriſt is; it is he who *loved us:* a moſt comfortable ſtyle. 2. In the particular benefits that flow from this love, *and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood.* Every word hath

an emphaſis in it: he had not an empty and complementing love; but ſuch a love as moved him to leave the height of glory, and come down and take on our nature; and in that nature to die, and ſhed his blood for us; and by that blood, to waſh us from the filthineſs and guilt of ſin, in taking away the evil of ſin and wrath. And, in that he is ſaid to waſh us from ſin, *in his own blood*, it ſuppoſes, 1. That ſin is a filthineſs. 2. That this filthineſs is not eaſily waſhen away. 3. That there is a great efficacy and real virtue in the blood of Chriſt, to waſh the ſoul, and cleanſe it from ſin, as if it had never ſinned; as there is efficacy and virtue in a fountain of water, to waſh a filthy thing. And this was typified in thoſe ceremonial and legal waſhings under the law. 4. That that wherewith Chriſt waſheth believers, is, his *own blood*: not the blood of bulls and goats, but the blood of the *Firſt-begotten from the dead*, the blood of *the true and faithful Witneſs*, the blood of *the Prince of the kings of the earth*; yea, the blood of him *which is, which was*, and *which is to come*, the blood of him *who was*, and *is God*. Therefore, Acts xx. 28. it is ſaid, *Feed the church of God which he hath purchaſed with his own blood*. It holds out not only the efficacy and ſatisfactorineſs of the blood of Chriſt, but alſo the end of his death: that it was not a meer teſtimony and witneſs-bearing, nor only to leave an example to others, (as profane men, derogating from our bleſſed Lord's death, affirm) but to waſh his own from their ſins in his blood, to take away the guilt of ſin in juſtification, and to make the power of his death come in and ſlay ſin, and to ſanctify, as it is, 1 Cor. vi. *Such were ſome of you, but now you are waſhed*, that is, juſtified and ſanctified. There is not a name that Chriſt hath, but it hath ſome privilege and benefit in it to believers; it holds out love on his ſide, and conſolation on ours; and every benefit which comes to us, is a name and commendation to him, and may be ſo uſed by us.

Ver. 6. In the deſcription, he ſets out how Chriſt, not only takes away what is ill from us, but how he abounds in conferring privileges on us. He not only takes away ſin, but he hath made us kings and prieſts to God, his Father, 1 Kings, in delivering us from the ſlavery of ſin, that the moſt part of the world lives in; and in making us maſters over ſin and ſinful luſts, maſters over the devil and the world, and the fleſh in ſome meaſure. And this is a princely thing: ſo the church is ſet out, Rev. xii. as having the moon, that is to ſay, the tranſitory world under her feet, 2 Kings, in reſpect of a ſpiritual reigning in our ſpirits with God, by an heavenly converſation; *having our converſations in heaven*, Phil. iii. 20. Col. iii. 1. in an holy and heavenly pride, and in a ſort of kingly majeſty, diſdaining the ups and downs in the world. 3. Kings alſo, in title and right, being ſet as kings on the throne with him, to execute the judgment written, Pſalm cxlix. 9. This honour have all his ſaints, in a ſpiritual way, and ſome way to judge the world in their practice: and they ſhall be kings in poſſeſſion, when that which is here ſhall have the full accompliſhment: and all the ſaints, as ſo many crowned kings, ſhall follow him in the clouds. 2*dly*, Prieſts, to offer their bodies a living ſacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, Rom. xii. 1. to offer prayers and praiſes, the calves of their lips; and this is no ſmall privilege, to have acceſs to God as prieſts. The Jews held theſe two as great dignities, the kingly and prieſtly offices; and believers are called by Chriſt to both, ſo that they may come with boldneſs to the throne of grace, and enter within the holieſt, through the vail, by that new and living way, being freed from the ſpirit of bondage and fear, which, in a great part, accompanied the Jews ceremonial worſhip. 1. How many excellent conſolations are here to believers, and grounds of directions to them? What grounds of conſolation compared to theſe, *to be waſhen in the blood of the Lamb*; *to be made kings and prieſts to God* and Chriſt's Father; that is, to no idol, but to him, to whom Chriſt is a prieſt? Here is life and immortality brought to light by the goſpel, privileges and benefits of an exceeding paſſing worth and excellency.

1. Comparing this ver. with ver. 1. here kings and prieſts, and there his ſervants. *Obſerve*, That there is no ſuch royalty and dignity in the world, as to be our Lord Jeſus his ſervant; it is truly to be a king, to reign: and a prieſt, to be conſecrated to God; it conſiſts not in looſeneſs and carnal liberty, but in new obedience: and the more obedient, circumſpect and ſtrict in holineſs, the greater liberty, majeſty, and kingly ſtateline ſs. All our Lord's ſervants are kings, ſo great a king is he, and ſo happy are they.

2. Theſe privileges lay an obligation on be-

lievers, to carry themſelves as ſuch. 1. If Chriſt's blood be given as a fountain to waſh at, then make uſe of it for pardon of ſin, mortification and ſanctification. 2. Let us carry ourſelves kingly. It is a beaſtly thing to be a ſervant of ſin; but it is a kingly thing and ſtately, to be minding the throne, we are called to the faith and hope of; to have our hearts and converſation ſuitable to that holy and heavenly place; to have royal ſpirits, diſdaining, and trampling on the things of a preſent world, as unworthy of our hearts and affections.

3. Comparing this with the former, when he ſpeaks of Chriſt, his affections warm; and when he ſpeaks of the benefits which come by him, it leads him to the love they come from; and by that, again, he is led to praiſe him, and he cannot get Jeſus Chriſt ſet high enough. *Obſerve*, Believers hearts ſhould warm, and be often warming themſelves with thoughts of Chriſt, and venting their warmneſs of affection to him in praiſe: it is a ſweet thing, when believers hearts cannot part with Chriſt; but, whenever he comes in their mind or mouth, ſtill to give him a word of praiſe, and come to their purpoſe again, as John doth here; and it is often thus with Paul, as 1 Tim. i. 17. Eph. iii. 20.

LECTURE III.

Ver. 7. *Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye ſhall ſee him, and they alſo which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth ſhall wail becauſe of him: even ſo, Amen.*

8. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, ſaith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*

9. *I John, who alſo am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jeſus Chriſt, was in the iſle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt.*

IT is a concerning meſſage that Chriſt is now ſending to his church; therefore there is the large preface to ſtir them up he writes to, to make that which he ſends welcome.

We heard from verſe 4. the particular inſcription or direction of this book, as an epiſtle: and when he hath wiſhed *grace* and *peace*, and ſet down the parties from whom the *grace* and *peace* is wiſhed, and the epiſtle is ſent, he turns it over in a thankſgiving to Chriſt, eſpecially, pitching on him, as looking to the benefits and privileges they enjoyed through him, as being in a ſpecial way, purchaſed by him: and this thankſgiving, or doxology, is all that he and all ſaints can give Chriſt, for all that he hath done for them; *unto him be glory and dominion.* Believers, in looking on Chriſt's purchaſe, would be more in aſcribing glory and dominion to him; not that they can add any new glory to him, or enlarge his dominion; but it is to acknowledge, that to him belongs glory and dominion, as it is afterwards, chap. v. ver. 12. *Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and glory, and bleſſing.* It is the believers expreſſion, and hearty aſſent, in approving God's purpoſe and project in making him head over all the church.

Ver. 7. He ſeems to come back where he left, when he began his thankſgiving, to ſpeak of Jeſus Chriſt under the laſt title of *Prince of the kings of the earth*; and that by way of pre-occupying an objection, which carnal hearts might make; and it is this. Is he *Prince of the kings of the earth*, who was put to death and laid in the grave? where is he now, if he be ſuch a *Prince?* he anſwereth, *Behold, he cometh with clouds*: though many profane carnal hearts now do not acknowledge him, yet he ſhall one day be acknowledged; he is now out of ſight; but it will not be long ſo: he is making ready for his coming to judgment, and is coming, chap. xxii. 20. *Surely, I come quickly.* This coming, in the preſent time, implieth two things, 1. The ſeaſonableneſs of his coming; he miſſes no time, he comes quickly. 2. That even the ſhort time he delays, he is making ready, as it were, for his coming; he is leading witneſſes, and fitting proceſſes, and diſcovering the truth and falſhood of every thing; and every thing that

may further his coming, is going forward; he is not idle in reference to his laſt coming to judgment, but is haſtening all. *2dly*, His coming to judgment is ſet out in the majeſty and ſtatelineſs of it under an expreſſion ordinary in the prophets, (as much of this book is, *He cometh with clouds.* So Pſal. xcvii. 2. *Clouds and darkneſs are round about him*: and Matth. xxiv. 30. He ſhall *come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.* So Pſalm xviii. 10, 11. To ſet out the ſtatelineſs of the Judge that cometh thus backed with celeſtial majeſty. *3dly*, His coming is ſet out by the palpableneſs and viſibleneſs of it, *Every eye ſhall ſee him;* tho' moſt part of Atheiſts think not of his coming now; yet when he ſhall come, there ſhall not be a reaſonable creature, that ever had life on earth, whether believer, or unbeliever, but they ſhall with their eyes ſee him in that day. *4thly*, Among them that ſhall ſee him, theſe are added, *They alſo who pierced him*: under which is comprehended his greateſt enemies; and it takes in both thoſe who had their hands hot in his blood, and killed him bodily, and thoſe who crucified, and do crucify him ſpiritually, as it is ſaid, chap. xi. 8. He was crucified in ſpiritual Sodom, they ſhall all in that day be called before his bar, and be forced to look on him. A fifth circumſtance in his coming, *all kindreds of the earth ſhall wail becauſe of him;* in the original, *all the tribes of the earth*: it is a word borrowed from the Jews, their manner of reckoning, who counted their kingdoms by tribes. The meaning is, all the kingdoms of the earth, and thoſe that laugh at him now, and think little of his coming, when it is ſpoken of, ſhall wail becauſe of him, that is, becauſe of their ſlighting of him; and now ſeeing him to be their Judge, whom they ſlighted and contemned: and though there be now a kindly mourning, like that in Zech. xii. 10. *They ſhall look upon him, whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn*; yet, this being to be at the day of judgment, and ſpoken of the enemies that think nothing of him now, we take it to be an anxious howling of enemies, when they ſhall ſee Chriſt coming in the clouds to the great judgment, and all his angels and ſaints about him: as Matth. xxiv. 30. *Then ſhall all the tribes of the earth mourn.* *6thly*, There is a ſixth circumſtance added, *even ſo, Amen*: which is John's ſetting to his ſeal to his coming; and it is doubled, as it is ordinary, both in the Greek and Hebrew; he wiſheth he may come, and believeth he will come, that it may be as he hath ſaid, even as he cloſeth his Revelation; *Amen. Even ſo, come Lord Jeſus.* And ſo it looketh to his ſtately way of coming, and the effects it ſhall have in the world, it being for his glory, to vindicate himſelf from the rubs that his profane enemies put upon him in the world; he ſays *Amen* to that, *even ſo, Amen.*

Obſerve 1. Our Lord Jeſus, that was crucified, and thought little of, ſhall be as high as ever he was low, in the open view of all his enemies. The time is coming, and now is advancing faſt forward, when he ſhall take unto him his kingdom, and be viſibly ſeen by all the kingdoms of the earth, to be the Judge of quick and dead, *the Prince of the kings of the earth.* This is one of the articles of our creed; and we would make uſe of this ſcripture to confirm it: there is a time coming, and it is not far off, when he ſhall ſet his throne in the clouds, and all eyes ſhall ſee him. Think ye this true, that there is a time coming, when we that are here, and all others, ſhall ſee Chriſt in his human nature, and alſo much of his Godhead, as he ſhall be pleaſed to let out, and we capable of? Think on it, and let it not go with a word; but conſider how you will meet him and ſtand before him; and when you meet with difficulties or creature-comforts, that would turn you aſide, remember on this day: and where will they all be, when ye ſhall be arreſted to ſtand before him? Eccleſ. xi. 9.

Obſerve 2. Chriſt's coming to judgment, is a ſpecial part of his ſtatelineſs, and a main part of the univerſalneſs of his kingly office as Mediator, when he ſhall come and ſit as Judge, and give ſentence on godly and wicked, and ſend away the one, and welcome the other. This will be one of his ſtatelieſt days, when he ſhall vindicate himſelf from profane men, and bear himſelf out to his people, in his exceeding glory. Believers, believe there is ſuch a day; and let it quiet your hearts in the mean time of all theſe confuſions.

Obſerve 3. Our Lord Jeſus his coming to judgment, will be a doleful coming to the moſt part of the world; *they alſo who pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth ſhall wail becauſe of him: they ſhall cry to the hills, fall on us, and to the mountains cover us;* and would be glad to get into the clefts of the rocks, and to the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of

his majeſty, Iſaiah ii. 12. Men would think the greateſt hill or mountain a light burden in that day, to get themſelves hid from the piercing view of a ſlighted and provoked Mediator. Oh, but that will be bitter and ſore to bide! think upon it. There is a time coming, when many of you that hear this ſame word, if grace prevent not, ſhall ſee and find the truth of it. It is terrible, but experience will make it true; many of you now ſcar to hear tell of Chriſt's coming to judgment; but when that day cometh it ſhall be bitter in another kind to you, when this bitter yelling noiſe, crying and howling, ſhall be among the carnal world that ſlighted him, and ye ſhall find yourſelves among them, and ſhall ſhare with them; and every cry and yell about you, ſhall be a new wound. Therefore humble yourſelves, and ſeek for mercy and reconciliation in time: for either muſt ye get it now, or never.

Obſ. 4. A hearty conſenting and ſaying *Amen* to Chriſt's coming to judgment, to have fore-thoughts of it, and to be longing for it, and wiſhing that it may come, is a good token of a believer and friend of Chriſt, to whom this day will be a comfort. But, if many of us had our own mind, we would never wiſh to die, nor that there ſhould be a day of judgment.

Ver. 8. Chriſt cometh in himſelf to tell what he is, and to confirm what John hath ſaid of him, *I am Alpha and Omega;* which are two letters in the Greek alphabet; *alpha*, the firſt, and *omega*, the laſt: and the meaning is in the next words, *The beginning and the ending*. *The Beginning*, he who gives all things a being and beginning, and have no beginning myſelf: *the Ending*, he who puts an end to all things, and in whom all things end, and hath no ending myſelf: for, all things terminate in him as their end, Rom. xi. 36. *To him are all things, which is, which was, and which is to come;* the ſame deſcription which was given to God the Father, ver. 4. ſetting out the immutability and unchangeableneſs of his being, that he is from eternity to eternity the ſame, and as we ſhew, the title JEHOVAH taketh in theſe three words. Then, more plainly, *the Almighty:* every word here is a proper attribute of God; he is infinite in power, ſovereign in dominion, and not bounded as creatures are: and this is clear to be ſpoken of Chriſt, not only from the ſcope, (John being to ſet out Chriſt from whom he had this revelation) but from ver. 11. following, where he gives him the ſame titles over again; or rather, Chriſt ſpeaking of himſelf, taketh and repeateth the ſame titles.

Obſ. 1. Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is God equal with the Father, and Holy Ghoſt; he, who is the firſt and laſt, *the beginning and the ending, which is, which was, and which is to come, the Almighty*, muſt be God. Theſe titles can agree to no other: there is no created being capable of any of theſe titles; but he is ſuch. Therefore, &c.

Obſ. 2. The ſtatelineſs and majeſty of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: what an excellent and ſtately perſon is he? there is not a property attributed to God, but it is agreeable to Chriſt. The uſe of it is, to bring hearts to high thoughts of Chriſt: and it is not for nought, but for this end that the ſcripture inſiſts ſo much in giving him ſuch ſtately ſtyles, even to wear ſouls out of their atheiſtical thoughts of him, and to prefer and eſteem him above all.

3. Looking upon theſe words as ſpoken by Chriſt himſelf: after John had deſcribed him, he cometh in, and takes it off John's hand, and deſcribes himſelf. *Obſerve*, That our Lord Jeſus' own mouth can beſt tell what himſelf is: hearing, reading, ſpeaking, writing will not do it; if the deſcription come not out of Chriſt's own mouth, it will do little on hearers.

Ver. 9. Follows the body of this book, or epiſtle. We will not now enter on a particular diviſion of it. That which is ver. 19. of this ſame chapter, ſhall ſerve for the time, *Write the things which thou haſt ſeen, and the things which are, and the things which ſhall be hereafter*. The whole may be taken up in theſe two, 1. John his repreſenting the caſe of things, as they were for the preſent. And, 2. As they were to be hereafter.

The firſt of theſe, viz. His repreſenting the caſe of things as they then were, is that which is ſet down in the firſt three chapters: wherein is ſet out the caſe that the ſeven churches of Aſia were in; which he diſcovers to themſelves, and to the world; and ſhews how many foul faults they had under a fair name and profeſſion: and this takes up John's firſt viſion.

That which is from ver. 9. to the end of this chapter, we take up in theſe three. 1. There is the viſion itſelf, what John ſaw, and what he heard, from ver. 10. to ver. 17. mixed through other.

2. In the 9 and 10 verſes, ſome circumſtances are ſet down concerning John, and the manner of his receiving the viſion, to make way for the faith of the viſion, and the whole ſtory that follows. 3. From ver. 17. to the end, ſome circumſtances, that make way for John's writing and publiſhing what he ſaw and heard, are recorded.

The firſt circumſtance that makes way for the faith of the viſion and ſtory, is, The perſon by whom Chriſt wrote, *I John:* of whom we have heard before in the entry. And he ſets out himſelf here, further, under ſeveral expreſſions or titles: 1. *Who alſo am your brother:* a ſon of the ſame houſe, a joint heir with you in the ſame kingdom; a comforting title to them, and a humbling title to him. Thoſe he wrote to, being brethren, he reckons himſelf a brother with them: for the moſt eminent believers, John, Paul, Abraham, David, &c. come in to be brethren with the meaneſt believers; all being children of one Father, of one houſe, heirs of one inheritance: and Abraham, his being a brother, and John his being a brother, prejudgeth not the leaſt of them to whom he writeth. And, as all have one Father, ſo all are begotten by the ſame word, have one ſpirit here, and glory for ever hereafter. 2. The next title he deſcribes himſelf by, is, *Companion in tribulation;* that is, a fellow ſufferer with you, a ſharer of the ſufferings of Chriſt as well as you; I, who am a great apoſtle, am not exempted from ſufferings more than ye are, who are in Smyrna, Philadelphia, &c. I have my own ſhare of the croſs as well as ye have; yea, he takes it to himſelf as a title of honour, as a great prerogative and dignity, as Paul, Eph. iii. 1. *I Paul, the priſoner of Jeſus Chriſt for you Gentiles;* ſo it is, *I John*, who, as I am ſuffering with you, ſo I am confined for preaching to you in Patmos: pointing out this, that as all believers are brethren, ſo all have one lot in ſuffering here-away, and none are exempted from the croſs: were it the diſciple whom Jeſus loved and leaned on his boſom at the ſupper the night he was betrayed; yet he muſt be a companion in tribulation, and come into heaven at the ſame door with the reſt. Folks would not think this ſtrange, that afflictions light on theſe whom Chriſt loves beſt: the ſervant is not greater than the Lord. It ſhould comfort ſufferers, and make them look on it, as their prerogative, to be ſufferers for Chriſt. 3. There is a further aggravation, or explication of the former, *and in the kingdom and patience of Jeſus Chriſt.* Leſt it ſhould be thought any thing derogatory to be a ſufferer, he ſays, he is a companion in the kingdom and patience of Jeſus Chriſt with them. And theſe two words, *kingdom* and *patience*, are put together, not only to ſhew he is a King and a Prieſt with other believers; but to ſhew this much, that Chriſt's kingdom is often more in the exerciſe of patience than in dominion; and that the ſubjects of Chriſt's kingdom here, are more put to exerciſe patience than to reign. His meaning is, I am a ſharer with you in the ſpiritual kingdom of Chriſt, that needeth no worldly grandeur, but hath need of patience. And it ſaith, that he counts it his prerogative to be ſingled out, and put to patient ſuffering, for giving teſtimony to Chriſt as King of his church. Afflictions for Chriſt, and ſharing in his kingdom, may ſtand well together for the time, and in reference to the upſhot, *If we ſuffer with him, we ſhall reign with him.*

A ſecond circumſtance, which is alſo a further deſcription of himſelf, is from the place and cauſe, 1. From the place of his ſuffering, *I was in the iſle which is called Patmos.* This *Patmos* is an iſle in the Aegean ſea, near the coaſt of Aſia, the Leſs, not far from the ſeven churches in Aſia, to whom he writeth: a place which is called barren, by them who write of it; not much inhabited then, nor now, becauſe of the barrenneſs of it: therefore it was a greater evidence of the cruelty of John's perſecutors that baniſhed him thither. 2. The cauſe, is, *For the word of God, and for the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt;* that is, for his preaching the word of God, and for his owning and maintaining Chriſt's goſpel; for his bearing teſtimony, that Jeſus Chriſt was the King, Prieſt, and Prophet of his church, and the eternal ſubſtantial word of the eternal Father; for Chriſt's cauſe, who is the Word of God: or, for bearing teſtimony to him. The way how he came to this iſland is not ſet down; but hiſtory tells, [*Euſeb. lib. 3. cap. 14. ex Irenaeo et Clem. Alex.*] it was in the fourteenth year of Domitian the emperor, when he raiſed the ſecond perſecution againſt the church of Chriſt, about the 97th year of our Lord, that he, after he had tortured John, baniſhed him to this iſle, near about the ſame time of John's age. This then is the place that John was baniſhed to; and yet, in the ſame place, he

hath ſweet fellowſhip with God; is countenanced of him, and honoured to be the carrier of this Revelation to the church.

1. See here how far graceleſs and profane perſecutors, ſuch as this beaſt Domitian was, may prevail againſt the ſervants of Jeſus Chriſt, when he doth baniſh John to Patmos, beſide other horrible perſecutions which he raiſed againſt the church. Chriſt, by this, would have us to know his kingdom is not of this world.

2. Solitarineſs for Chriſt, is not the worſt condition. Chriſt can make up that another way: and if there be a neceſſity of withdrawing men from their duty, as of miniſters from their public miniſtry, he can make it tend as much to their private benefit, and to the public good of his church, if not more: neither doth John loſe any thing by his baniſhment and confinement; for he finds more intimate and ſweet communion and fellowſhip with Chriſt, and gets more of his mind: nor doth the church loſe any thing by it; for ſhe gets this revelation of God's mind. If we believed this, we would never go out of God's way, to make up his work: for, if he pleaſe to lay us by, he knows how to make up that, both to ourſelves, and God's people. The Chriſtian church is as much beholden to Paul's impriſonment in epiſtles, as to his liberty in preaching.

3. Honeſt ſuffering for Chriſt hath often with it the freſheſt and cleareſt manifeſtations of Chriſt. Folks that will continue faithful, and bide by their duty through ſufferings, they ſhall not only not be loſers, but gainers, 1 Peter iv. 14. *If ye be reproached for the name of Chriſt, happy are ye; for the Spirit of God, and of glory, reſteth upon you.* I would have none carnal nor vain in this, but humbly confident and conſtant, as they would thrive in their ſpiritual condition, and maintain their peace.

LECTURE IV.

Ver. 10. *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.*

BEfore John comes particularly to the viſion he ſaw, he inſiſteth on ſome particular circumſtances, that make way to the more full faith and credit of the viſion and ſtory that followeth: and though they be only circumſtances in themſelves; yet they are profitable, and conducing to the main end he hath before him. We heard of the firſt and ſecond circumſtance, *how* and *where* John was, when he got this viſion.

Followeth, in ver. 10. the third and fourth circumſtance; that is, the day when he got this viſion, and the frame he was in; *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day.* The words, in the original, are, *I was in the Spirit on that Lord's day*, pointing out a day ſingularly, and a day that in a particular and ſpecial manner is called *his day*, beſide any other day, that Dominic day, or day which is the Lord's.

That we may have acceſs to the uſe, we ſhall ſpeak a little to theſe two: 1. What particular day this is, ſeeing there is no mention made what day it is, more than this, that it is called *the Lord's day.* 2. What it is *to be in the Spirit* on this day.

For clearing of the firſt of theſe two, ye would conſider, that there is but one other phraſe in ſcripture like this, and it is ſpoken of the Lord's ſupper, 1 Cor. xi. 20. *This is not to eat the Lord's ſupper.* They that know the original, know alſo this phraſe to be ſingular, like this of the Lord's day, ἐν τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ, and 1 Corinth. xi. 20. κυριακὸν δεῖπνον, which is oppoſed unto, and contradiſtinguiſhed from, τὸ ἴδιον δεῖπνον: which was not ſet apart from other ſuppers, and common uſe, as this was: and theſe two, being by one particular phraſe expreſſed, we muſt expound the one by the other. Now, the Lord's ſupper, is called ſo, for three reaſons; for which alſo, we conceive this day to be called the Lord's day. 1. The Lord's ſupper, becauſe of the Lord's ſingular inſtituting that bread and wine for a ſpecial and religious end, diſtinguiſhing, differencing, and ſetting it apart from a common uſe, to a more ſpecial uſe: and ſo, this day is called the Lord's day, becauſe of the Lord's ſeparating and ſetting apart this day for his ſpecial ſervice and worſhip; and in that, diſtinguiſhing it from other days, as he had done that ſupper from common ſuppers. 2. The Lord's ſupper, for its ſpecial ſignification, Jeſus Chriſt and his benefits being eſpecially ſet out in it, his death

and ſufferings pointed at, and the benefits we have thereby. So this day is called the Lord's day, becauſe it is of ſpecial ſignification, pointing out, not ſo much God's ceaſing from the work of creation, as our Lord's ceaſing from the work of redemption. As the Lord's ſupper is for the remembrance of his death till he come again; ſo is this day for remembering the work of redemption, and his reſurrection, till he come again. 3. The Lord's ſupper, becauſe of its ſpecial end, to ſet out the honour of the Mediator, and the worſhip and ordinances brought in by him under the New Teſtament; ſo to diſtinguiſh it from the paſſover. So this day is called the Lord's day, for the ſame reaſon, to ſet out the honour of the Mediator, and that it may be enrolled among the ordinances of the New Teſtament. Therefore, when in the New Teſtament, ought is called the Lord's, it points ordinarily at Chriſt the Mediator, and at the ſecond perſon of the Godhead, as 1 Cor. viii. 6. *one God*, diſtinguiſhed from *one Lord*. We take it then for granted, that it is called the Lord's day, for theſe reaſons; 1. Becauſe it is a ſpecial day, ſet apart for the Lord's uſe, of ſpecial ſignification, and for a ſpecial end. And, 2. That it is a ſpecial day, known to the church, may appear; for elſe John would not have given it ſuch a denomination; and that it points at ſomething of Chriſt, and ſo is ſeparated from any Jewiſh day, and common day. It is a day known ſingularly to relate to Chriſt. To clear it, conſider, it muſt either be the firſt day of the week, or ſome other; but none other day it is. *Ergo*, &c. if any other, it can be ſuppoſed only one of theſe two: either, not any particular day of the week, but any ſpecial day or time of Chriſt's appearing or manifeſting himſelf; or elſe the Jewiſh Sabbath day, Now, neither of theſe can be meant by the Lord's day. 1. Not the former; for, ſuch a day of Chriſt's ſpecial appearing not being named here, it would leave the church in an uncertainty to know what day was meaned; yet is this day mentioned, to point it out from other days; that is the ſcope why it is ſo deſigned. Beſide, if it were any ſuch day, it would point at no one day, for there are many times of Chriſt's appearing. It is not ſo to be underſtood then, tho' even ſo our Lord's appearing may agree to the firſt day of the week, whereon moſt frequently he appeared after his reſurrection to his diſciples, as Mat. xxviii. John xx. 26. Acts i. 2. 2. Neither the latter, viz. the Jewiſh Sabbath day. 1. Becauſe it is ever called the Sabbath, and gets the name it formerly had: and the giving of it this name, will more obſcure than clear the day. 2. Becauſe the Jewiſh Sabbaths were then annulled, as Col. ii. 16. *Let none judge you in meat or drink, or in reſpect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days;* therefore then can they not be called the Lord's day. And Gal. iv. 10. they are reproved for obſerving days, and months, and times, and years, where it is clear, the Jewiſh new moons, ſabbaths, and feſtivities, were then, and before that time aboliſhed, in ſo far as peculiar to them, though all diſtinction of days was not taken away, more than all diſtinctions of the elements in the Lord's ſupper, from other meat; becauſe diſtinction of meat was condemned there alſo: but this followeth, all Jewiſh diſtinction, both of meat and days, was taken away, but what is ſtill aſſigned by Chriſt, that continues. 3. The Lord's day, in the phraſe of the New Teſtament, looks to Chriſt, as having its name ſome way from him, which cannot be ſaid of the Jewiſh Sabbath: but this is called the Lord's day, as pointing at an ordinance of the New Teſtament, whereas the Jewiſh Sabbaths had a reſpect to the Old Teſtament ordinances. 3. It remaineth therefore, it muſt be the firſt day of the week, becauſe no other day can lay claim to it: it is that day, which we call Sunday, or, the Chriſtian Sabbath; and was in the primitive times called the Lord's day. 1. Becauſe the reaſons why a day is called the Lord's day, do agree to it eſpecially. The Jewiſh Sabbath was called the Lord's day, Exod. xx. 8. becauſe on it he ceaſed from the works of creation: this day is called the Lord's day, becauſe on it he ceaſed from the work of redemption, Mark xvi. 1, 2. Luke xxiv. 1, 2. John xx. 1. It is that day whereon our Lord not only roſe, but ſeveral times did meet with his diſciples: and many mark ſeveral privileges and benefits conferred on this day, as the pouring out of the Holy Ghoſt, Acts ii. and more reaſons might be given, whereby this day is ſingularly beyond others to be called his. 2. Becauſe this firſt day of the week, and no other, was ſet apart for the Lord's worſhip and ſervice, as diſtinguiſhed from other days. And John's end here, is to fix on a particular day, known to them, and ſo eſteemed of among them, as ſuch a day. That it was ſet apart for the Lord and his wor-

ſhip, is clear not only from places we have named, but from Acts xx. 7. *Upon the firſt day of the week, when the diſciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his ſpeech until midnight:* which intimates not only a meeting, but a cuſtom of meeting, and that for preaching, prayer, and celebration of the Lord's Supper; ſo 1 Cor. xvi. 2. *Upon the firſt day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in ſtore, as God hath proſpered him:* and in ver. 1. he tells, concerning the collection for the ſaints, he had given the ſame order to the churches of Galatia. If it be aſked, Why doth Paul point at the firſt day of the week, and bids give themſelves to charity that day? Here it is, Becauſe that day was dedicated to God's ſervice and worſhip, whereof charity was a pendicle: and, as we hinted, this was not peculiar to one church, as Corinth, but was common to all the churches. The like order was in all the churches of Galatia: and it doth not point at Paul's inſtituting a day; but at his ſuppoſing of it to be inſtituted, and at his enjoining of a poſitive duty of charity meet for that day. And it is obſervable, that though the ſaints had meetings on other days, yet it is never ſaid, they did meet the ſecond, third, or fourth day, &c. but on the firſt. Which cetainly is done to ſhew a peculiarneſs in that day, and the meetings on it. Yea, few or none deny this denomination to ſignify the firſt day on this account, it being ſo clear from antiquity, and no other day being here to compete with it, and that can lay ſuch claim to this denomination, as this day doth, and was by the moſt antient ſtill ſo named.

For the ſecond thing to be cleared: What it is *to be in the Spirit on the Lord's day? To be in the Spirit*, is, 1. To be ſpiritual, to have the habits of grace, and a new nature: and thus it taketh in the ordinary walk of believers, Gal. v. 16, 25. 2. More eſpecially, it is for theſe who are habitually in the Spirit, to be actually, and in a more eminent meaſure in the Spirit, as Eph. v. 18. *to be filled with the Spirit*, to be in a holy rapture and extaſy, is warranted and allowed to believers in a more ſpecial frame; and, at more ſpecial times, to be in a ſpiritualneſs, abſtracted from carnalneſs, and lawful things, more than ordinary. 3. It is to be in the Spirit in an extrordinary manner and meaſure, or to be in an extraordinary rapture, the Spirit revealing ſomething extraordinarily: and this is to be in the Spirit, in a ſenſe different from the former, albeit conſiſting with them. We cannot ſeclude any of theſe in this place; for John was regenerated, and was habitually ſpiritual and gracious; but we eſpecially include the laſt two: as if he ſaid, Though I was abſent from company and Chriſtian fellowſhip, and had not a congregation to preach to on the Lord's day; yet I was in the Spirit, exerciſing the habits of grace, and I was in an eminent, ſpiritual and holy frame; the Spirit elevating my Spirit: which is that ſpoken of, Iſa. lviii. 13. *If thou call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, &c.* And the Lord taketh him in this ſpiritual frame, and ſtrain, and raviſheth him in the ſpirit. And from the ſecond ſtep he brings him up to the third, to be in Spirit as an extraordinary prophet, as we take Peter to have been, Acts x. when he went up to pray, that is, to the ſecond ſtep, and fell in a trance, and ſaw heaven opened, which is the third. We think the ſame hath been John's caſe here.

The words give occaſion to ſpeak of ſeveral doctrines. As, 1. The good that is to be gotten on the Lord's day, when folks are in a ſpiritual frame. 2. That when folks are ſeparated from the public ordinances, they would be making it up in private, by giving themſelves to ſpiritual exerciſes. 3. And that God not only can, but doth make up the good to be gotten by the public, by private and ſecret fellowſhip with himſelf, when believers in him are baniſhed from, or denuded of the public ordinances. But not to inſiſt on theſe, they give occaſion to ſpeak a little of theſe three things. 1. The inſtitution of the Lord's day. 2. The name that the Lord's day gets. 3. Of the ſanctification of it, or of a ſpecial part, wherein the ſanctification of it conſiſts.

For the firſt, viz. for the inſtitution of this day: ſeveral arguments are here, or, we may argue ſeveral ways to prove it. 1. If in the apoſtles time this day was ſet apart for the Lord's worſhip and ſervice, and in a ſpecial manner called his, as being kept to him on a moral ground; then we have warrant, and it is our duty to keep it for the ſame end and uſe: for the practice of extraordinary men, grounded on moral and perpetual reaſons, and that were not peculiar to them as extraordinary, but are common to them and us; (as the grounds and reaſons of the ſetting apart this day are, it being for the remembrance of his reſurrec-

tion, and the bringing in of a new world; and therefore all did, from the beginning, keep that day) are binding to us, as is clear. But the first day of the week was appointed to be the Lord's day, in the apostles times; and singled out and set apart for his service on a moral ground, for no ground peculiar to them can be given: therefore certainly it must be our duty to keep it. 2. If the first day of the week was singled out from other days, and counted the Lord's day, then there behoved to be an institution for it, or a supposed institution; that is, it must be the Lord's day, either because he instituted it, when he spoke many things to his apostles after his resurrection, concerning the right ordering of his house and worship; and by his practice, observed and sanctified it for his special service; or because these, that were infallibly guided and led by his Spirit, instituted and gave warrant to keep it: for, without an institution and command, it is not to be kept, or named so, more than another day; but this first day was in practice, singled out beside all other days, and is accounted the Lord's in a special manner, as is said; therefore there must be some institution of it. 3. Comparing this text with 1 Cor. xi. 20. if the first day of the week be the Lord's day, as the sacrament of the supper is the Lord's supper, then it must be, by his appointment and institution, his; but so the phrase in both places is to be understood. *Ergo*. By comparing these two places, the peculiarness of the phrase is such, that (there being no other phrase like them in scripture) it seemeth the Holy Ghost warrants us to gather the reasons of this denomination of the one from the other, though the institution of this day be not so clearly expressed, as the institution of the Lord's supper. For it is a received rule for expounding scripture, to expound more dark places, by places that are more full and clear: and therefore conclude we, that the Lord's day is to be called the Lord's, because of its institution, tho' we know not where; because, for the same reason, the supper is called his, there being no other solid ground to conclude upon: and they who give reasons to the contrary, must make it appear, that there are other reasons more pregnant, or else the language of the Holy Ghost must have weight with us. 4. This first day is the Lord's, as the seventh day is called his, or any other thing in the Old Testament; but that is ever because of his setting apart that day, or that thing for his own, from others of that kind; therefore it must be so here.

There are some exceptions made by some worthy men, which we shall speak a word to. As, 1. if it be so, it will follow that all days are not alike, contrary to Rom. xiv. 14. Gal. iv. 10. Col. ii. 16. where the scripture seems to say plainly, that all days are alike: therefore the Lord's day cannot be so understood. *Answ.* This doth indeed directly contradict the letter of the text: for either this text pointeth at one day by another, or else it doth nothing. 2. The apostle's scope in the places that seem to be contrary to this, is clear: when he casts the Jewish Sabbath and holy days, he casts them alike in respect of Jewish observation only; or, in so far as they were Jewish and typical: for, Christ had taken them away in that respect, even as he casteth meats also, yet without prejudice of the sacraments: and this confirmeth our argument. For if Jewish days and Sabbaths were taken away forty years and more, as is clear by Paul, before John wrote this Revelation, in as far as they were Jewish, and yet John speaks of a Lord's day, as differenced from other days, it says it continued when they were abolished. There is a great odds betwixt laying aside of Jewish days, and the Lord's day; and when John speaks of the Lord's day, he speaks of it in the singular number, in opposition to those many days the Jews had under the ceremonial law. And even that learned doctor granteth this place to speak of the first day, and the church's practice to meet on it also, and, in several respects, to be privileged beyond other days.

A second exception is, If this day be so counted of, it will bring in the sanctifying of it, in as eminent a measure, as the Jews Sabbath was. And, is not that to judaize? *Answ.* Distinguish betwixt things ceremonial or typical, and things moral and perpetual: we bring back nothing that was ceremonial and typical, as their Sabbaths of weeks, sacrafices, and many other things were; but for moral duties, they become us as well as the Jews, and bind Christians to the end of the world. And this brings not back Judaism, neither leads us to sacrifices, and the like, which pointed at Christ to come; but, contrarily, this day, and the duties of it, hold out Christ already come: which destroyeth all these ceremonies and sacrifices, and declareth them to be gone.

A third exception, It cannot be compared with the Lord's ſupper; for, 1. The Lord's ſupper is clearly inſtituted; but this is not clear in the inſtitution thereof. 2. The Lord's ſupper is a ſacrament; this is not: and days may be changed, as ſacraments cannot. *Anſw.* 1. To the laſt part: It is a begging of the queſtion: if it be the Lord's day, ſet apart for his ſervice, all the world cannot change it, except he, who can change ſacraments alſo. 2. To the firſt part: that the inſtitution of this day is not ſo clear, as the inſtitution of the ſupper. *Anſw.* We do not parallel them in reſpect of clearneſs of inſtitution; but, in reſpect of the ground, or reaſon why they get this name: which ſuppoſes an inſtitution. If the ſacrament of the ſupper, be called the Lord's ſupper, becauſe inſtituted by him, for a ſpecial uſe; ſo muſt the Lord's day get this name on this reaſon; or ſome better or clearer reaſon from ſcripture muſt be given.

For the ſecond, Seeing it gets this name, to be called the Lord's day: it may be queſtioned here concerning our manner of ſpeaking of days, calling the Lord's day Sunday, the next day after it Monday, &c. which hath the firſt riſe from ſuperſtition, if not from idolatry; ſome of them being attributed to planets, as Sunday and Monday; ſome of them to idols, as Thurſday, &c. But, to ſpeak to the thing itſelf, look to the primitive times, we will find Sunday called the Lord's day; and the days of the week, by the firſt, ſecond, third, &c. But the names of days, being like the names of places and months, folks muſt ſpeak of them, as they are in uſe, and ſcripture warrants us ſo to do, Acts xvii. 22. Paul is ſaid to ſtand in the midſt of Mars-hill. Acts xxviii. 11. ſpeaketh of a ſhip, whoſe ſign was Caſtor and Pollux. So, March, January, July and Auguſt, are from the idols Mars and Janus; or, derived from men that appropriate more than ordinary to themſelves. And though it was ordinary to Chriſtians, in the primitive times, to call this day the Lord's day among themſelves; yet, when they had dealing with the Jews, they called it the Sabbath; and when they had dealing with the heathen, they called it Sunday. And ſo, though it be beſt to ſpeak of days as ſcripture nameth them; yet, it is agreeable with ſcripture, to deſign or denominate them, as they are in uſe among a people, eſpecially where no ſuperſtitious uſe is in naming of them.

For the third, The ſanctification of this day. It is pointed out in John his ſaying, he was in the Spirit on the Lord's day: to point out this, that this day requireth a ſpecial ſanctification and ſetting apart to worſhip God. And there are four ſteps of it mentioned in the ſcripture. The 1. Is negative abſtinence, not only from ſin, but from our civil and ordinary affairs, which are lawful on other days, but not on this day, Iſaiah lviii. 13. The 2. Is poſitive: in devoting it to God, and ſpending the whole day in duties of worſhip, in reading, hearing, praying, ſinging, breaking of bread, or celebrating the communion, Acts xx. 7. And that, not only in private duties, but in public: and in private, when the public is interrupted, except in caſes of neceſſity. 3. It ſhould be ſpent in the duties of charity: though the ſanctification of this day cannot conſiſt with working; yet, it may ſtand well with giving of alms, and ſeeing to the neceſſities of others, 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. A fourth ſtep, is, in the text, to have a holy and ſanctified frame, a divine ſtamp, a heavenly converſation, more than ordinarily taken up with God and Chriſt, and the things of another life that day. This is the main thing wherein the Sabbath is to be ſanctified, wherein it repreſents heaven, to be abſtracted from the world, and to be living above in our ſpirits, eminently raviſhed in ſpirit, as abſtracted from things we are to be taken up with on other days. The frame of a Sabbath ſhould be a kind of raviſhment, wherein not only we are not taken up with working our ordinary callings, but we do go about prayer and other ſpiritual duties in a more heavenly way, than on other days, and that with a difference in our frame, being more elevated and ſpiritual, we ſhould be other men, in more divine contemplation. This is the main thing called for in ſanctifying the Sabbath: and therefore, Heb. iv. heaven is ſet out by the Sabbath: wherein there ought not only to be a ceaſing from our own works, but an entering into our reſt, Heb. iv. 10. as it is Iſaiah lviii. 13. a delighting in God, calling the Sabbath our delight, the holy of the Lord, and honourable, the heart being taken up with it.

Remember from all that hath been ſaid, this day is the Lord's day: and it ſaith that folks ſhould ſpend it, not as they like, but for him, and about the duties of his ſervice. It is not the ſanc-

tifying of the Sabbath to ſpend an hour or two in public, and the reſt of it in our own diſcourſes, pleaſing and delightſome to ourſelves. All days are God's; but he hath given you ſix, and reſerved the ſeventh to himſelf. Ye ſhould be with him in the Spirit on the Lord's day: which is the main uſe of all that hath been ſaid.

LECTURE V.

Ver. 10. *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,* 11. *Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the firſt and the laſt: and, what thou ſeeſt, write in a book, and ſend it unto the ſeven churches which are in Aſia; unto Epheſus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.*

JOHN hath in the verſes before, and in the beginning of this, put by the particular circumſtances relating to this viſion, we ſhall ſay no more of them. We come to the viſion itſelf, in the reſt of the chapter, with ſome circumſtances, making way to John's writing of what he ſaw.

We comprehend, under the viſion, not only what is objected to the eye, or what John ſaw: but all that he ſees or hears, whereby ſome new thing is repreſented to John, or that which he had heard or ſeen before, is again more clearly revealed, and made known to him, as it uſed to be in the extraordinary prophets, having God's mind, ſeveral ways, manifeſted to them.

This part of the viſion hath three ſteps, 1*ſt*, What John heard, from the midſt of ver. 10. to verſe 12. 2*dly*, What he did, verſe 12. And, 3*dly*, Followeth that which he ſaw, to verſe 17. The reſt of the chapter, from verſe 17. hath ſome following effects and circumſtances, to clear the viſion, and John's writing of it.

That which John heard, is three ways deſcribed. 1. In the nature of the voice, which he heard. 2. From the place where, or the manner or way how he heard it; *the voice ſpake behind him.* 3. The particular matter that was ſpoken.

Firſt, The nature of the voice which he heard, is ſet out with two words. 1. It is called a great voice. 2. It was a voice, as of a trumpet, or, like a trumpet.

1. A great voice, that is, a mighty ſound, a voice that made a great noiſe, as afterwards, ver. 15. *His voice was as the ſound of many waters*, like the tumbling down of a great river over a high fall or precipice.

2. It was a *voice, as of a trumpet*; that is, 1. Not a confuſed or inarticulate ſound, but a ſtately voice, having a kind of majeſty with it. 2. *Like a trumpet*, giving a certain and diſtinct ſound. And, 3. *Like a trumpet*, to ſtir up John to attention, to give him an alarm, to ſet him on his watch and guard, to obſerve what he ſaw and heard. And it imports theſe four things, which might be ſo many grounds of doctrine: 1. The majeſty of the perſon who was ſpeaking to John, that John may come to take him up; it is to ſhew that it was no common perſon, but our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that is ſtately in his coming: and this is the firſt thing that folks ſhould have, when they come to hear the word, they ſhould be affected with the majeſty of him who ſpeaketh, and conſider it is his voice, *who ſhakes the heaven and the earth, that makes the hinds to calve*, Pſal. xxix. 2. It is to point out to John the great diſtance between him and the perſon that ſpeaketh to him, and ſo to humble him, and to affect him with a humbling and kindly ſenſe of his own infirmity. And theſe two go together, viz. an impreſſion of the ſtateline's and majeſty of God, who ſpeaks, and an humble ſenſe of infirmity in the creature. See it in Abraham, Gen. xviii. 17. *Behold now, I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the Lord, who am but duſt and aſhes.* And, verſe 25. *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* And they are alſo joined, Eccleſ. v. 1, 2. *Keep thy foot, when thou goeſt into the houſe of God: God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: let thy words be few.* 3. It is to put John to an holy attention to hear, and to be watchful in hearing what he was to ſay to him: the trumpet ſoundeth, that he may be the better taken heed to when he ſpeaks. And this is alſo a good property of hearers, when, as it is, Acts x. 33. we can ſay, with Cornelius, *We are all here preſent before God, to hear whatſoever things are commanded thee of*

God; to be in a humble watchful posture, having the heart laid open to whatsoever God will say; hanging on him as the phrase is, Luke xix. 48. 4. The sound of the trumpet, is not only to waken to attention, but to put to action: it gives, not only a distinct sound for direction, but it puts to doing; to point at the nature of our Lord's voice, and how it ought to be heard. It is not enough to hear; but there would be a suitableness to the voice heard, according as the trumpet sounds distinctly. Folks should hear suitably, and welcome what is said, and conform their practice thereto, taking with convictions, challenges, directions to duties, promises, &c. as the word giveth them. Therefore the preaching of the word is compared to the sounding of a trumpet, Isaiah lviii. 1. *Lift up thy voice like a trumpet;* that is, powerfully and distinctly: and, as it supposes something on the minister's side, that he would have his voice trumpet-like, so it supposes something on the side of the hearers, that they would conform their practice suitably to it, as soldiers prepare themselves at the sound of a trumpet, 1 Cor. xiv. 8.

The second circumstance, is, The place where, or the manner how he heard the voice; it spoke *behind him;* it came not as before John; but as it were unawares, surprizing him behind him, 1. The more to affect John with the sound, and to make him inquire in it: for the more surprising a thing be, it affects the more, and wakens up the more desire to inquire in it. 2. That our Lord may even try John how he will carry himself in following the inquiry of the voice; and so to put John to pains to find it out. Therefore, Isa. xxx. 21. it is said, *Thou shalt hear a voice behind thee;* partly, to signify that our backs are on God, when he speaks, we are running away from him; partly, to stir us up to turn our face about, as it were, to, and to inquire after what is spoken.

Ver. 11. The third thing is, The matter spoken: and it contains two things: 1. A description of the speaker, his title and name, *I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last;* the last two words are an exposition of the former two. 2. The commission John gets, and the direction given him: 1*st*, Generally, to write what he saw. And, 2*dly*, More particularly, to send it to the seven churches. For this title, we spoke of it before, ver. 8.

It is our Lord asserting his own Godhead, as being the first, the beginning of all the creation of God actively, being of himself God essential, and giving a beginning and being to all things that exist, John i. 3. *All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made, that was made;* and the last end of all things; not only everlasting himself, without end; but to whose honour are all things that have a beginning: he is the ultimate end; they are all for him.

Quest. *Why is this title so often repeated?*

Answ. Besides this general, that it is to hold out Christ's Godhead: Therefore, this and other such like titles, are so often given him in this book: which is of excellent use and benefit, to have this born in upon the hearts and minds of sinners. It is repeated here: 1. That John might know from whom he had this commission: even from him, who had power to give him a commission both to speak and to write; *the first and the last;* a thing that concerns ministers to know when they come out to preach the word, whose commission they have, that they take not this honour to themselves, nor from men, except in the ordinary way appointed by him: for except they have Christ's warrant, man's will not commissionate them to go to churches and preach at their own hands. 2. It is also for the people's cause, to learn them to take the word of John's hand. It is not John's word that cometh to them, but the word of *Alpha and Omega, the first and the last:* and it were good for us so to speak; and good for you so to hear the word. That same Jesus Christ, that gave John and the apostles warrant to preach and write, it is the same Jesus Christ, that sendeth out pastors and teachers to preach; it is he that gives gifts to men for edifying the body, Eph. iv. 12. His warrant to both is one; and his authority, commissionating both, is one; and both are gifts for the church's good.

The second thing in this verse, is, the commission John gets. 1. In general, to write what he saw. 2. More particularly, to send it to the seven churches.

1. *Write what thou seest;* that is, not this vision only, which thou hast seen, but all the words and circumstances which thou hast seen, or shall see and hear: and so it is his first warrant to write this Revelation, and send it to the churches: it points at the authority on which the written word

is founded; it depends not on men, but on Jeſus Chriſt, that gives warrant to write; and we ſhould look on the Bible, and every chapter thereof, as by Chriſt's direction written to us.

2. The matter he ſhould write is reſtricted; write not every thing that pleaſeth thee, but what thou ſeeſt: to point out the guiding and inſpiration of the Spirit in theſe holy men, who were penmen of the ſcripture; they ſpake and wrote as they were inſpired and guided by the Holy Ghoſt.

3. It ſhews, that there is need, and it is requiſite, that men have a particular commiſſion to carry the word to the people; not only a commiſſion in general, to write, or to carry the goſpel; but for every particular meſſage. Not that men ſhould be anxious, or perplexed, about their warrant, or commiſſion, in an extraordinary way; but to weigh well the time, place, perſons, and ſuch circumſtances as may clear their commiſſion in an ordinary way, there being ſome things to be written and ſent to one church by Chriſt's warrant, which are not ſo to another; every church hath a particular meſſage and commiſſion renewed.

2. More particularly, what he ſhould do with it, when it is written in a book: *Send it to the ſeven churches;* that is, John, this Revelation is not to ly beſide thee; but it is for the benefit of the church: *ſend it therefore to the ſeven churches in Aſia.* 1. Becauſe moſt famous in that time, and becauſe near to Patmos where he was; and becauſe it is probable John had ſome particular relation to them; and their need preſently required it. This book of the Revelation is ſent for the benefit of the church: and therefore ought to be welcomed thankfully, as a rich jewel.

We ſhewed before, why theſe churches were called ſeven, and not the church in Aſia, ver. 4. and ſay no more of it now. Theſe churches are particularly named. We ſhall not ſtand on a geographical deſcription of the places. Epheſus is ſpoken of at large, Acts xix. 20. This church and Smyrna, were in that part of Aſia the Leſs, called Ionia; Pergamos in that part, called Aetolia; Thyatira, Sardis, and Philadelphia, in Lydia; and Laodicea in that part, called Caira, or Caria: which not being profitable to you to inſiſt upon, we ſhall take ſome general conſiderations from the words, and ſo proceed

And, 1. It would be conſidered why theſe churches are deſigned from the name of the cities wherein they were. We rather ſpeak a word to this: becauſe we find churches in the New Teſtament named by towns. It is true, churches in Galatia are alſo named; but moſt frequently they are named by cities, as the church at Jeruſalem, the church at Rome, the church at Corinth, &c; and Titus is to ordain elders in every city; by Paul's appointment: which was for the city; and it is like alſo, for the edification of theſe about, God making the goſpel ſpread from cities to countries about, as it is ſaid; the word ſpread from Epheſus to all Aſia, although there were other churches beſide theſe, that were within the walls of theſe towns. The reaſons of this, we conceive to be, 1. Becauſe the cities, or towns, were moſt famous for their populouſneſs, and were well furniſhed with officers: and there was moſt occaſion of getting a harveſt of ſouls in them, by ſpreading the net of the goſpel among them, in reſpect of which accidental and politic conſiderations, which belong not to the eſſence of a church, ſome cities being more famous and able to keep the word of truth, and make it forthcoming to other churches. It is not unagreeable to ſcripture, to have particular reſpect to cities, and churches in them, as they may further the work of the goſpel. 2. Becauſe in theſe great cities, and places of concourſe, the miniſters and officers of the church, who ſerved in the work of the Lord, and went round in a circuit in the churches about, had their moſt ordinary reſidence, as it would ſeem, and that their fixed, collegiate meetings and combinations were there. 1. Becauſe we find no particular congregations mentioned, but only the church at ſuch a town written unto, though there was many particular congregations about; and theſe cities kept not the word within themſelves. 2. Where they are mentioned, as the church at Jeruſalem, it taketh in not only theſe within the walls, but all the churches in Judea: ſo Corinth takes in Cenchrea, &c.

2. Conſider thoſe churches as once given to idolatry: Epheſus was famous, or rather infamous for that, Acts xix. yet now Chriſt eſteems them all churches, beſtows an epiſtle upon them, holding out, 1. His love. 2. The power of his grace and goſpel. 3. The ſovereignty and freeneſs of his grace, breaking in on the kingdom of ſin and Satan amongſt them; and that Chriſt can win in churches to himſelf out of the moſt prophane

Heathenish and idolatrous cities and people.

3. Consider these cities are respected by Christ: and it is not because they are cities, but because they are churches; that which makes them to be preferred before others is the churches in them: and this is it that maketh places carry respect with Jesus Christ, more than all the glancing victories and glory of the world.

4. Consider them, as they are some of them more, some of them less, yet none of them are called less or more churches. Ephesus, where were many thousands, is but a church, as Smyrna, and other lesser towns are: the reason is, the scripture goes not upon multitude, and external considerations of that kind; but upon the unity that is among ministers, and officers, which is not astricted to one particular congregation: and where it is, it makes an union among many, as amongst few; and amongst few, as amongst many.

5. Consider, that the number of these churches is according to the places where they were fixed, and where the members did inhabit: which shews, that parochial marches by bounds or towns in convenient lying, is not unsuitable, but consonant to scripture: wherefore the church of Ephesus, or, of any certain place, includeth all the professors living there; they are accounted of that church, and no other, as providence hath put them together: and the churches are divided as they live sundry. No indweller of Ephesus is accounted of the church of Smyrna, or contrarily; order in this being well consistent with the gospel: and as we will not find mention made in scripture of two churches in one place, whatever the number be, save when they are after subdivided, as 1 Cor. xiv. so we will not find any saint spoken of, as belonging to any congregation, but as they dwell: and the church at such a place, and saints of such a place, are still taken to be of a like extent.

6. Consider, some of them were more corrupt, others of them were more pure; yet he writes an epistle to them all: some hath a name that they are living, when they are dead; some are fallen from their first love; some have in them those that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans; some are lukewarm, &c. yet they are all of them owned as churches, and written to: 1. Because our Lord looks on them, as having that which made them to have the essence of visible churches: and in so far, he gives them the name, though many defects were in them: and therefore entitles them so. He stands not to give Laodicea the title of a church to him, which many, it may be, would scarcely count worthy the name of Christians. 2. Because our Lord's way is not at first to give up with churches, and persons, who are joined to him in church-relations, but to press upon them to be forthcoming to their obligations: he says not, ye are no churches; but reckons them churches: and, on that ground, founds his promises, threatenings and directions; and gives them reproofs for what is wrong, and his advice to amend the same: an excellent way of dealing, to have churches answerable to their obligation, and not to cast them off. Rejection is the last thing used, when neither threatenings, promises, reproofs, nor directions have place to do them good. And we may say it on the by, it is Christ's prerogative to remove candlesticks, and dissolve ties between him and churches.

7. Consider, these churches, as they are now, comparing them with what they were once: golden candlesticks; now dens for Mahomet; the Godhead of Christ, once written of to them, now trampled on. Which shews, 1. How doleful a thing it is to despise warnings. 2. To what a height churches defection may come to: when there is not a healing in time; when falling from the first love is not taken heed to, it may come to make a church no church. These churches were once as glorious as ever Glasgow was, and more, Paul writing to sundry of them, and here John to them all; yet, for contempt of the gospel, God breaks the staves of beauty and bands, and they are no churches to him. Tremble to think upon it.

8. Consider, that John now in prison writes: the thurch is obliged to John's imprisonment. We now have more writings by the apostles epistles from their prisons, than we have from their liberty, God making this good use of man's malice.

9. He repeats his commission, not only in general, but to every church, as their peculiar message was, that he might bear out his commission in his dealing with them; and that they might know the warrant they had to hear him. Neither ministers ought to speak, or people to hear, except they be warranted: there is an unwarrantableness in hearing, as there is in speaking, Prov. xix. 27. And people would make conscience in hearing, that it be not done indifferently; and there would not be indifferent access for all to preach, nor for hearing, but as the Lord warrants.

LECTURE VI.

Ver. 12. *And I turned to ſee the voice that ſpake with me. And being turned, I ſaw ſeven golden candleſticks.*

13. *And in the midſt of the ſeven candleſticks, one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.*

14. *His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as ſnow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire.*

15. *And his feet like unto fine braſs, as if they burned in a furnace:*———

THE ſecond circumſtance, or ſtep, of the firſt part of the viſion, is what John did, ver. 12. or his carriage when he heard the voice, ſpoken of before, ver. 10. *I turned to ſee the voice that ſpake:* a voice is not properly the object of ſight; but it is two ways to be underſtood. 1. Either John turned him, that is, gave pains more clearly to perceive and underſtand that which was ſpoken: for ſeeing in ſcripture, is often ſo taken, for a more clear uptaking and underſtanding of a thing: and ſo the meaning is, John having heard the voice behind him, he lends to his ear to take it up better. Or, 2. It may look to John's deſire, to ſee him that ſpoke: and ſo he turned, not to ſee the voice; but the ſpeaker: and on the back of this, the heavenly viſion is repreſented to him. *And being turned, I ſaw ſeven golden candleſticks.* Follows what John ſaw upon his turning about; he gets this viſion. Folks that go about the uſe of the means ſeriouſly, minding edification, they readily profit.

Let us ſpeak to that which properly is the viſion. It holds out, or, there are holden forth in it, three things: 1. The church is holden out under the ſimilitude of a candleſtick; or, the ſeven churches of Aſia, under the ſimilitude of ſeven golden candleſticks: ſo they are expounded, ver. 20. 2. The miniſters of the churches are holden out under the ſimilitude of ſeven ſtars, ver. 16. ſo are they expounded in ver. 20. alſo. We ſhall forbear any further expoſition, or ſpeaking of them, till we come to that place. The main thing in the viſion is our Lord Jeſus, repreſented theſe ways. 1*ſt*, In his offices. 2*dly*, In his excellent qualifications for his diſcharging theſe offices. 3*dly*, In his care of his churches, and actual executing of his offices, and exerciſing of his qualifications for the good of his churches and miniſters: he is among the one walking, and holding the other in his hand; and hath a ſword going out of his mouth for the good of both.

Queſt. 1. *Whether is it Chriſt that appears and ſpeaks here, or not?* The reaſon of the doubt is from ver. 1. where it is ſaid, *Jeſus Chriſt ſent and ſignified theſe things by his angel.*

Anſ. It is he that appears and ſpeaks here to John, who gave him the commiſſion to write; and certainly, it was no angel that gave John commiſſion to write, and ſend it to the ſeven churches; but it is Jeſus Chriſt, who entitles himſelf before, to be *the firſt and the laſt:* no angel can give commiſſion, nor dare take upon him theſe titles and ſtyles, but Jeſus Chriſt only. 2. It is clear alſo to be Chriſt, from the parts of the deſcription, and from the particular charge that Chriſt is holden out to have, viz. in having a care of the churches, in holding the ſtars in his hand, and ſending a ſword out of his mouth. Who can do theſe things but Chriſt? 3. From the ſeven epiſtles, which begin with ſome part of this deſcription, as belonging to him: he is ſtyled ſome part of it, chap. ii. and iii.

Queſt. 2. *Whether doth Jeſus Chriſt appear here really in his manhood? or, Is it only a repreſentation of him in a viſion, for ſignifying and holding forth the excellent properties and qualifications that are in him, as ſometime God appeared of old to weak man, condeſcending to his capacity for his comfort, as Dan.* vii. 9. *and ſometime Chriſt, as Dan.* x. 5. *to which this viſion ſeemeth to relate?*

Anſ. We take it not for any real apparition of Chriſt in his humanity, or as he was man conceived in and born of the virgin Mary, crucified, dead and buried, and in that nature riſen again and aſcended; but we take it only to be a repreſentation or viſion of the glorious properties and qualifications, and ſtately majeſty of the Son of God, who was, and is, and is to come, the firſt and the laſt: who, as he is God, ſo alſo was, and is man; but doth not now appear in his human

nature, but as God. *Reaſon.* 1. Becauſe in ſubſtance it is the ſame viſion that we find, Dan. vii. 9. and x. 5. where God, and Chriſt, as God, are holden out under the ſame expreſſions: and if theſe expreſſions can be applied in theſe places to ſignify the parts of a human body, (which God hath not, for he is a ſpirit) there can be no reaſon why the ſame expreſſions here ſhould be applied to the parts of a body. 2. It is clear alſo, if we look to the end, which Jeſus Chriſt hath before him in this repreſentation: he being to direct ſeven epiſtles to the ſeven churches in Aſia, he ſets out himſelf by ſome excellent properties, to ground the faith of his people, and move them to reverence, receive, and give obedience to what he writes unto them. 3. Look through all this viſion, it cannot be applied literally: the ſeven churches cannot be ſeven candleſticks; the ſeven miniſters cannot be ſeven ſtars, &c. but it is to evidence the excellent qualifications that are in Chriſt under theſe repreſentations: and therefore what ſome would draw from this, or other repreſentations of this kind, concerning Chriſt's body on earth, or the ubiquity of his humanity, or bodily preſence with his churches; or, for protracting of his body, (as Winckelmanus, and other Lutherans alledged) hath no ground from this place, but rather the juſt contrary. If Chriſt appeared after his aſcenſion, no otherwiſe than he did before his incarnation, he would take away all carnal thoughts of his bodily preſence on earth. 4. It is ſaid, *One like unto the Son of man*: and this holds out he was not indeed man in this viſion, but appeared to John, as he did to Daniel, ſome way repreſenting himſelf ſo. But, 5. The application and expoſition of many of theſe expreſſions, chap. ii. and iii. holding forth his eyes, to ſignify his omniſcience, and the like, will ſhew the abſurdity of this. But, to come to the three parts of the deſcription, more particularly; wherein, as we ſaid, 1. We have his offices and authority. 2. His qualifications for executing theſe offices. 3. His care of his churches, and his actual executing of his offices, and exerciſing of his qualifications for the good of them, and his miniſters.

Firſt, His offices and authority are repreſented; his kingly, prieſtly and princely offices, under his garments; his prophetical office, by the ſword that proceedeth out of his mouth.

Long garments were eſpecially uſed by two ſorts of perſons, kings and prieſts, Ex. xxviii. 29. Aaron, the high-prieſt, and his ſons, have holy garments appointed them; and the high-prieſt was to have a long robe curiouſly ſewed and embroidered: ſo alſo, long garments were for a ſign of authority and reverence, and Chriſt caſt that up to the Scribes and Phariſees, Mat. xxiii. 5. Mark xii. 38. And Chriſt was clothed with a purple robe, which was a ſpecial robe, deſigning great men from others, though they did it in deriſion to him.

He is 'girt about the paps with a golden girdle.' A girdle hath two uſes, 1. It was uſed for neating the long robe, for binding it up, that it might not be cumberſome to men in their employment, Luke xvii. 8. *Gird thyſelf, and ſerve me.* 2. A golden girdle ſignifieth authority and eminence; ſo the girdles of kings ſignified, Iſaiah xxii. 21. when Eliakim is conſtituted a ruler, it is ſaid, 'I will clothe 'him with thy robe, and ſtrengthen him with thy 'girdle;' and what is meant by that is expounded in the following words, 'I will commit the govern-'ment into his hand, and he ſhall be a father to the 'inhabitants of Jeruſalem, and to the houſe of Ju-'dah, and I will lay the key of the houſe of David 'upon his ſhoulder: he ſhall open, and none ſhall 'ſhut, &c.' This girdle of Chriſt is ſpoken of, Iſa. xi. 5. 'Righteouſneſs ſhall be the girdle of his 'loins, and faithfulneſs the girdle of his reins'.

The expreſſion holdeth out theſe three things, which we conceive to be underſtood by it. 1. The authority and warrantableneſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt's kingly and princely office, as that which followeth, doth of his prophetical office: hereby letting us know, that our Lord Jeſus' being in heaven, and in glory, hath not made him lay by his offices or the executing of them; but he remains king and prieſt for ever, Pſalm cx. even in heaven he bears his offices to his churches. 2. That our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, not only bears theſe offices, but in an excellent and glorious manner: there is no ſuch king, no ſuch prieſt, no ſuch prophet as he: ſo that whatſoever belongs to any of his offices, or any part of any of them, he would have his people looking to him as eminent therein. He is a King ruling in righteouſneſs, ſtately in majeſty and dominion; a Prieſt that 'continueth for ever, 'and hath an unchangeable prieſthood; and is able 'to ſave all them, to the uttermoſt, that come unto 'God by him, ſeeing he lives for ever to make inter-'ceſſion for them:' and, 'ſuch an high-prieſt becomes

'us, who is holy, and harmleſs, undefiled, ſeparated 'from ſinners, and made higher than the heavens,' Heb. vii. 24, 25, 26. he is a prophet, ſuch as hath no equal; none teacheth like him. Therefore it becometh us not only, not to have low thoughts of Chriſt, as bearing thoſe offices, but to think of him as being eminent and glorious in them, and all that concerns them. 3. It holds out, that our Lord Jeſus' ſtatelineſs and glory doth not mar nor hinder him in the application of his offices, and executing them for the good of his church: but, for as ſtately as he is for authority, having on his long robe, and being girded with a golden girdle; yet his garment is ſo truced and girded, as he is fitted for his employment, and to make uſe of his offices for the benefit of ſouls, (ſee John xiii. 3.) as ever he did when he was on earth. Chriſt's greatneſs and glory is ſo far from unfitting him for the diſcharge of his offices, that he hath robes compacted, and himſelf ſo fitted, as he may handſomely go about the diſcharge of them, being ſtill girded, though the girdle be of gold.

The ſecond part of the deſcription, verſe 14. is his qualifications for his offices, ſet out under the particular parts of a body, 'Firſt, His head and his 'hair were like wool:' this would not agree to Chriſt's manhood in all appearance, he not having come to that age at which men uſe to become white-haired. It is an application of, or an alluſion to that of Dan. vii. 9. if not taken out of it. And the reaſon of the alluſion is, to ſet out, 1. The eternity of Chriſt's Godhead: that though he was, and is man, yet, before the world was, he was, and is the eternal God, without beginning; that whiteneſs of the hair, being ſpoken of God, to ſet out his eternity. He is not from yeſterday, as poor creatures are, but from everlaſting, though his eternity maketh no change nor alteration on him, as age doth on men. 2. It ſets out our Lord Jeſus' wiſdom and experience, and the reverence that is due to him: he is ſet out as one having gray hairs, being eminently endued with wiſdom and experience, as old men uſe to be in compariſon of others, and as theſe of younger years uſually are not. Therefore, Dan. vii. 9. he is called 'the Antient 'of Days,' which expounds his appearing with white hairs; Iſaiah xi. 2. 'The Spirit of the Lord 'reſts upon him, the ſpirit of wiſdom and under-'ſtanding, the ſpirit of counſel and might, the 'ſpirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord.'

The ſecond part of this qualification is in his eyes; *his eyes were as a flame of fire.* He is alſo thus ſet forth, Dan. x. 6. Theſe eyes point out the omniſcience of Chriſt, who, as God, ſees every thing: and they are ſaid to be *as a flame of fire*, partly, becauſe of their piercing nature; that as all things are naked before him and bare, ſo he ſees thoroughly, in through and out through them all. All things are lying open, and, as it were, embowelled before his eyes, Heb. iv. and, partly, becauſe of the dreadfulneſs and terribleneſs that will ariſe from his omniſcience to the wicked of the world: his, and his church's enemies, nothing will be more terrible to them, nor a glance of Chriſt's eye, whereby he can deſtroy worlds of them, as when he looked down on Sodom and Gomorrah, fire and brimſtone followed his eye, and deſtroyed them.

The third part of this deſcription is, ver. 15. *his feet is like unto fine braſs:* this is excellent braſs, glittering braſs, neareſt unto gold, as being ſome way mixed with it: and theſe *feet of braſs* point out not only his power, but eſpecially his ways, counſels, and diſpenſations toward his people in ordering of his churches; God's paths and ways being the manner of his guiding of the world. So Chriſt's feet do ſignify his ſteps up and down in his church, ordering all things well, wiſely, and holily to his glorious ends: and conſequently, his diſpenſations, whereby he makes his preſence manifeſt among his people. 2. Theſe *feet* are ſaid to be 'like unto fine braſs, as if they burned in a fur-'nace;' to point out, 1. That all his diſpenſations are pure and perfect. 2. Excellent and firm, ſolid and durable: there is no prevailing by the gates of hell againſt them. They are pure, ſpotleſs and clean; no iniquity is in them, Deut. xxxii. 4. *He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth, and without iniquity, juſt and right is he.* We think this to be the meaning here: his ways in his church, his ſtepping up and down in it, are pure and ſpotleſs, firm and ſolid; all on-lookers cannot mark a ſpot in them; they cannot be mended, or bettered, nor hindered, he ſo ſickerly ſets them down. It ſerves to hold forth the ſtatelineſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and to bring our hearts to a holy awe and reverence of him. O that folks knew what he were, they would walk in more awe and reverence before and with him, who is ſuch a ſtately perſon,

love, reverence, and admire Jesus: there is no such stately and lovely person in the world: submit to him, he will do no wrong. Contend not with him, for on he will go, so sickerly sets he down his steps, like pillars of brass. The reasons of these expositions will appear more in the inscriptions of the epistles, chap. ii. and iii.

LECTURE VII.

Ver. 15.——*And his voice as the sound of many waters.*
16. *And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.*

I Told you, that this vision doth not represent the body of our Lord Jesus, or his human nature; but it is to point out his divine qualifications, wherewith he was furnished as God-man in one person, for the good of his church. And these things spoken of, as parts of a body, bear out some resemblance and analogy of these qualifications that are in him, far beyond any thing that can be conceived.

The fourth property or qualification is, *his voice*, which is said to be *as the sound of many waters*. It was said, in ver. 10. to be *a great voice like a trumpet;* here it is said to be *like the sound of many waters*, both high and great, heard afar off, and very terrible and dreadful. By *his voice*, in scripture, is understood mainly two things; both which may well relate to this resemblance. 1. His effectual willing and commanding of things to be, as it is said, 'He spoke, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.' Gen. i. 'Let there be light, 'and it was light:' for Christ, as God, hath not a voice properly; but the voice, being that by which a man signifies his command and will, and being here attributed to Christ, as God, is to point out his effectual willing and bringing that forth which he would have done; and so points at the effectualness of Christ's government. There is nothing called for by him, but it comes to pass; nothing commanded, but is done, and that with a word. 2. It is taken for the manifestation of God's terribleness and majesty, Psal. xviii. 13. *The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice: hail-stones and coals of fire.* In which sense it is applied to the thunder: because by it he manifests his power, and shews himself terrible. Hence there is so much spoken of his voice, Psalm xxix. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. *The voice of the Lord, &c.* To shew not only the powerful effects of the voice of God in the thunder, and the way it produceth its effects, but the terribleness and majesty of God who hath such a voice, that, as it is Hag. ii. 6. *can shake heaven and earth:* which is to point out his dreadfulness and terribleness against the enemies of his church. If he speaks the word, they evanish: one word of this King will make the stoutest tyrants to quake, as is clear from scripture, and the story of former times.

A fifth qualification is, verse 16. *He had in his right-hand seven stars.* The seven stars are expounded, in the last verse, to be the ministers of the churches. And the reasons of it we forbear till we come to that: only here our Lord Jesus is said to have a *right-hand*, i. e. power, and skill, and activity in exercising his power: for the right-hand is the strongest hand, and that by which men skilfully and dexterously go about the bringing to pass of that which they would be at. He hath not power and fury, but power and skill; and with power and skill he manages all his matters. Believers have not a handless mediator, to speak so; he hath hands as well as feet. But more of this in the third thing, contained in this description.

Sixthly, He is described further, *Out of his mouth went a two-edged sword:* whereby is meaned the word of God, especially the gospel. His voice, spoken of before, is more general, relating to his universal power and sovereignty over all the world: this relates more particularly to the written and preached word, called *the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, Eph.* vi. and *sharper than a two-edged sword, dividing betwixt the joints and the marrow*, the soul and the spirit, *and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*, Heb. iv. The word is compared to a sword, and a *two edged sword*, for these reasons, 1. Because of the power of it; it hath a discerning, piercing, penetrating power with it, to come in on hearts, and to discover the thoughts and intents of the heart; when Christ blesseth it, and maketh

it ſtrike at the roots of corruption, it will humble the proudeſt heart, and quicken the deadeſt ſpirit, and pierce through the ſoul and conſcience of the moſt obdured perſon, as Acts ii. Peter's preaching did prick his hearers. This is the ſaving and proper effect of the word, when it anatomizes folks, and layeth open their thoughts, their ſecurity, pride, formality, &c. and ſtrikes at the root of the body of death, to kill it, and be its death. 2. Becauſe of the effect it hath among carnal hearers and hypocrites: in which reſpect we think it is eſpecially looked on here, as afterwards in the epiſtle to Pergamos, chap. ii. 12, 16. *I will fight againſt them with the ſword of my mouth.* This ſword when rightly handled, proves a torture to the wicked men in the world, when it diſcovers their rottenneſs; ſo it is ſaid of the two faithful witneſſes, Rev. xi. 10. that they *tormented them that dwelt on the earth;* the word of God was ſo ſharp in their mouths that it did hew (Hoſ. vi. 3.) their minds and conſciences, and galled them at the heart; ſo, Acts vii. it is ſaid, Stephen's hearers were *cut in their heart, and gnaſhed upon him with their teeth;* they could not abide the plainneſs and evidence of the word accompanied with power. 3. Becauſe it hath a further cutting virtue to wicked men, when it proves through God's juſtice, plaguing to their hearts and minds; and hath an inſtrumental efficacy for their ſlaying, when God draws out the ſentence, and gives the word an edge, and makes it cut, and, in his juſtice, to prove their deſtruction, Iſaiah xi. 4. *With the breath of his lips he ſhall ſlay the wicked,* 1 *Kings* xix. 17. *Him that eſcapeth the ſword of Jehu, ſhall Eliſha ſlay:* and Hoſ. vi. 5. *I hewed them by my prophets, and ſlew them by the words of my mouth;* through God's pronouncing of ſharp threatenings, and their corruption abuſing the threatenings, it becomes their death. 2. This *ſword* is ſaid to proceed *out of his mouth;* to point out wherefrom the force, efficacy, and power of the word cometh, when it pierceth. It is not the word, as it is written or ſpoken by men's mouth; but as it proceedeth out of Chriſt's mouth, which makes it profitable or convincing: and it is this which makes ſinners guilt ſo great, and tormenteth hypocrites, when he addeth weight with it, to thwart their corruption, and they repine againſt it.

The laſt qualification is, *his countenance was as the ſun ſhining in his ſtrength.* Whereby is meant the love that he ſheweth to his people, and the glory and majeſty that is in himſelf, Pſalm iv. 6. *Lord lift up the light of thy countenance upon us,* that is, the manifeſtation of thy love. And Pſalm lxxx. the cauſing of his face to ſhine is ſeveral times ſpoken of. And this favour and ſtately majeſty in Chriſt, is compared to the ſun ſhining, not as in the morning, nor at even, nor under a cloud, but in his ſtrength: 1. Becauſe of the glorious majeſty that is in it, as chap. v. 15. of the Song, *His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.* There is an excellency and beauty in it that dazzles and obſcures all the excellency and beauty of the world, even as the light of the ſun obſcures the ſtars. 2. Becauſe of the lightſomeneſs of it: for Chriſt is to believers as the ſun is to the world, John i. 9. *He is that true light, that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world.* Light, both for direction and conſolation: and that is a third reaſon of the ſimilitude. *His countenance is as the ſun ſhining in his ſtrength,* for the refreſhingneſs of it, Pſal. iv. 6, 7. His countenance maketh the heart more glad than corn and wine, and worldly comforts whatſoever. 4. His countenance is ſo compared, from the effectual influence it hath on believers growth; even as the ſun hath influence on the growing of corn, graſs, trees, herbs, and all things in the inferior world: ſo Chriſt's countenance hath influence on believers growth in all things. Therefore, Mal. iv. 2. it is ſaid, *The Sun of righteouſneſs ſhall ariſe, with healing under his wings, to ſuch as fear his name; and they ſhall go forth, and grow up as calves in the ſtall.* His preſence and favour hath a real and effectual influence on all that are united to him, as the ſun, in his ſtrength, hath on herbs and plants. We point but at theſe things which are infinite in themſelves. O that neceſſity of union with Chriſt! O the excellency of that condition of being near to him! He is our light: there is no living without him; and how lightſome is it to walk with him, and to dwell in him?

The third thing in the deſcription is, Chriſt's actual exerciſing of his offices and qualifications for the good of his churches and miniſters (which are the objects about which his care is eſpecially exerciſed) holden out in theſe two. 1. He walks *among the golden candleſticks.* And, 2. *He keeps the ſtars in his right-hand;* that is his work and great employment, as verſe 13, 16. and chap. ii. 1.

1. His walking among the golden candleſticks points out, 1. His ſpecial preſence in his church: though he be omnipreſent through all the world, yet he hath a ſpecial manifeſtation of his preſence in his church: and there is a ſpecial relation between him and them, as it is ſpoken of Iſrael, Pſ. cxlvii. 19. compared with Deut. iv. 7. *What nation is there ſo great that hath God ſo near them in all things? &c.* He is near to his church in a ſingular manner, in the ſpecial effects of his preſence. 2. It points out his ſpecial care of his church: he chuſeth his church as the pleaſanteſt place in all the world to walk in; and he taketh pleaſure there, as in his garden and gallery. His common providence is extended to all the world; but he taketh ſpecial notice, and hath a ſpecial care of his church above all the world, Iſa. xxvii. 3. *I, the Lord, do keep it; I will water it every moment, leſt any hurt it; I will keep it night and day.* See Iſa. xliii. 3, 4. 3. It points out his ſpecial taking notice of, and obſerving the carriage of his church and of all within the ſame: he knoweth all the world, and the thoughts, words, and actions of every one, all projects, counſels and events, before they come; but, in a ſpecial manner, he taketh notice of all his church, now the work of grace thriveth in his people; what fruit his ordinances have among them, who are making progreſs, who are backſliding, what is the particular poſture of every ſoul; to ſned off luxuriant branches, to purge out what is corrupt, to help forward what is right, to prevent any prejudice may come unto them, to forſee and provide for any thing, as it may be for their good. Which ſhews, 1. What a great benefit it is to be a member of this church: if it be a mercy to be under his ſpecial and ſingular care, it muſt be no ſmall priviledge and benefit to be a member of his church. 2. It letteth us ſee what manner of perſons we ought to be, who have Chriſt's preſence ſo near us, nearer than all the world beſide: whenever we are in the ordinances, we would take up Chriſt as walking among the midſt of us; and in all our converſation, apprehend him at our ear. It both calls for holineſs from us, and layeth watchfulneſs on us, knowing how narrowly he taketh notice of us. 3. It points out how unexcuſable the faults and failings of thoſe who live in the church are. Chriſt walks among them; and yet they ſtand not in awe of him: the ſigns of his preſence are always with them, and yet they take no notice of them: the nearer the ſigns of his preſence, and ſpecial care be, the greater is our ſin, if it have not influence on us. 4. It points at Chriſt's tenderneſs and care, for the comfort of them that dare not truſt themſelves, but commit themſelves to him, and truſt to his care and tenderneſs. He ſeeth well to all his churches, and every particular perſon's condition, and is never from them: his being in heaven, hath not made him to lay by his care of his people. This were a great conſolation, if we would ſingly make uſe of it. Matth. xxviii. *Lo, I am with you to the end of the world;* and he keeps his promiſe.

The other word, his *holding the ſtars in his right-hand*, holds out his care of his miniſters: the meaning is, that as he walks in the midſt of the churches, and takes ſpecial care of them; ſo he takes a ſpecial care of the miniſters of theſe ſeven churches, and ſo of the miniſters of all the churches. And under this is holden out, 1. The difficulty of the miniſters ſtation: they are not able to ſtand there alone, except they be upholden by Chriſt: partly becauſe of the malice and oppoſition of men, and devils, that, by wicked men, ſeek to ruin and overturn the church and work of God in their hands; the venting of their malice begins at them; and, partly, becauſe of the greatneſs of the burden and charge that lies on them: and, partly alſo, from their own infirmities, &c. 2. It points out the Lord's ſpecial care of them, according to their ſtation, ſtrait, and charge: as their charge is great, and their difficulties great and many; ſo he exerciſes his power for their direction, defence and protection: he hath care of all the world; but more eſpecially of his churches: but for his church's ſake, he hath, moſt of all, a ſpecial care of his miniſters, who are called the meſſengers of the churches and the glory of Chriſt, 1 Cor. viii. they being the men that he makes uſe of for the handling of his ſword, and ſubduing of ſouls to him, they often meet with little eſtimation from men, and walk among many ſnares and dangers: therefore he holds out his care and the application of his power, eſpecially to encourage and ſtrengthen them to duty in the midſt of theſe ſnares and difficulties. 3. By *his holding them in his right hand*, he points at that dependency that miniſters ought to have on Jeſus Chriſt: they ſhould go about their duty, as in his hand, lippening to his ſtrength and power, rather than

ought in themſelves, for the performing of the taſk committed to them.

1. This is for ſpecial conſolation in evil times, that Chriſt hath ſuch a care of his miniſters and churches. Let the devil pluck again and again to have a miniſtry down, ſometimes by force, ſometimes by ſlight, it will not be; they are ſtars, and in Chriſt's hand: ſooner will ſtars be plucked from heaven, than they from him.

2. Chriſt's care of his church, kythes in caring for his miniſters: the right care of the one is carried along with the right care of the other; and it is not a right care of churches, where there is not a reſpect to miniſters: Chriſt knoweth the good and the ill of the one, ſtands and falls with the good and ill of the other; there is ſuch a connection betwixt them, and ſuch a ſibneſs, they are ſo intereſted the one in the other, that according as the one is, ſo is the other: ordinarily, if the miniſter be carnal and ſecure, ſo is the flock; and if the miniſter be in a lively temper, there will alſo be ſome life among the flock. And if we ſpeak in reference to thoſe who have enmity at the church, hatred againſt the church is vented, and beginning at hatred againſt the miniſtry. It is impoſſible to be careful of Chriſt's church, and deſpiſe and hate his miniſters, or overturn a miniſtry.

3. It ſhews that there is a reſpect due to them that Chriſt puts in this place; and where Chriſt hath put reſpect, it becometh us to put reſpect alſo. There ſhould be a ſympathy with them, and a reverencing of them, if it were for no more but for this cauſe, that he *keeps them in his right-hand:* reſpect to him ſhould make reſpect to them. It is a ſtrange religion, to profeſs reſpect to churches and ſaints, and ſhew ſo little to miniſters; Chriſt did never ſo.

LECTURE VIII.

Ver. 17. *And when I ſaw him, I fell at his feet as dead: and he laid his right-hand upon me, ſaying unto me, Fear not; I am the firſt and the laſt.*

18. *I am he that liveth and was dead: and behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen.*———

YE have heard of this viſion which John ſaw: the Lord beginneth with it at the entry of this taſk of writing this book of the Revelation, to imprint on him a ſtamp and impreſſion of his own excellency, as a preparation and fitting of him for the work; even as he began with Iſaiah, chap. vi. and with Ezekiel, chap. i. Bearing out, by theſe viſions, a repreſentation of his glory and majeſty, thereby to fit and qualify them for their duty: for they are fitteſt to bear God's meſſage, and to deſcribe him to others, that are thus prepared and qualified, and have ſome reverence and awe of God imprinted on their own hearts.

From ver. 17. and forward to the end, we have ſome conſequents that followed this viſion, or ſome circumſtances for the edification of the church, for clearing of the viſion before-mentioned, and for making way for John's writing of what he ſaw and they are four in number: 1. The effect which the viſion had on John in the beginning of ver. 17. for as ſtately and lovingly as Jeſus Chriſt repreſented himſelf, he could not bear it, but faints when he ſees him, and falls at his feet as dead. 2. A conſolation propoſed by our Lord to John, which hath ſeveral ſteps in the latter part of ver. 17. and 18. wherein as John kythed weakneſs, ſo Chriſt kythed much love, tenderneſs and ſkilfulneſs in applying an effectual remedy for curing the diſtemper John was in. 3. A repetition of John's commiſſion and warrant to write, ver. 19. And, 4. An explication of that part of the viſion, concerning the meaning of the ſeven golden candleſticks, and the ſtars ver. 20.

1. *And when I ſaw him, I fell down at his feet as dead;* this is the firſt conſequent or effect of the viſion. *I fell down as dead;* i. e. I was benummed, as it were, and dammiſhed with the ſight of the excellent majeſty and glory that I ſaw in him; and I was put out of capacity to act the acts of body or mind, as if I had been dead: I could no more exerciſe or act the acts of a living man, than a dead man can, as Daniel, chap. x. 8, 9. And it hath been often ſeen in the beſt of God's children, when more than ordinary repreſentations of God hath been let forth, they have become as dead men, unfit for action; and it proceeds from two grounds, 1. From the exceeding great diſtance that is betwixt the infinite majeſty of God

and finite creatures: the brightneſs of the glory, excellency, and majeſty of God the Creator, burdeneth and overburdeneth the weakneſs and infirmity of the beſt of creatures. For if the eyes of creatures be that weak, that they cannot look on the ſun, what wonder that fleſh and blood is not able to look on the Sun of Righteouſneſs. This new wine is too ſtrong for our old bottles. 2. From the fear of a begun quarrel, and grounds of a continued quarrel then apprehended, making not only a diſproportion, through infirmity, betwixt the majeſty of God and the creature, which is ſo many ways defective to comprehend him; but alſo making a diſconformity through ſin, and ſo a fear to appear before him, which makes the creature fear undoing, as in Iſa. vi. 5. *Wo is me, I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips; for mine eyes have ſeen the King, the Lord of hoſts.* For though, before the fall, when God and Adam were friends, he could have endured God to ſpeak to him, yet, after the fall, the appearance of God is terrible unto him: when he hears his voice he is afraid, and runs and hides himſelf. And there is ſomething of this fear that ſticketh to the beſt; a fear that riſeth from the ſight of ſin, which nearneſs to God doth diſcover. And it is like that ſomething of both theſe grounds were in John, as may be gathered from our Lord's application of the remedy, and the grounds whereupon he goes in comforting him, 'He layeth his hand on him, and 'ſtrengthens him and ſaith, Fear not, &c. Whereby it ſeemeth, 1. John conceived, from a diſtemper of mind, Chriſt would reckon with him, and with Peter, Luke v. 8. fears (as a ſinful and profane perſon in his own account) his being ſo near ſuch a glorious and holy Majeſty. And, 2. This diſtemper of mind kythes, and hath influence on his body, and maketh him fall down at his feet, not out of reverence to worſhip him; but being overſwayed with the exceſſiveneſs of fear, that maſtered and overcame him, he cannot ſtand up, but falleth down as dead.

1. This ſets out to us the great diſproportion that is betwixt creatures and the majeſty of God: the beloved diſciple, John, cannot ſtand before him when he kythes, but falleth down as dead, Iſa. xl. 15, 17. and xli. 11, 12, 24. All nations are as nothing before him, or as the duſt in the balance. A little nearneſs to God ſhould leave a ſtamp of humility, and an impreſſion of the majeſty and excellency of God upon us. This is one of the fountain graces, humility, and a holy awe of the majeſty of God: and this is the way to come to it, to get a right ſight of that excellent majeſty that is in him. 2. Reverence and admire God's wiſe and well-ordered governing of this world, eſpecially theſe things that concern his church and people. Wonder that God hath carved out ſuch a way in the works of creation and providence, and in the diſpenſation of the goſpel, and myſteries of ſalvation, ſuitable to our weakneſs; and ſo as there may be communion kept with him, Job xxvi. 9. It is made one of the ſtately ſteps of his power, that *he holdeth back the face of his throne, and ſpreadeth his cloud upon it:* he draweth the vail of the firmament before his throne, to keep his glory from breaking forth, and eating up men. And in the diſpenſation of the goſpel, he hath choſen the miniſtry of weak men, to reveal his mind by them to us; and ſpeaketh not immediately himſelf, becauſe we could not endure it. If ye heard him once ſpeak, as he did on mount Sinai, ye would ſay, as Iſrael did, *Let not God ſpeak to us, leſt we die.* And this way of revealing himſelf, ſhould be ſo far from making us caſt at it, that it ſhould make us wonder at his condeſcendency in hedging up of himſelf, as it were, for our good. 3. It lets us ſee how much we are in his reverence that deals ſo tenderly with us, when a little glimpſe of his glory, a looking of his eye, a drawing by of the vail would kill us, and make us as if we had never been. 4. It ſheweth us alſo, that humility and reverence, even in the beſt of God's people is often ready to degenerate into ſervile fear and diſcouragement. The worſhipping of Jeſus Chriſt in humble reverence, was a duty called for from John; yet this diſtemper of exceſſive fear was not called for. Such is our weakneſs, and the ſlipperineſs of our walking, that hardly can we keep the right path, but deviate to one ſide or other. Our faith is ready to degenerate into preſumption, and our humility to fainting and deſpondency of ſpirit, and our fear to diſcouragement, heartleſsneſs, and diſtruct; our corruption is ready to abuſe any thing: for though there be no exceſs in theſe graces, yet there may be in us exceſs in our way of exerciſing the ſame, by reaſon of the corruption which is in us.

The ſecond thing is, Chriſt's tender care of John under this fit; when he falls at his feet as

dead he comforts him: and this is set down in three steps. 1. *He laid his right hand upon him*, as a sign of his kindness, for his encouragement. 2. Giveth him a general word of exhortation for his comfort, *Fear not*. 3. He giveth him three general grounds why he should not fear, to support his faith. *Observe*, in general, our Lord Jesus' exceeding tenderness of folks, especially in their fits of fainting and discouragement, which ariseth thro' their mistaking, or wrong uptaking of him. 1*st*, It points at the exceeding tenderness and effectualness of his care, that, on the back of this fit, layeth on his hand and sayeth, *Fear not;* that taketh him at this nick of his distemper, and raiseth him. 2*dly*, What is the great ground of consolation that is proposed, it is a holding forth of himself, *I am the first and the last*. And it lets us see when folks scar at Christ, and discourage and faint through their mistaking of him, there is no such way of curing that distemper and mistake, as by a right uptaking of him. The note hath these two branches, 1. That the great ground of our mistaking of Christ, is our ignorance of him, in his offices and worth. 2. That the right curing of that mistake, is the right knowledge and uptaking of him. 3. It says this, That when souls are fainted and discouraged, Christ is both the cure and the curer: he must lay on his hand and speak the word: he is the cure that is applied, and the Physician that applieth it; he toucheth and speaketh, and the cure followeth. This also sheweth, 1. That there are some kind of bodily exercises that arise from a distemper of the mind, that so faints and weakneth the body, that none can cure but Christ; and this of discouragement and fainting is one. 2. It sheweth to believers their necessity of having the word out of Christ's mouth for their encouragement, ere they can shake off discouragement he hath gotten the tongue of the learned, to speak a word in season to the weary soul. If he were more waited on in ordinances, and if the word were taken as from his mouth, we should come better speed than we do, and profit more by the ordinances. 3. More particularly, *His right-hand*, is his power; and his laying it on John, is not any personal touch, but an inward strengthening and upstirring, as Daniel, Dan. x. 10. *Behold an hand toucheth me, which set me upon my knees*, i. e. some power for my strengthening and comfortable upstirring. And Ps. cxxxviii. 3. David saith, *In the days when I cried, thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul;* which is the communicating of inward strength, to keep him unsinking under the sad condition he was in. 1. It points out what our need is; our weakness and discouragement is often such, that we have need, not only of comfort, but of strength. 2. It points at Christ's way of dealing with souls, that will sometimes strengthen, ere he comfort: first lay on his hand, and then let the word of comfort, *Fear not*, come behind: he seeth this meet, and it is a main evidence of Christ's tenderness, faithfulness and wisdom, that takes this way with his people.

The second step of Christ's care, is, His saying, *Fear not:* a word that is often used and repeated in the prophets, especially, Isaiah xli. xliii. xliv. and lvi. chapters. *Observe* 1. There is an excessive fear that God alloweth not in his people: every thing that passeth for fear and humility should not be admitted. Christ saith to John, *Fear not;* which hath three marks from his experience. 1. It is a degenerating fear that breeds mistakes of Christ, and scares them at him; that weakens and faints them in their fellowship with him. Christ alloweth not John's fear to the marring of that. 2. It maketh folks uncapable of hearing or receiving a message from Christ, so that when he speaketh, they are benummed, senseless and dead, having ears, but hear not: and it locketh them so up, that no word taketh hold of them. Christ alloweth not this in John. 3. It disables, obstructs and marreth in the discharge of that duty that Christ calls to. When John is called to write the vision, he falleth *as dead:* therefore, Christ saith, *Fear not;* but rise up and write: thou art called to reverence and fear me; but to such a fear as may stand well with thy duty, and further thee, and doth not hinder thee in it. And we would learn not to fear, in so far as it works any of these effects. *Observe*, 2. When fear exceeds, degenerates, and groweth excessive in these three spoken of, our Lord alloweth it no more, than he doth proud security: only Jesus Christ is much more tender of souls under the one, nor he is under the other; yet let us not please ourselves in these excessive fits, as if we were in no hazard. *Obs.* 3. It saith, that folks would be tender in dealing with souls under such distempers, knowing there is a great difference betwixt these who are under carnal pre-

ſumption, and others under fainting.

The third ſtep of Chriſt's care, is, In giving John grounds of conſolation to warrant his faith: and they are three. The firſt is from his own Godhead, *I am the firſt and the laſt:* I am God that ſpeaks to thee; I was before the world, and will continue when the world ſhall be ended, the eternal God, a ſingular property of God, and a demonſtration of Chriſt's Godhead: therefore would he ſay, Thou needeſt not fear, John: I am not an enemy, nor a ſtranger, or terrible ſpirit, but God; and that may ſuſtain one in friendſhip with God: and it is alſo a proof, that the viſion before was a viſion of Chriſt, as God.

2. The ſecond ground is, The union of his Godhead and manhood, in one perſon, and his ſuffering in his manhood united to his Godhead, *I am he that liveth, and was dead: and behold, I am alive for ever more.* In the original, it is otherwiſe, and better for the underſtanding of the words, *I am the living, and I was made dead; and behold, I live for ever more. I am the living:* that is, I am the living God, who had life from all eternity of myſelf, and gave life to all creatures that have life, as it is ſaid, John v. 26. *As the Father hath life in himſelf; ſo hath he given to the Son to have life in himſelf.* And I that was, and is this living God, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, *was made dead;* that is I became man, was made of a woman, made under the law, Gal. iv. pointing out the true Mediator, God-man in one perſon. His taking on the nature of man, and ſatisfying the juſtice of God, in undergoing the wrath of his Father, and in ſubjecting himſelf to the death of the croſs for the ſins of his own elect, both natures are joined in one perſon; yet it was not as God that he died, tho' the perſon that was God died. *And, behold, I live for evermore, Amen.* In as far as I was once dead, as man, now I am alive, and ſhall live for evermore. And this laſt expreſſion hath two words put to it, to point out its excellency. 1. *Behold, I live,* pointing at his reſurrection, and the conſolation that flows from it to believers; I have overcome death, and live; and ſo I live, as I ſhall live for ever, for the benefit of believers in me. That is of ſpecial conſolation to us, our life being linked to Chriſt's life, who is God-man, and our Mediator: *Becauſe he lives, we ſhall live alſo,* John xiv. 19. His life is a pledge and pawn of ours. 2. *Amen,* or *Verily:* an aſſeveration to confirm the truth of this reſurrection, and to put all the world out of doubt of his living, not only as God, but as God and man in one perſon. Be aſſured ye have a living Chriſt.

The third ground is, *And I have the keys of hell and of death:* to point out his abſolute ſovereignty, as Mediator, in the ſtate of humiliation and exaltation: therefore, fear not, *John,* for *I have the keys of hell,* and ordereth even what concerns them. The *keys* are the ſign of government, Iſa. xxii. 21. It is ſpoken of Eliakim, a type of Chriſt, *I will commit the government into his hand:* and then follows, *The key of the houſe of David will I lay upon his ſhoulder.* The meaning is, I have abſolute ſovereignty and dominion over heaven and hell; I deliver and carry to heaven whom I pleaſe; none go there, but thoſe whom I take in: and hell prevaileth not at its own will, but is under my dominion: for I have ſupreme power over hell and death: not that Chriſt's dominion is limited to theſe; but, becauſe hell and death are the two things that believers fear moſt. He tells that they need not fear them; for they are both his vaſſals; the devil bears not the keys, but he bears them himſelf. Theſe are the grounds of conſolation that are given to John; and they are ſtrengthening grounds of faith and ſalvation to all believers.

Obſerve 1. Our Lord Jeſus is God; *the Firſt and the Laſt;* he that was born of the virgin Mary, and ſo a true man, is God; he that was crucified, dead and buried, is God. This is one of the articles of our faith: and this place of ſcripture is to be looked on as a proof of it, againſt all the moſt cavilling enemies of our Lord's deity: he that died, was, and is, the firſt and the laſt; and the incommunicable attributes of the Godhead agree to him.

2. This is propoſed as a ground of conſolation to John and all believers; and it hath a world of conſolation in it. as, 1. Not only that there is a God; but that our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is God; and that, notwithſtanding his being God, yet he hath loved ſinners ſo well, that he took on man's nature, and, in that nature, died for them; and that he who wooes ſinners, and offers to marry them, is God, and yet is very tender to them, and of them, which is no ſmall conſolation. And it ſheweth alſo, that he is faithful and powerful to perform his promiſe to believers: ſo there is not

a deſign of enemies laid from the beginning to this day, but he hath a hand beyond it. 2. That folks may expect good of God: ſeeing Chriſt is God, can believers look for hard dealing from him? He is abſolute in his ſovereignty and dominion, yet ſwaying it for the good of believers. What would folks have more for a ground of conſolation, in times of confuſion, than this? Let the world go as it will, our Lord Jeſus is God, and wiſely orders all. 3. It ſaith this, that folks, when their diſcouragements prevail, as they are ready to miſtake Chriſt, ſo they are ready to reflect on his Godhead, as if he were not faithful, or powerful, or wiſe, or tender enough. 4. The ſolid cure of fear and fainting, is, to be acquainted with Chriſt, as God: the ignorance of Chriſt is the ground of their being anxious, impatient, and dammiſhed with faithleſs fears, 1 John v. 4, 5.

From the ſecond ground, *I am living, and was dead.* *Obſerve*, 1. That this eternal Son of God became man, elſe he could not have died; he that was God, was alſo true man: and this is another ground of our faith, or a confirmation of an article of it. 2. That Jeſus Chriſt, in his manhood, ſatisfied juſtice: for he was dead; he laid down his life, and that willingly: *No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down, and take it up again.* 3. That Jeſus Chriſt is God and man, having two diſtinct natures in one perſon; for, in the one nature, he is *living*, and, in the other nature, he that was *living*, became *dead;* yet it is but one perſon, that was both living and dead: ſome things, as is ordinary, are attributed to the perſon, that agreed but to one of the natures; as, Acts xx. 28. God is ſaid to have purchaſed his church with his own blood: not that the Godhead could ſuffer, but he that was God, ſuffered; ſo of the man, Chriſt, it may be ſaid, that he is omnipotent, yet not as man, but the perſon that was, and is man, is omnipotent: ſo the perſon that is God died, tho' not as God, but in reſpect of his human nature, and as he was man. Theſe phraſes from Chriſt's own mouth do both clear and confirm our faith.

And behold, I am alive for evermore. Then, 1. Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who died once, ſhall die no more. 2. He who died out of love to his people, is riſen and exalted to heavenly glory and dignity, and bears the office of Mediator, for the conſolation of his people for evermore. 3. His exaltation maketh him no leſs mindful, nor leſs affectionate, and tender of believers in him: for John might have thought, that now there was a diſtance and dryneſs come in between Chriſt and him, eſpecially conſidered as God; but he tells John, he liveth for his comfort: and that he may expect, that he who gave life to all, and laid down his life for him, and other believers, would be tender of him, and of his life.

Which letteth us ſee, 1. That the price of believers redemption is paid. 2. That it is paid by a brother that had a human nature, and was like us in all things, except ſin. 3. That Chriſt, who is God, is alſo man; and that to put us in a capacity of living. 4. See here Chriſt's reſurrection and victory over death; ſo that the bargain is compleated and finiſhed: and, conſequently, that believers ſhall riſe and live for ever through him. Every word here is big with conſolation to us, if we know how to ſuck at it.

LECTURE IX.

Ver. 18.——*And have the keys of hell and of death.*

19. *Write the things which thou haſt ſeen and the things which are, and the things which ſhall be hereafter.*

20. *The myſtery of the ſeven ſtars which thou ſaweſt in my right hand, and the ſeven golden candleſticks. The ſeven ſtars are the angels of the ſeven churches: and the ſeven candleſticks which thou ſaweſt, are the ſeven churches.*

THE Lord is now comforting John, 1. From his natures or perſon. 2. From his dying and victory over death. 3. From his office, which, as Mediator, he executes; inſtanced eſpecially over hell and death, for theſe reaſons, 1. Becauſe hell and death were the laſt enemies Chriſt had to ſubdue, as if he had ſaid, I have gotten power over the greateſt enemies: and, conſequently, I have power over the reſt: and ſo it points at the greatneſs and univerſality of his power, as Media-

tor, he being made head over all things to the church, and having all things put under him, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth, and which are under the earth, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow. 2. For the comfort of his people; particularly, for the comfort of John, because now John was affrighted with the majesty of God, and the challenges of his own sinfulness, and was overcharged with fear: therefore Christ saith to him, Fear not hell nor death, John; for I *have the keys* of both, and can dispose so of them, as they shall not hurt thee; so guarding him and his people against fears and down-casting, which may flow from the apprehension of hell and death, which are the main things that the wakened person, cast down at Christ's feet, doth fear.

1. From our Lord's repeating these grounds of consolation for John's encouragement, in general, *Observe*, That when fear groweth excessive, and degenerates, even in these that should least mistake Jesus Christ, it is not easily removed; but will take one ground of encouragement and confirmation after another, ere the soul be erected. This is clear from the many arguments, and the repeating of them, to remove John's fear; for Christ doth nothing idly: so apprehensive and jealous is flesh, when the majesty of God kythes, and the sense of sin, and challenges for sin are weakened, and the creatures infirmity and weakness is discovered; and so strong is misbelief, that the souls of these who are most tenderly dealt with, (and readily none was more tenderly dealt with nor John, the beloved disciple, who lay in Christ's bosom) are hardly raised up to comfort and confidence. This flows, partly, from the proneness of our nature to mistake Christ, and sink into discouragement; and, partly, through our weakness and sinfulness; so that the worth of Christ gets no credit in the general, far less in our particular, at such a nick of time as this is, when discouragement prevaileth: a thing that experience teacheth, and that souls would walk in fear of, at such times, a temper like unto which we may see, Ps. lxxvii. 2. *My sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted.*

The second general, is this, That it is no great hazard for a discouraged soul to be laid at Christ's feet: it is a good posture, when a soul cannot bear the weight of a difficulty, to throw itself down before him. Christ is tender to these, and though souls sin in giving way to excessive fear, through the apprehension of wrath and guilt; yet, our Lord deals gently with them; when the reed is bruised, he will not break it; when the flax is but smoaking, he will not quench it; when the ewes are with young, he softly drives them, and carries the lambs in his bosom, and suits his tenderness in reference to them, Isa. xl. 11. If any be in such a condition, it were good to believe this: Christ's tenderness in such a case, when the soul is laid low, is abundantly clear in this one instance.

Thirdly, More particularly, *Observe*, 1. That believers may have apprehensions and fears of hell and death; or the fears of hell and death may seize and be excessive in them: therefore Christ guards against it, which otherwise were not needful.

Obs. 2. Much of this fear proceedeth from the ignorance of Christ's natures, person and offices, or from the ignorance of him in the administration of these his offices. Therefore, when he comes to comfort John, he holds out his offices, and lets him know that life and death are at his disposing. There is some secret mistake of Christ, and some strange mould of Christ in the mind, where excessive fear prevaileth: therefore it is often said, *Fear not, it is I, be not afraid:* and through the following epistles to the churches, he ever telleth what he is, with some property.

Observe, 3. That our Lord Jesus Christ, hath the obsolute guiding and administration of what concerns his people; yea, hath their greatest enemies at his command; he lets into hell and death, and keeps out whom he pleaseth; he gives orders in all.

Observe, 4. That there is no greater consolation to God's people in time of their fears of hell and death, than to know that our Lord Jesus hath the keys of both, and all in both, that devils will not win out of the pit, till he open the door, nor lengthen their chain one link, but as he lets it out, Rev. xx. 4, 14.

5. Lay all these together, what needs John fear? If evil spirits act by Christ's orders, and the most wicked in hell or earth cannot exceed their orders, what needs there be fears? seeing Christ keeps the keys of the devils house, and hath orders given, and employment carved out to them, as ac-

curately as he hath to men on earth, good or bad; for death and hell are his ſervants, and go not their own errands, but his; and therefore dare not exceed their commiſſion, yea, they muſt not, nor cannot, whatever malice they have in perſecuting his order: what ground then of fear is there? And ſo it may ſerve to comfort us againſt the evils of our outward and inward condition: there is nothing comes in church, or commonwealth, but as he orders it, who is faithful in all the houſe of God, as a Son. It were good if our meeting together had this fruit, to get the faith of his ſovereignty ſealed up in our hearts. If folks would chuſe a good friend, patron, or maſter, he is the party: ſtick to him, and fear nothing.

Ver. 19. Followeth the third thing, And it is ſome circumſtances that make way for John's writing what he ſaw, or our Lord's repeating and enlarging of John's commiſſion. This commiſſion is ſo often repeated to tell, 1. How punctual he would have John in keeping himſelf by his commiſſion, neither altering nor diminiſhing it, nor doing any thing leſs or more, but what he had commiſſion for. 2. To ſhew on what ground this word depends, and the authority of it: it is not to be accounted authentic, becauſe John wrote it ſimply, or becauſe the church accounts it ſo; but becauſe John, at Chriſt's command, wrote it; Chriſt will have the warrant and authority of his word diſcernible, and out of queſtion, eſpecially what is contained in this Revelation: we will not find the warrant of any ſo often repeated, as the warrant to write this. 4. It may be for this reaſon, John's former fainting and fagging might have made him forget his errand: therefore he will repeat it to him: to tell that diſcouraging and fainting muſt not mar folk in their duty: but they would always labour ſo to compoſe their ſpirits, as the duty they are called to, may not be neglected: and though they may be ſurpriſed with fear and fainting; yet they would up, and fall to work again. We may conſider the reaſons of this repetition more fully afterward.

That which he commands him to write, doth more accurately and diſtinctly divide this book, nor he did formerly, ver. 11. So that theſe words, are the compendious diviſion of the book and prophecy that followeth. And we take it to be a diviſion of it, in three ſorts of things. 1. The things which thou haſt ſeen. 2. The things which are. 3. The things which ſhall be hereafter; or otherwiſe, the firſt branch comprehendeth the ſecond alſo: and ſo it is divided in two.

1. *The things which thou haſt ſeen*, that is, the things that in thy time have happened, or fallen forth ſince the goſpel began, the hiſtory of the goſpel in its riſe and victories to this time: and we expound it thus, and do not refer it only to the particular viſion ſpoken of before, for two reaſons. 1. Becauſe, *Theſe things which thou haſt ſeen* hold forth the ſubject-matter of the book, as well *as the things which are*, and *the things which ſhall be hereafter*. And *the things which thou haſt ſeen*, are diſtinguiſhed from *the things which are*, and *the things which ſhall be hereafter:* they muſt therefore be of one ſort. And ſo, *the things which thou haſt ſeen*, relate to the time paſt; *the things which are*, to the time preſent, as *the things which ſhall be hereafter*, to the time to come. 2. Becauſe, comparing theſe words with ver. 11. we will find a clear difference: for in ver. 11. it is ſaid in the ſingular number, *what thou ſeeſt, write in a book and ſend it to the ſeven churches:* which looketh to the particular viſion, ſpoken of there, or the following viſions; looking on the Revelation, as one viſion with ſo many parts; but here, it is written, the thing in the plural; and *which thou haſt ſeen*, in the preterite time; that is write the things which are paſt, to diſtinguiſh them from things preſent and to come: and ſo we expound theſe things of the things paſt, from the riſe of the goſpel to this time, according to the ſcope of this prophecy.

2. *The things which are*, that is, the preſent eſtate of the churches, in the two following chapters: which holds forth the ſtate of theſe churches, as they were for the time.

3. *The things which ſhall be hereafter*, or, which muſt be hereafter, point at the ſtory and ſtate of the church from John's time to the ſecond coming of Chriſt: for, from the riſe and beginning of the church here, it ends not, till it bring the church militant to glory, and put the wicked in the bottomleſs pit, chap. xx. 22. I mark it, becauſe it ſerves to be a key to the reſt of the ſtory. And this diviſion ſheweth, 1. That we are not to ſeek in this book of the Revelation things that were before Chriſt's time, as ſome needleſly draw it to the four monarchies. 2. That the things contained in this book relate not to

a generation or two only; but to things falling out in the church to the end of the world: for, though ſome little things before Chriſt's time be hinted at in this book, yet they are not brought in as principal prophecies, but uſeful to expound theſe principal prophecies, as when Rome is ſpoken of, chap. xvii. and it is bypaſt governments, under the name of Babylon, that is brought in to clear what is meant by the whore which John ſaw.

Again, two things further are obſervable here, 1. Our Lord Jeſus his care and reſpect to his church, that will acquaint her with things paſt, preſent, and to come, for their comfort and edification. So well would he have them provided with leſſons, and guarded againſt all times, and whatever difficulties may come. 2. Being now to enter to the ſtory, which he is to write, he divides it ere he begin, both to make way for clearneſs in the thing, and for diſtinctneſs in the uptaking of it; to make it the more intelligible to them to whom he writeth, and to all that ſhould read it: he draweth it all up to three heads. And there is a profitable uſe to be made of this for men, in ſpeaking and writing, to be methodical and orderly: our Lord's way of writing is no friend to confuſion, nor enemy to order, if ſo be, order be made ſubſervient to edification, and not to curioſity; ſuch is Chriſt's order here; and to that ſcope doth that recapitulation ſerve, Heb. vi. 1. and viii. 1. And ſo are the writings of Paul often moſt exact in this.

Ver. 20. This verſe containeth an explication of the myſtery, ſpoken of before in the viſion, which John ſaw: at leaſt of ſo much of it, as is uſeful and needful to be known: as uſually he leaveth always ſomewhat at the back of the viſion, to be a key to open the reſt; ſo this ſerveth to open ſomewhat that is paſt; ſomething that is ſpoken in the ſeven epiſtles to the angels, and ſeveral times hereafter. There is ſomething to be ſupplied here, while he ſaith, *The myſtery of the ſeven ſtars which thou ſaweſt;* that is, I will ſhew thee, or I will tell thee the myſtery of the ſeven ſtars, &c. as he ſaith, Rev. xvii. 7. *I will tell thee the myſtery of the woman;* that is, I will let thee know what it meaneth; Jeſus Chriſt being the beſt interpreter of his own mind, condeſcendeth to open up ſo much of the myſtery as was uſeful and needful. 1. He expoundeth the ſtars: and then, 2. The candleſticks.

1. He expoundeth the ſtars: *the ſeven ſtars are the angels of the ſeven churches;* that is, the ſeven ſtars ſignify, mean, and repreſent the angels, or miniſters, or officers of the ſeven churches; for it is a thing ordinary, to call miniſters, angels, Mal. ii. 7. *The prieſts lips ſhould keep knowledge, and the people ſhould ſeek the law at his mouth: for he is the meſſenger of the Lord of hoſts.* In the original, it is, *For he is the angel of the Lord of hoſts.* So Judge ii. 1. it is ſaid *An angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim:* the word in the original is, *A meſſenger came up;* one particularly ſent for that errand. Miniſters are called angels, 1. For God's ſpecial employing them about his holy things beyond others. 2. Becauſe of that their ſanctified ſtation, to put them in mind, that they ſhould be in their converſation angelical. 3. To make them to be received as angels by others; that is, the dignity due to them. By angels here, is not meant ſome more eminent nor another in theſe churches, ſuch as the Lord-biſhop; but, by angels, we underſtand all the biſhops and preſbyters that were over theſe churches. 1. Becauſe when it is ſaid, *The ſeven ſtars are the angels of the ſeven churches,* it ſpeaketh of them indefinitely, whether they be more or fewer; and he ſaith not, they are the ſeven angels of the ſeven churches, as it ſaith, *The ſeven candleſticks are the ſeven churches;* but ſuppoſeth, that the number is not ſo exact in the one as in the other; for if the number of miniſters were definite, as of the churches, why ſhould the manner of ſpeech be different? Nor ſaith it, *the eminent angels of the ſeven churches;* but indefinitely, they *are the angels of the ſeven churches;* as Phil. i. he writeth to the biſhops and deacons, ſuppoſing a plurality of ſuch in one town, leſs than Epheſus, or others mentioned here. Therefore, 2. It is not to be expounded of one man, as if ſome one man in each of theſe churches had had the preeminence, becauſe our Lord writing to ſome of theſe churches, and directing the epiſtle to the angel, ſpeaketh of them as more; as when he writeth to Smyrna, chap. ii. verſe 10. he ſaith *Fear none of thoſe things which thou ſhalt ſuffer. Behold, the devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into priſon, that ye may be tried:* which muſt relate primarily, to the miniſters in Smyrna: and ſuppoſeth more miniſters than one; and that in directing the epiſtle to the angel of ſuch a church, he un-

derſtood the whole collective body of miniſters and church-officers, that afterward he diſtributes in more individual perſons. See the notes there, and on chap. ii. verſe 24. where the church in Thyatira is diſtributed in three, 1. In theſe, who are polluted members thereof. 2. In theſe, who were free of theſe pollutions called the reſt. 3. In the miniſters, who are ſtyled you, ὑμῖν δὲ, as diſtinct from the other two; yet all in the plural number.

3. What is then to be underſtood by angel of Epheſus, and ſo of the reſt, we may learn from Acts xx. 17. with 28. where Paul having the ſame buſineſs to do in the matter, in recommending the care of that church to ſome, for preventing ills which he foreſaw to be coming, he calleth not one, but the elders of the church of Epheſus; and giveth not to one, the charge or name of biſhop, but to all of them he committeth it. Therefore, ſeeing Paul comprehendeth all in his ſermon under that name ἐπισκόπους, verſe 28. (and would by writ, as well as word done it) we muſt ſo expound John to do alſo, though he writ in a more obſcure ſtyle, as beſt agreeth with this prophecy. For this argument is ſure, theſe that John wrote to, under the name of the angel of Epheſus, and ſo of other churches, are theſe who have the overſight of, and authority over theſe churches; but theſe are clear to be many elders or biſhops, Acts xx. *&c. ergo*, &c. Therefore take we the ſtyle, angel, to be collective, *i. e.* to the angels (ſeeing the ſtyle as alſo, the matter agreeth to all) or miniſters of a church: as ſuppoſe one were writing to ſuch a city, governed by a number of magiſtrates, in the Ariſtocratic government, might it not be directed to the magiſtrate of ſuch a city, and yet no particular perſon be pointed at, but the whole be collectively underſtood? and ſo we conceive it here. Even as by one beaſt, chapter xiii. &c. or head, chapter xvii. he doth expreſs a civil government, viz. of Rome, before it was Monarchic; ſo may he be underſtood to do, by the figurative title, angel here, though it be in the ſingular number; conſidering with all, that the things charged on this angel, or required of him, are ſuch as agree not to one, but to the collective body of church-officers together. Beſide, more miniſters there were than one in thoſe churches, that is certain. Either then they muſt be comprehended under the title of angel, or elſe taken in as contradiſtinguiſhed from them with the reſt of the church; but that will be found abſurd, that the church and her guides ſhould be ſome way contradiſtinguiſhed, and yet miniſters not to fall under that diſtinction: for, ſtars they muſt be, that is, angels, or candleſticks that is amongſt the people, as diſtinguiſhed from the ſtars; but the laſt cannot be. Therefore, of neceſſity, the firſt muſt be underſtood. We conceive, then, as by church, or candleſtick, is underſtood many profeſſors or churches (for under church here, ſuch who thus plead, will grant more particular churches to be comprehended: for, ſay they, they are Dioceſian churches) in an united way of worſhipping or government; ſo, by angel, many church-guides in an united way of governing may be underſtood. Miniſters are called ſtars, for theſe reaſons. 1. To ſignify and point out the eminence and dignity of the office, that it is a glorious and ſhining office. 2. To point out what is the ſpecial end of this office; it is to give light; as the uſe of ſtars is to give light to the world, ſo it is miniſters main employment to ſhine and give light to others, to make the world which is a dark night, to be lightſome. In which ſenſe Matth. v. 14. It is ſaid, *They are the light of the world.* 3. It is to ſignify, that they are but ſubſervient lights: our Lord Jeſus is the Sun of Righteouſneſs, that light, that great light, and miniſters are leſſer lights. 4. It is to point out the way how miniſters become lightſome. Stars receive their light from the ſun, and by virtue of that borrowed light are made lightſome; ſo miniſters are made lightſome, and ſhine, to give others light, by virtue of the light that they receive from Chriſt: they are lights, but their light is ſtar light, a borrowed light: and eclipſes betwixt Jeſus Chriſt and them will darken them, ſeeing they have no light but what they receive from him. This would learn miniſters and people a right uptaking of the nature of this office, and keep of contrary extremes, that both reſpectively are ſubject unto.

The ſecond part is expounded, *the ſeven candleſticks are the ſeven churches*, as before he expounded the ſeven ſtars to be the angels of the ſeven churches. The churches are called candleſticks, for theſe reaſons. 1. Becauſe the candleſtick is that which properly the light is ſet into: and it is fitted for receiving of light, though it have none of

its own; ſo the viſible church is that wherein Chriſt Jeſus ſets his lights, 1 Cor. xii. 28. *God hath ſet ſome in the church, firſt apoſtles, ſecondly prophets*, &c. The church is, as it were, the candleſtick to the candle, the proper ſeat of the apoſtles, prophets and miniſters after them. 2. Though the candleſtick give no light; yet it makes the light ſet on it to be the more uſeful to others, as Matth. v. 14. *Ye are the light of the world; a city ſet on a hill cannot be hid: neither do men light a candle to put it under a buſhel, but on a candleſtick, that it may give light to all that are in the houſe:* ſo miniſters are ſet in the church; and their ſetting in the church, is the way whereby God preſerves light ordinarily, and makes it ſhine. And ſo, the excellent comely order of the viſible church kythes in this, that it is like a city ſet on a hill. And hence the church is called *the pillar and ground of the truth*, 1 Tim. iii. 15. The light of the truth being ſet in the church, as on a pillar, to make it kythe the more, and be ſeen the further, that others may fall in love with it. And laying both theſe together, the miniſters being lights, and the churches candleſticks, it holdeth out a near and ſib relation betwixt miniſters and people, as if the people were dark without miniſters, and the miniſters would not ſhine far, nor be uſeful, if they had not churches to bear them up. We ought not to ſtrain this ſimilitude too far, as if churches might be churches without miniſters, much leſs before miniſters be ſet in them, as a candleſtick ſtill is a candleſtick, without a light, but certainly, very dark. That is not the ſcope; but it is to ſhew that in conſtituted churches, what is Chriſt's eſteem, both of miniſters and people, and what is the mutual relation that ſtands betwixt them, each to other. We know that the church organized, is but one body, whereof the paſtors are a principal part; and that theſe derogate not to the other relations betwixt miniſters and people, as to be fathers to them, to beget them, to nouriſh them, as a nurſe doth in giving ſuck; to be mothers travailing in birth with them: in which reſpect, particular churches and Chriſtians have their being from miniſters, as ſuch inſtruments who hath begotten them by the immortal ſeed of the word.

2. *Golden candleſticks*, 1. To point out, comparatively, the excellency of the viſible church, above all other ſocieties in the world; and, poſitively, the excellency that is among the churches: as gold is the moſt excellent metal, ſo the church is the choice and wail of all the world beſide; it is God's garden. 2. To let us ſee what is believers duty, and what all the members of the church are obliged to; they ought to be as gold that will abide the trial, and hath no droſs. The church of Chriſt ſhould be thoroughly ſincere, as gold; to be like every ſort of metal will not be enough.

Queſt. *How can theſe churches be called gold, ſeeing many of them are ſo little worth, that they could ſcarce abide the trial, as Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, &c. and Laodicea is ſo corrupt, that ſhe hath no commendation at all?*

Anſ. Our Lord Jeſus deſigns the viſible church, or churches, not according to the plurality, but according to the better part; and when there is any gold, he counts by it: even as one may call an heap, a heap of corn, though the greateſt part be chaff. 3. There is ſomething eſſential to the church as viſible, which makes them get this denomination: for the viſible church hath a comparative excellency beyond others that are without; and Jeſus Chriſt looking, not to what they were, but to the nature of a viſible church, he calls them *golden candleſticks*, even as he calls the miniſters *ſtars*, though there were ſome among them little worth, as that angel of Laodicea; becauſe by virtue of their office they were ſo: ſo the churches, written to by the apoſtles, are called ſaints, and holy, in ſo far as, by virtue of their profeſſion and church-ſtate relation that they ſtood in to God, they were ſo. 3. He deſigns them ſo by virtue of their obligation, to let them ſee what they ſhould be, and were obliged to be. This is a main reaſon why the church of the Jews is called a holy people; not for any great holineſs that often was amongſt them all, but becauſe they were ſeparated from other people, to be a peculiar people to him; in which reſpect the children of believers are called holy, 1 Cor. vii. which is not to be underſtood of any perſonal holineſs, but of a holineſs in reſpect of a federal or covenant relation: in which reſpect they are ſeparated from the reſt of the world, who have not an external right to ſuch church-privileges. Thus both ſtock and branches are holy, and no otherwiſe, Rom. xi.

Which lets us ſee, 1. What reſpect Jeſus Chriſt hath to his churches and miniſters. 2. That the ſcripture's way of expounding itſelf, is to expound

one place by another; one verſe or phraſe, darkly ſet down in one place, by another, more full and clear in another place. 3. Particularly, how to expound the word *are* or *is*, the ſeven ſtars: *are*, i. e. they ſignify and repreſent; a word often uſed, Gen. xli. 26. *The ſeven good kine*, are *ſeven years*, &c. So the lamb is the paſſover: and Matth. xxvi. 26. *Take, eat: this is my body. This cup is my blood*, &c. Which expreſſions hold out no tranſubſtantiation, or tranſmutation, or turning of one ſubſtance into another, more than what is ſaid here imports, that the miniſters were tranſubſtantiated in ſtars, or the churches in candleſticks, or contrarily; but it is a myſterious and ſacramental way of ſpeaking, to ſet forth the thing ſignified or repreſented, by giving the name thereof to the ſign which repreſents it. And this is in many places to be adverted unto.

Concerning a CALLING *to the* MINISTRY, *and clearneſs therein.*

THIS command *of writing* was particularly ſet down, ver. 11. here again it is renewed; and afterward, chap. ii. and iii. is ſeven times repeated, with reſpect to every church he writes unto; which certainly is to ſhew of what concernment clearneſs of a call is, and that both in general and particular; and is done, among other reaſons, for this end, to clear John in his call, and to warrant the people in their receiving of his meſſage. From which we may gather this, That a miniſter that taketh on him to edify a church, in the name of the Lord, had need to be clear of his call thereunto from the Lord: it is not the general that we now inſiſt on, viz. that there is ſuch a peculiar calling, or, that none but the Lord can authorize for it; but it is eſpecially concerning that clearneſs which every miniſter ought to have in his call, that with holy boldneſs, he may go about the work, having peace in himſelf, whatever he may meet with in it, as one who hath not run, whereas the Lord did not ſend him, Jer. xxiii. 21. That this is exceedingly requiſite to a miniſter, we ſuppoſe will be out of queſtion to all who know that miniſters are but ambaſſadors; and ſo for them to want clearneſs of the Lord's call, is to be uncertain whether they have a commiſſion or not: and therefore, they who look not to it, can neither have that confidence of the Lord's owning them, or excepting of them in their duty, except there be ſome ſatisfaction herein, viz. that the Lord hath ſent them, or doth ſend them. It will be a puzzling queſtion to many one day, Man, who made thee a miniſter? Who gave thee a commiſſion to treat for Chriſt? And although others may have peace in the uſe-making of ſuch a man's miniſtry, yet himſelf can have none, he being ever liable to this queſtion, Friend, how enteredſt thou thither? and how obtained thou this honour? Doubtleſs from the defect of this trial it is, in part, that many thruſt themſelves into the work at firſt, whoſe after carriage and way proves them never to have been ſent; which they durſt not have done, had they walked by this rule of waiting for a commiſſion thereto. And, on the other hand, ſome really called to the miniſtry, are yet kept in a kind of bondage, both as to their duty and their peace; becauſe it is not clear to them that it is ſo; for although the being of a miniſter, and his calling, ſimply depends not on his clearneſs of his call, as the being of a believer doth not neceſſarily infer that he muſt know himſelf to be a believer; yet, no queſtion, as a believer's particular comfort depends on the clearneſs of his intereſt, for which cauſe he ſhould ſtudy it, ſo a miniſter's confidence and quietneſs in his particular miniſtry, doth much depend on this, that he be clear in his call to be a miniſter: for which cauſe, they who look thereaway, or are entered therein, would humbly inquire for nothing more than this, that they be clear that they have Chriſt's commiſſion for their engaging. And although it be impoſſible to be particular, or fully ſatisfying in this, ſo as to meet with all the difficulties that may occur; but Chriſtian prudence and tenderneſs will ſtill find matter of exerciſe in the deciding thereof; yet, having this occaſion here, which is alſo frequent in this book, we may, once for all, ſay a word in the general to what may give a miniſter clearneſs in his calling; which we may take up in a fivefold conſideration: 1. Of a miniſter's call to that work in general. 2. To a particular people, 3. In carrying a particular meſſage to that people. 4. What is required of him as to writing for the benefit of the church. 5. And what reſpect people ought to have to God's calling of a man in their hearing and reading.

For the firſt, we ſay, 1. That miniſters would ſoberly endeavour ſatisfaction at their entry, if they

be called to that work or not, and begin with that. This is certain, that it is not indifferent whether men betake them to this calling or another; for God hath not indifferently diſpenſed his talents, nor hath he left men to that liberty to chuſe as they will, but willeth them to continue and abide in that calling whereto they are called, and not which they have choſen themſelves: yea, that a man have ſome knowledge or affection to that work of the miniſtry, will not prove him to be called, although all that is externally needful for his promoting therein did occur; for that will not prove a call to another charge or truſt, and ſo not to this. And no queſtion, it being a deſirable thing in itſelf to be a meſſenger for Jeſus Chriſt to his church, many may deſire the office of a biſhop, and be approven of God in their look thereaway, and yet indeed never be called of God actually to it, as experience may confirm.

Secondly, When we ſpeak of a call in any of the former reſpects, it is not to be underſtood, that men now are to look for an immediate and extraordinary call, as John and the apoſtles had; that were as unwarrantable as to look for an extraordinary meaſure of gifts, ſuch as they were furniſhed with, and that in an immediate way; but it is, that as extraordinary officers had extraordinary and immediate evidences of their call, for ſo it required; ſo miniſters and ordinary office-bearers, that are called in a mediate way, would ſeek for ſuch evidences as mediately may ſatisfy them; for the mediate calling of the church, according to Chriſt's ordinance, is Chriſt's call, as that more immediate was: and therefore, Acts xx. 28. and elſewhere, theſe elders and paſtors of Epheſus, who yet, no queſtion, had but ſuch a call as theſe that were choſen by the people, and ordained by the preſbytery, Acts xiv. 23. and 1 Tim. iv. 14. are ſaid to be ſet over the flock *by the Holy Ghoſt*. And ſo paſtors and teachers, who are to be continued in the church by a mediate way of man's tranſmitting it to others, as Paul's word is, 2. Tim. ii. 2. are yet accounted a gift of Chriſt's to his church, as the offices of apoſtles, evangeliſts, &c. are, Eph. iv. 11.

Thirdly, In this inquiry, the great ſtreſs would not be laid on a man's own inclination, or a ſuppoſed impulſe, which yet may be but the inclination. That being found to flow from, or to go along with rational grounds, may have its own weight, but otherwiſe not; for we ſee often men more affectionately inclining to what they ſhould not, than to what they ſhould. Hence, many run who are not ſent, whoſe inclinations certainly lead them to it: and others again, that are moſt convincingly called, have yet difficulty to go over their inclinations, as doth appear in Moſes, Jeremiah, and Jonah, at leaſt, in his call to Nineveh. And our hearts being deceitful, and we ready to account the motions of our own ſpirits to be better than they are, there is need, whether in the general, or in the particular call, to be warry here. More particularly, we conceive, that both in general, and with relation to a particular place for the clearing of a miniſter's call, reſpect is to be had to theſe four, which may be ſatisfying as to his peace when they concur.

1. A man's gift is the great differencing character of a call, though it be not of itſelf conſtitutive of a call; i. e. that one be in ſome meaſure διδακτικος, or, apt to teach: this being infallibly true, that whom the Lord deſigns for any employment in his houſe, if it were but to make curtains, ſockets, &c. to the ark, he will ſome way fit, and make them ſuitable to it. And this is as the ſeal whereby he evinceth, in the hearts of hearers, that he who treats, is his authorized ambaſſador.

2. To clear a man to exerciſe his gift: it muſt not only be a gift, but found and declared to be ſo, by theſe to whom the trial of gifts is committed by Jeſus Chriſt; for it is not the having a gift, that maketh a call, yea, nor that which maketh it a public gift, or to be acknowledged as ſuch; but it is the orderly authoritative miſſion that followeth upon that gift: in which reſpect, the exerciſe of the gift, and the laying on of the hands of the preſbytery are put together, 1 Tim. iv. 14. even though it ſeemeth that he had knowledge and gifts before. If it were not thus, what a confuſion would there be in the church of Chriſt more than in any commonwealth? where it is not gifts that conſtitute a magiſtrate or an officer, but the orderly calling of a perſon thereunto by ſuch as have authority; which ought alſo ſingularly to be obſerved here. And the Lord hath appointed this, not only for the public order of his houſe, which is exceedingly prized by him; but alſo, for the particular clearing of the perſon that is to be deſigned. Thus, I conceive, a perſon that is at ſome doubt about his gift, and poſ-

ſibly thinking it fit to edify; yet, upon ſuppoſition that it be found otherwiſe by theſe to whom the ſpirits, or gifts, ought to be ſubjected, he may have peace in abſtaining, whatever his own thoughts be, becauſe the Lord hath not made theſe his rule. Hence alſo, on the other hand, ſome who may eſteem their gift unfit for edifying of the church; yet if it be found otherwiſe by theſe whoſe place leads them to decide, and whoſe conſcience will make them tender in it, they ought and may with peace yield: whereas, if there were no authoritative trial, what a torture would it be to ſome to have the weight wholly lying on themſelves? and what a door would be open to the moſt ſelf-confident perſons on the other hand? Yea, were it not thus, there would be no need of the trial of gifts, enjoined, 1 Cor. xiv. 29, 31. which being in extraordinary gifted prophets, it is much more to be reſpected in ordinary miniſters: neither were there uſe for ſo many precepts to try, and ſo many characters how to diſcern them that are fitted for, or called to the miniſtry, whereof, *to be apt to teach*, is a main one, if there were not weight to be laid on the probation and determination of a preſbytery, who are to account to God for their deciſion in ſuch a caſe, and are not left to indifferency or arbitrarineſs therein.

3. For a man's peace, beſide the former two, ſingleneſs in himſelf is neceſſary, without which, both the former two will not ſuſtain him againſt a challenge, except there be a teſtimony here, that conſcience of duty, and obedience to God's call, made him yield to it: that God's glory, and promoting of the work of the edifying of Chriſt's body, was his end; and that his taking up of Chriſt's mind, to be calling him to follow this call, was his motive that made him betake himſelf to this calling, and not to another; and that upon deliberation and ſearch made, to diſcern the mind of God. Where theſe three concur, viz. a gift, and that orderly approven, with the heart's yielding to the call, upon that account, to do Chriſt ſervice in that, more than in another ſtation, becauſe it apprehends him to call to that employment, and not to another, we conceive, there is good ground of peace, ſo as there cannot be a torturing challenge upon this occaſion: for altho' men intruſted to try, are not infallible in diſcerning of gifts; yet when uſe is made of this way, as Chriſt's ordinance, for attaining ſatisfaction in this matter of a call, it is not like that his ordinance will be a ſnare to any: and if triers of gifts ſhould miſtake, yet may it be expected, that either the Lord will diſcover it timeouſly ſome other way to the perſon concerned, or graciouſly ſome other way pity him, who did yield only out of reſpect to his call, as it was ſuppoſed by him. And who knoweth alſo, but gifts may follow, by God's bleſſing upon labours, when he ſo clears a call, if the queſtion only be there? as one may have peace in a magiſtracy, when ſingly it is embraced out of the conſcience of God's call, although it may be they who had hand in his election did unfitly make choice of ſuch a perſon. And though this ſingleneſs be not ſimply neceſſary to the being of a call; (for there may be a call without it, as in Judas) yet it is ſimply neceſſary for the man's peace that accepts it.

4. We take in here the conſideration of God's providence, and the concurrence of his diſpenſations; which, though they will not determine a call ſimply, nor make a thing lawful to one, which is not in itſelf lawful, yet, in poſitive duties, they may do much to caſt the balance in ſwaying a man to one calling beyond another: as ſuppoſe one hath means and ways in providence provided for his education, which others have not; or he hath been led to ſtudy: conſcience puts at him to take ſome calling, and it may be, pointeth at this, at leaſt, ſo far as to make proof of it. All doors for other callings are ſhut upon him, ſo that he muſt betake himſelf to this, or languiſh in doing of nothing. Sometimes others may be made uſe of to put at him, and the mind is kept in diſquiet while he eſſayeth any other thing: reaſon here ſheweth, ſuch and ſuch like things concurring, may have ſo much weight as to encourage, one to follow this motion, and may confirm him when this goeth along with the former three, or hath them following upon it.

If there were more particular enquiry called for concerning that impulſe of the Spirit, which may be in one, in reference to the miniſtry, how to diſcern it? and what weight to lay on it? We confeſs that it is hard to decide therein, the operations of the Lord's Spirit being myſteries, and often ſeeming unreaſonable to men; as alſo the deceits of our own hearts are deep, and not eaſily reached: yet, for helping in this, we may ſay, that it is not unuſual to the Lord to puſh one by

his Spirit, when he mindeth to have him to the miniſtry; and thereby to ſtir the heart of one, more than another, and more to this calling than another, though in all, or at all times, not in the ſame meaſure. This, in experience, hath been found, and God hath afterward ſealed it to have been of him: and by this, many have been brought to the miniſtry, who have been profitable in it, who, had not this been, would never have thought on it, or have been perſuaded thereto by others. And ſeeing the calling of the miniſtry is in an eſpecial and peculiar way from God, and eminently his choice, herein doth appear it is not inconſiſtent with his ſovereignty and intereſt therein, that he uſe this mean or way of an inward impulſe. And although what is expreſly ſpoken of this in ſcripture, be, for the moſt part, in reference to extraordinary officers, and that in an extraordinary manner; yet, by proportion, may an ordinary impulſe be gathered from that, as concurring in the ſending of ordinary officers, as there is an ordinary motion of the Spirit acknowledged in other lawful duties. Yet, 1. Advert, that this impulſe of the Spirit is not in all alike or equally diſcernible. The Lord ſometimes will thruſt one forth by a more inward impulſe, and withdraw others by more external means: hence, it will be found, that if the thing be of God, where the way is moſt improbable, and there be feweſt encouragements and leaſt outward drawing, there the inward thruſt is the more ſtrong, becauſe by it the Lord doth ſupply the want of that weight, which theſe outward helps might have on him. And again, where outward things more convincingly concur, as that a man is purpoſely, as it were, educated in reference to that end, provided for, and encouraged by others in the undertaking thereof, &c. In theſe, although the end may be ſingle, yet often is the inward impulſe leſs diſcernible, becauſe the Lord hath provided other means to draw them forth, which do ſupply that: neither is he to be aſtricted to one way of proceeding in this. 2. Advert, that this impulſe may be, when yet it is not diſcerned, either becauſe it is not taken heed unto, or, becauſe the inclination may be prejudged, and the perſon not diſcern the language thereof; or, becauſe the Lord may make it aſcend by ſteps and degrees, as it were, at firſt withdrawing the mind only from ſome deſign that it was ſet upon; and it may not be poſitively at firſt known what he aimeth at. And, *Secondly*, He may incline the heart to, and bring it in love with reading, and ſtudying, and other means, which afterward he may make uſe of in reference to this end; and yet poſſibly hide from the perſon that which he aimeth at by this. *Thirdly*, He may make a ſtir inwardly in the heart, making it ſome way diſquiet in every other thing, and reſtleſs in whatſoever it turneth itſelf to, as not being its proper work, that thereby he may conſtrain it to look ſome other where. *Fourthly*, When this is done, he may make the perſon content to eſſay the trial of his gift, if ſo be by that he may attain quietneſs, and yet ſtill the perſon be but trying what the language of that impulſe may mean, and not be diſtinctly clear of the reſult. And the Lord doth wiſely follow this order, partly, to draw on the perſon by ſteps, who might otherwiſe be ſcared, if all were preſented to him together; and, partly, that, in due order, he might effectuate his point, and train up the inſtrument to a fitneſs for the work he is to call him to; whereas, if he had perſuaſion of God's calling him to the miniſtry at firſt, before any acquired fitneſs for the ſame, he might be in hazard to ſlight the means, and precipitate in the thing, which the Lord alloweth not; partly alſo he doth it, to keep ſuch in dependence on him for through-bearing in every ſtep, one after another; ſo that, although, at firſt, one be not clear that God calleth him to the miniſtry itſelf, yet if he be ſo far clear, as that he calls him to forbear ſuch an other calling, to follow ſuch a ſtudy, to eſſay trials, &c. he ought to yield to that, waiting for what God may further reveal to him. Therefore, 3. Advert, that difference ought to be made between an impulſe to the ſtudy of divinity, and an impulſe to the miniſtry: one may really be ſtirred to the firſt, and ought to account it ſo, and ſo far to yield, without diſputing what may follow; as we may ſee in many, who in the ſtudy of divinity, and in trials, have given good proof of God's approving them in going that length, and yet he hath thought meet by death, or otherwiſe, to prevent their being entered actually to the miniſtry; which declareth that they were never called thereunto; as therefore, by any impulſe, one cannot warrantably conclude, that he is certainly to live ſo long; ſo can he not certainly gather, that he is called to be actually a miniſter, which ſuppoſeth the for-

mer; and therefore certainty in this is not to be at firſt inquired for, or expected; but ſo much is to be reſted in, as may give the conſcience quietneſs in the preſent ſtep, ſuppoſing that death ſhould prevent an other: this being the Lord's way, that the further one follow his call, it will be clearer unto him, like one that aſcendeth by degrees, he is ſtill in capacity to behold the further. Yet, 4. Advert, that every impulſe, which may be to the calling of the miniſtry, is not to be accounted an impulſe of the Spirit of God; or, as his moving either to the ſtudying of divinity, or the following of the miniſtry, as we may ſee in the multitude of falſe prophets of old, and in the experience of later times, wherein many have, and do run, whom the Lord never ſent. And conſidering the nature of our ſpirits, and the way that the devil may have in the ſeducing of ſome, and jumbling of others: this needeth not to be thought ſtrange. The great difficulty then will be, how to diſcern the voice of the Spirit of God in this particular from the voice of our own ſpirits, or of the devil, in this reſpect, transforming himſelf into an angel of light, and ſometimes even driving honeſt hearts to the attempting of this as a good thing, who yet may not be called thereunto of God indeed.

To help then in the trial of this, conſider, 1. That that which is an impulſe of the Lord's Spirit, doth more compoſe and ſanctify the whole frame of the inward man, it being that ſame Spirit which is the Spirit of grace and ſupplication: therefore the more ſenſibly he pouſe, the more ſenſibly are theſe effects; and the more compoſed and ſanctified a heart be, the more clear and diſtinct will that impulſe of the Spirit be, becauſe then the heart is more impartial to diſcern the ſame. And although this impulſe of the Spirit be but a common work, which may be in a hypocrite, and ſo alway hath not this ſanctifying efficacy with it; yet, we conceive, where one, out of conſcience, reflecteth on it, to try whether it be of God, or not, there can be no concluſion drawn from it to quiet the conſcience in the acknowledgment thereof, except it be found to be like his Spirit in the effects of it.

2. That this impulſe of the Spirit is not backed with the aſſiſtance of our ſpirits; but ſome way it conſtraineth them to yield to it, even contrary to their own inclination; ſo that it moveth and carrieth a man over the thoughts of gain, reproach, credit or loſs, over his inability and unfitneſs; which are never more diſcovered than when this impulſe is ſtrongeſt and moſt diſtinct, as we may ſee in the examples of Moſes, Jeremiah, &c. whereas motions from our own ſpirits do often leſſen the difficulties, and hide the unfitneſs and inability that is within us, and readily ground themſelves upon ſome ſuppoſed ability or probability, more than there is apparent reaſon for.

3. That God's Spirit moveth by ſpiritual motives like himſelf, as the promoting of God's glory, the edification of his people, the preventing of a challenge, by giving obedience to him, and ſuch like: whereas other motions have ends and motives like themſelves, as in the falſe prophets, and other teachers in the New Teſtament, may be ſeen; who fed not the flock but themſelves, and ſerved not the Lord Chriſt but their own bellies, and ſought their own credit, eaſe, &c. yea, even Judas, though extraordinarily moved by the Spirit; yet it is like that was not the motive which prevailed with him to yield, but ſome carnal motive, whether, gain, credit, or ſuch like, as is held forth in the goſpel.

4. That the motion of the Lord's Spirit is, in its nature, kindly, and, in its way, regular, according to the rule of the Spirit in the word; that is, it doth not drive the heart violently as the devil's injections do, nor doth it precipitate in the following and purſuing of what it moveth to; but, as having the command of the heart, he moveth natively, without making the ſpirit confuſed, and he preſſeth the proſecuting of what he moveth unto, orderly, it being the ſame Spirit that hath laid down a rule to walk by in the word, and now ſtirs within the heart; and, therefore, the inward impulſe cannot but be anſwerable to the outward rule. Hence alſo, the Spirit's motion is ſubmiſſive to the way of trial appointed in the word, and is not abſolute or peremptory; whereas motions from ourſelves, or from the devil, are head-ſtrong and irregular, aiming at the end or thing, without reſpect to the way preſcribed for attaining it; or, at leaſt, do not ſo heartily approve of the one as of the other, eſpecially if it be thwarted in its deſign by them.

5. That this motion of the Spirit putteth to the uſe of all means that lead to the end, as well as to the end itſelf; that is, reading, ſtudying, praying,

or what may fit one for that end: for the Spirit never divideth the end and the means: and Paul's word to Timothy, ſubjoining that precept, *Give thyſelf to reading*, to that other of his *fulfilling his miniſtry*, doth confirm this: whereas, when theſe are divided, there can be no claim made to a motion of the Spirit of God.

6. Conſider, that the impulſe of the Spirit, is a fitting, gifting impulſe, and carrying along with it a capacity in ſome meaſure for, and a ſuitableneſs to, the thing that it calls to. Hence, in the ſcripture, the call of the Spirit, and the gifts of the Spirit go together: and this laſt is given as the evidence of the firſt. And in this reſpect, although there may be an impulſe to the ſtudy of divinity without the call of the Spirit unto the miniſtry; yet can that never be counted an impulſe of the Spirit actually to enter the miniſtry, where this gifting of the Spirit is not: for it can never be inſtanced in all the word of God, that his Spirit ſent any, but his call was ſealed by his gifting of them. And ſo, in effect, the trying of this impulſe, ſo as one may have ſatisfaction therein, will, for the moſt part, reſolve in the trial of thoſe two formerly mentioned, viz. the fitneſs of ones gift to teach. *Secondly*, The ſingleneſs and ſincerity of the motive whereby one is ſwayed to follow the impulſe: for although the Spirit may move, yet if it be ſome carnal ground that perſuadeth the perſon to yield to that which the Spirit moveth unto, it can be no ground of peace. Theſe two then are, at leaſt, as to a man's peace, the *ſine quibus non*, in the trial of this impulſe; ſo that without them, he cannot conclude himſelf to be called actually to enter the miniſtry, or have peace in the undertaking thereof.

To ſpeak a word then to what weight is to be laid on this impulſe: concerning it, we ſay, 1. That if all things beſide concur to the fitting and qualifying of a miniſter, this is not ſimply to be accounted a *ſine quo non* in ones undertaking; becauſe, 1. There may be ſome impulſe, though we diſcern it not. 2. Becauſe there are more clear grounds to gather God's mind from, as the effects of the Spirit fitting one with gifts for the charge, and other grounds laid down, whereupon weight may more ſafely be laid, than upon any inward apprehending, or not apprehending of the Spirit's motion, which is never given to us in any thing, as the alone rule of obedience; and we muſt ſuppoſe the motion of the Spirit to be where theſe gifts are, ſeeing as the impulſe hath always the gifts with it, ſo we may gather the impulſe from the gifts.

2. We ſay, that where other things concur not, no impulſe is to be accounted a ſufficient evidence of a call to the miniſtry ſimply, upon the grounds formerly given: yet, 3. A diſtinct native ſanctifying impulſe, may be a call to uſe means, and to wait on in God's way for attaining of fitneſs in a ſubmiſſive manner, ſeeking rather to know what God intends, then as being abſolutely determined in reſpect of the end. 4. Although gifts, ſingleneſs of heart, and an impulſe concur together; yet will not this conſtitute a miniſter, though they may evidence a call to the miniſtry, and warrant one to ſtep in, when a door is opened to them: becauſe neither of theſe do include an authoritative commiſſion for him to treat, although they do put him in a capacity to be ſent as an ambaſſador of Chriſt, when he ſhall be authorized. Hence it is, that in the caſe of deacons, Acts vi. who are by gifts fitted for their office; and of biſhops, Tit. i. 7, 8, 9. who are, in the reſpects there ſet down, to be found qualified for their employment; yet is the authoritative ordaining of both, mentioned, as that which did conſtitute them officers in theſe reſpective ſtations. *Laſtly*, We ſay that yet this impulſe, when all concur with it, may have its own cumulative weight for the ſtrengthening of one that hath it, to the undertaking of this charge, when the Lord in his ordinary way opens the door unto him.

To ſhut up this part of the diſcourſe, we conceive, that it were uſeful to the church, and conducing exceedingly for the clearing of entrance to the miniſtry, that there were ſome choice and way of trial, both of ſuch as might be preſently found fit to enter the miniſtry, and alſo of others that might be adviſed to ſtudy in reference thereunto; and that it might not be left unto men themſelves alone, whether they will offer themſelves to trial in reference to that charge or not. For ſo many may, and no queſtion do, ſmother good gifts, which might be uſeful, thereby prejudging the church thereof, who, by this grave, convincing, and (ere it fail) authoritative way, might be brought forth, and would more eaſily be made to yield thereunto, when the burden thereof were not wholly left on themſelves; whereas, now, partly, from ſhame and modeſty, partly from cuſtom, and undervaluing of the miniſtry, none

ordinarily, who otherwiſe have a temporal being, or any place, do betake themſelves to this calling: and it is hard to ſay, that either none ſuch are gifted for it, or that ſuch gifts ſhould be loſt. And by this, on the other ſide, we ſuppoſe, that many who do now deſign themſelves to the miniſtry, (becauſe none but ſuch as take that way are called thereunto (would be aſhamed to thruſt forth themſelves; and ſo the church might have acceſs a great deal better to the providing of herſelf with able and qualified miniſters; whereas now ſhe is, almoſt, confined in her choice to a number that give themſelves, or at moſt, are deſigned by their parents, or poſſibly conſtrained by neceſſity to follow ſuch a ſtudy. It is true, this way the Lord may provide his houſe, and may ſo engage thoſe whom he minds to make uſe of; yet certainly, it looks not ſo like, in an ordinary way, for attaining of edification as the other: and conſidering that the church as ſuch, is one body, and ſo ought to make uſe of every member, and any member as may moſt conduce for the good of the whole body. There is no queſtion but the church might call a member, upon ſuppoſition of his qualifications, to trial, and (being found conform to what was ſuppoſed) might appoint him to the miniſtry; and that member ought to yield to both, from that duty that lyeth on every member in reference to the whole body, which is to be preferred to any particular member's intereſt: and this without reſpect to mens outward condition or place; providing their being employed in this ſtation, may be more uſeful to the church, and the edification of Chriſt's body, than their being employed in no calling at all, or in any other calling. This being alſo to be granted, that ſome men may be ſo uſeful in, and fit for public civil callings, as that thereby the church may be benefited ſo far, that it will not be meet in every caſe, and in every perſon, to uſe this power; yet ſuch extraordinary caſes being laid aſide, no doubt ordinarily it were uſeful. And ſeeing all incorporations and commonwealths have this liberty to call and employ their members, without reſpect to their own inclinations, ſo as it may be moſt uſeful for the good of the body; this which nature teacheth, and experience hath confirmed in them, cannot be denied to the church, which is a body and hath its own policy given to it by Jeſus Chriſt for the building up of itſelf. This way is alſo agreeable to ſcripture, and to the practice of the primitive times; none can ſay that the church did not chuſe her elders and deacons, and other officers out of all her members indifferently, as ſhe thought fit, Acts vi. ſeven men fitly qualified are to be looked out amongſt all the people; ſo in Paul's practice through the Acts, and in his directions to Timothy and Titus. Such only are not to be choſen, who offer themſelves to it, but indifferently, ſuch as may be beſt qualified are to be enquired for; and when found, whatever they be, to be called and ordained to the miniſtry. By all which, it appears like the apoſtolic way to enquire for men that may be found qualified for the miniſtry: and alſo, that ſhunning or repining to enter the miniſtry in any perſon found qualified for it, and thus called to it, hath never been ſuppoſed as allowable by the apoſtles; but it was looked upon as a duty for thoſe that were ſo called to obey, as it was the duty of others to enquire for ſuch. To this alſo may that exhortation of Peter relate, 1 Epiſt. v. 2. *Feed the flock of God which is amongſt you, taking the overſight thereof, not by conſtraint, but willingly, &c.* whereby it would ſeem, that he is preſſing obedience from thoſe that were called, that willingly they ſhould undertake the overſight of God's flock. Which words, if well conſidered, would pinch exceedingly a tender conſcience of any man, if a call were thus preſſed upon him. And indeed, if it were at mens option arbitrarily to refuſe ſuch a call, the directions that are given to people and miniſters for ſearching out, calling and ordaining ſuch, were to no purpoſe, for thus they might all be fruſtrated. We do not ſay this to prejudge the laudable way of training up ſtudents in reference to this end, it ſeemeth that, even amongſt the Jews, theſe who were to teach the people were numerous, and as it were, in colleges trained up with the prophets, and theſe who were able to teach them. The apoſtles alſo were not defective in training of young men in reference to this, which ſhews the laudableneſs of that way. And although the main part thereof be not to be placed in ſcholaſtic debates; yet is training neceſſary, which in the meaneſt calling is found uſeful, and therefore not juſtly to be denied here. We would only ſay, 1. That there would be ſome choice made in the deſigning of youths for that ſtudy; ſo that, in an orderly way, ſome might be ſo trained, and not have liberty otherwiſe to

withdraw; and others timouſly adviſed to look to ſome other employment. 2. We would not have elections bounded and limited to that number, ſo as either any, whoſoever thus trained up, might certainly be ſuppoſed as capable of being miniſters, or as if no congregation or preſbytery might fix their eye upon, or give a call unto any other. This way of calling was long continued in the primitive church, as we may ſee in the example of Ambroſe, who, being a ſenator and preſident, although not yet baptized, nevertheleſs, becauſe of his known ability, piety, and prudence, was unexpectedly, and unanimouſly called to be biſhop of Millan: and notwithſtanding of his great oppoſition thereto, was, at length, ſo preſſed as he was made to yield; and after proved a notable inſtrument in the church of Chriſt. And it is remarked, that the good emperor Valentinian, did exceedingly rejoice when he heard it, bleſſing God that had led him to chuſe one to take care of bodies, who was accounted fit to take care of ſouls. Theodoret. hiſt. lib. IV. chap. 6. The like is recorded by Euagrius, hiſt. lib. IV. chap. 6. of one Euphraimius, who, while he was governour of the eaſt, was choſen to be biſhop of Antioch, which the author calleth *ſedes apoſtolica*. This is alſo the eſtabliſhed doctrine of our church in the firſt *Book of Diſcipline*, in that head that concerneth propheſying and interpreting ſcripture, whereof theſe are the words, *Moreover, men in whom is ſuppoſed to be any gift, which might edify the church, if they were employed, muſt be charged, by the miniſters and elders, to join themſelves with the ſeſſion and company of interpreters, to the end that the kirk may judge, whether they be able to ſerve to God's glory, and the profit of the kirk, in the vocation of miniſters, or not. And, if any be found diſobedient, and not willing to communicate the gifts and ſpecial graces of God with their brethren, after ſufficient admonition, diſcipline muſt proceed againſt them, provided that the civil magiſtrate concur with the judgment and election of the kirk: for no man may be permitted as beſt pleaſeth him to live within the kirk of God; but every man muſt be conſtrained, by fraternal admonition and correction, to beſtow his labours, when of the kirk he is required, to the edification of others.* Which, if it were zealouſly followed, might, by God's bleſſing, prove both profitable and honourable to the church.

To ſay ſomething to the ſecond head propoſed, viz. of a man's clearneſs to the miniſtry of a particular congregation, we ſuppoſe that this alſo is neceſſary for his peace, ſeeing there is no reaſon that men, ought arbitrarily to walk herein, but accordingly as they are called of God to one place and not to another: therefore we ſee that in John's commiſſion, the general is not only expreſſed; but particularly, he is inſtructed in reference to ſuch and ſuch particular churches: and according to this, we ſee in the hiſtory of the Acts, that ſome were ordered to preach in one place, and ſome in another; and Acts xiii. Paul and Silas in their leaving Antioch, and going to the Gentiles, were not only called by word, but confirmed and authorized by the laying on of hands; and we doubt not but this general alſo will be granted. For helping to clearneſs therein. The former general rules, are alſo to be applied with ſpecial reſpect to the particular caſe, as 1. It is to be tried, if the gift be not only ſuitable to edification in general, but to the edification of that people in particular: ſo that if when their caſe, diſpoſitions, qualifications, &c. And his gifts, diſpoſition, and other fitneſs, both in reference to his public miniſtry in doctrine and diſcipline, as alſo to his endowments in reference to his private converſation (yea, their very corruptions and infirmities being compared together) if, I ſay, ſuch a man may, in well grounded reaſon, be looked upon as qualified for the edifying of ſuch a people: in this compariſon alſo, reſpect would be had even to the more public ſtate of the church: ſo as a man's fitneſs would not only be tried with reſpect to the congregation itſelf; but with reſpect to other things. 2. This fitneſs will be found and determined to be ſo, by theſe whoſe place it is to try gifts, even in this reſpect. 3. The tryſting of providences is to be obſerved; as, the riſe of the call, if it proceed from no natural or carnal end? If no other door be opened elſewhere to him who is called, he may the more warrantably ſtep in there, if no probable ſettling of that congregation appear otherwiſe than by him, ſo as his refuſing might occaſion a detriment to that place? If things look ſo as he have an eſteem without prejudice in the hearts of that people; ſo as he may probably expect to be looked on as a miniſter, and to have the word without prejudice received from him in that place? alſo if without carnal reſpects his heart be made

to incline that way, or if unexpectedly and over many difficulties the people have pitched on him and adhered to him? Theſe, and ſuch like may have their own weight, ſo as to help to gather this concluſion, that probably ſuch a man's miniſtry may be uſeful and profitable in ſuch a place: neither is the advice of ſober and unbiaſſed men, miniſters and others, to be neglected; ſeeing often they may ſee more in a man's particular caſe, than he can diſcern himſelf: and that is oft found to be a mean made uſe of by God, for manifeſting of his mind in ſuch caſes. Again, if there be any competition of places, ſo as one be ſought by more congregations at once, the caſe is here ſomewhat different, ſuppoſing the man to be equally fitted for ſeveral places; otherwiſe greater ſuitableneſs to the one, than to the other, where it is palpable, doth caſt the balance. In deciding what to chuſe in this competition, there is much need of ſingleneſs and deniedneſs to all outward and carnal things, both in him that is ſought, and in them who ſeek, and in all others intereſted; this being a great ill to ſuffer carnalneſs and contentions to ſteal in, even in purſuit for a good miniſter. Neither is there great weight to be laid upon priority or poſteriority in the applications that are made, the matter itſelf and cauſes which may be given for the laſt and for the firſt, can only ſatisfy the conſcience as to the great ſcope of the miniſtry, viz. the edification of the church: ſeeing a man is obliged to look to edification in his miniſtry, and ſo to ſettle, where probably that may be beſt attained, and not as an occaſion may be, firſt or laſt moved to him; and it were good that both he who is called, and they who call, would ſubmit all intereſts, and be regulated by this. We conceive alſo, that the deciſion of this, doth not mainly or principally lie upon the perſon himſelf: for, as he is not ſimply to judge, whether his gifts be meet for the miniſtry in general, or for the edification of ſuch a people in particular; ſo neither comparatively is he to decide, whether it be more conducing for edification, that he embrace one call rather than another; but this is to be done rather by theſe whoſe place leads them indifferently to look to the general good of the church. This then is the great rule to decide by, whether his miniſtry, conſidered complexly in all circumſtances, may moſt conduce to the edification of Chriſt's body by the accepting of this or that charge, when all things are ſingly and impartially weighed and compared together? ſo as in the reſult it may, upon good grounds, be made to appear, that the one will prove a greater furtherance to the perfecting of the ſaints, and enlargement of Chriſt's kingdom than the other; as if his miniſtry in one place may be profitable to more ſouls than in another, and that not only with a reſpect to the particular congregation: but as it may have influence to the preventing or ſuppreſſing of ſome general evils, or the promoting of ſome general good in more congregations beſide: if his miniſtry may probably have more acceptance and fruit in one place, than in another; if by ſome preſent circumſtance, the planting of one place be more needful and the delay thereof be more dangerous than in another, which ſeemeth more difficult than the place in competition therewith; if the man find, after ſome trial, his liberty greater, his bowels more ſtirred, and his mouth more opened, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 Cor. vi. in reference to one more than another: if the harmonious judgment of ſingle and unintereſted faithful men prefer the one, as more edifying to the other; and many ſuch like, whereby Chriſtian prudence, after the enquiring of the Lord's mind, may find the general end of edification to ſway more on the one ſide than on the other, accordingly conſcience is to determine that to be God's call, and the perſon is to yield; for altho' in every caſe theſe could not ſway a man warrantably and ſimply in reſpect of his call; yet where the competition is in a caſe that is almoſt equal on both ſides, they may have place to caſt the balance.

For the third, That when a man is cleared in reference to a particular charge, there doth remain yet a neceſſity of clearing him in reference to a particular meſſage to that charge: for, as the condition of every congregation is not alike: ſo is not one way to be followed with all. Hence we ſee that John hath a particular and ſeveral meſſage in reference to theſe ſeven churches, though all agree in one general ſcope, viz. their edification. This is not to awaken at every time an anxious diſpute, what matter to preach: but, 1. To conſider what particular faults have need to be reproved; what truths have need eſpecially to be cleared; what duties are eſpecially to be preſſed, as being moſt ſlighted amongſt them; what ſnares they are moſt in hazard of, and need moſt to be

warned againſt, and ſo accordingly to inſiſt; for, though all duties be good, and all ſins be to be eſchewed; yet do we ſee in the word, that ſometimes, and in ſome places, ſome are more inſiſted on than others, upon the former grounds. 2. The neceſſary truths of the goſpel, as they tend to inſtruct, convince, convert, comfort, &c. which are the great taſk of a miniſter, are neceſſary to all people; yet in the preſſing of inſtruction and conviction, more than conſolation; or, again, conſolation and healing applications, more than ſharper threatenings and reproofs, that is to be regulated according to the temper and caſe of the people, as alſo the manner of propoſing and following of them, according as may among ſuch prove moſt edifying, as the Lord, in theſe ſeven epiſtles, doth more ſharply or more mildly deal with them to whom he writes. But becauſe there may be occaſion to touch this on the 10*th* chapter, and here we have already exceeded our bounds, we ſhall ſay no more of it, but ſhall ſay ſomewhat particularly to writing and the people's uſe-making thereof.

Concerning WRITING.

IN reference to this, we ſay, 1. That men may by writing communicate what light God gives them, for the good of the church, It is true, the goſpel was at firſt ſpread and planted by preaching, that is more properly the mean of converſion. It is true alſo that all the apoſtles preached, but all did not write; yet we will find, that the apoſtles made great uſe of writing, for the informing, reproving, ſtrengthening, and every way edifying of churches and perſons brought to the faith; for, they wrote their epiſtles, not only as ſcripture for the church in general, but alſo for the edifying of ſuch perſons, in particular, and for clearing of ſuch and ſuch particular doubts, or truths, which the ſtate of ſuch times, or churches, did moſt call for. There is reaſon alſo for this, if we conſider, 1. The relation that is amongſt all the members of the catholic church, whereby all are tied to be edifying one to another, &c. 2. The end wherefore God hath given men gifts which is to profit withal: and yet, 3. That a man cannot by word make his gift forthcoming in the extent that he is obliged; there is therefore a neceſſity of uſing writing for that end, it being a ſingular gift of God for promoting edification. It is upon this ground, as we ſaid, that many epiſtles are written, to be uſeful where the writers could not be, and when they were to be gone. It is upon this ground alſo, we conceive, that many pſalms, and ſongs, as that of Hezekiah, Iſa. xxxviii. are committed to writing by the authors, that by it their caſe or gift might be made uſeful to others, for their inſtruction, as the titles of ſundry pſalms bear.

This way, for many ages, hath been bleſſed for the good of the church of Chriſt, who have reaſon to bleſs God, that put it in the hearts of many antients and others, thus to be profitable in the church. And it may be, ſome able men have been but too ſparing to make their talent forthcoming that way to others. And as we may conclude, that miniſters may preach the goſpel who are called, becauſe the apoſtles did it, even though miniſters are not gifted with infallibility of preaching, as they were, becauſe that was for edifying the body: ſo may we conclude, that men called to it, may write for the edification of the church, although they be not gifted with infallibility in their writing

2. We gather from this, that none ſhould take on them to write any thing as the Lord's mind, for the edification of the church, without a call to it: I mean not an extraordinary call, as John had, but this I mean, that as there is an ordinary call needful to the preaching of the goſpel, and we may conclude from God's extraordinary way of calling the apoſtles to preach, the neceſſity of an ordinary call, ſo, in the general, that ſame conſequence will hold in reſpect of writing, for ſuch an end. And if we look through the ſcripture, we will find a call for writing, as well as for preaching; and readily he who was called to the firſt, was alſo called to the ſecond, as being a prophet of the Lord. Though this particular we do not abſolutely and ſimply preſs, ſeeing men may be called to write, and not be fitted to preach; yet I conceive, Solomon is called the preacher, from his writing. And to warrant writing, we would conceive ſo much to be neceſſary as may, 1. Satisfy the man himſelf, as to his being called to ſuch an eminent duty by God, and therefore there muſt be ſomewhat to hold out to him, that it is God's mind he ſhould undertake ſuch a taſk. That men walk not by their own ſatisfaction alone;

but that there may be ſo much, as to convince others, that God put them on that work: and therefore though we would not preſs authoritative miſſion to write, as to preach; yet conſidering that John's warrant to write, is alſo a warrant to others to make uſe of it, and that people would have a warrant for making uſe of writings, as well as a man for his writing. There is ſome orderly thing neceſſary, as to point out to the man his duty in writing, for his peace; ſo alſo to point out to others their duty in uſe-making of it. So that neither any that pleaſeth may write (but he would give ſome reaſon, beſide his pleaſure) nor would every one uſe the writings of all, as they pleaſe.

Reaſon. 1. A call is neceſſary for every thing, and men in lawful duties are to walk by it; otherwiſe, all lawful duties would lie upon all men as their calling, or be at their pleaſure: which ſtands not with God's putting the taſk, even of particulars, into mens hands.

2. To write of the holy things of God, is to take on us, to tell what God thinks, and what is his will, which is a moſt concerning thing; eſpecially to do it ſolemnly in write, leſt it prove, at leaſt a taking of God's name in vain, when without a call we do it.

3. This may clear it, That neither public preaching, nor private edification by word, can be diſcharged rightly, but when men walk according to God's call in theſe, which is alſo neceſſary in writing.

4. There is no promiſe to be guided in it, or of ſucceſs to it, without ſome clearneſs of a call to it, and ſo it cannot be comfortably undertaken or proſecuted.

5. All the ſaints had their call to write, who took that way: hence ſome apoſtles have written, others not; ſome ſaints have recorded their caſe, others not. The reaſon of this difference is, becauſe ſome were called to write, and others otherwiſe employed, elſe we muſt ſay, they failed who wrote not. Neither will it ſimply warrant one, that he writes truth: there was doubtleſs truth in the preaching of the ſons of thunder, and alſo of the ſon of conſolation, yet God thought it not good to call them all to write. And experience hath often made this truth out, that many have taken on them to write, whoſe writings have been exceeding hurtful to the church: ſo that had all men walked by a call in writing, there had been fewer errors, at leaſt, they had not come unto ſuch an height, and the church would have been free of many ſubtile diſputations, that have more prejudged, than advanced godlineſs in it. As therefore ſome may fail in not writing, when they are called to it, ſo others may be going about it, while they are not called to it.

If we might inquire in the general, for particulars cannot be pitched on, What may evidence a call to write? we ſhall ſhew, 1. What is not needful. 2. What will not ſatisfy and be ſufficient. And, 3. What is needful, and may be ſatisfying.

1. An extraordinary call by revelation, or immediate impulſe of the Spirit, ſuch as John and the apoſtles had, is not needful; it might make a writer, as well as a preacher, to be ſuſpected, if they ſhould pretend to any ſuch call.

2. We think not an authoritative miſſion in the perſon who is writer ſimply needful; one may be fitted to edify by writing, whoſe gifts lead not to edify by preaching, yet ought not the church to be fruſtrated of the benefit of his gift.

3. We think not a preſſing inclination ſimply neceſſary, ſeeing often, inclination thwarts with duty, and mens modeſty, lazineſs, or other reſpects, may much divert the inclination, as in Moſes, Jeremiah, and others, when called to God's work.

4. We think it not neceſſary, that there be any ſingular or extraordinary meaſure of gifts beyond others: ſome may be called to write by particular providences, when others of more underſtanding may be ſpared; even as ſome may be called to preach, and others of more learning and ability, are paſſed by.

On the contrary, It will not be ſufficient to evidence a call to write, 1. To have an inclination. 2. To have gifts, Or, 3. To be found in truth. Nor, 4. To have a good meaning and end. Theſe will not ſerve in other duties, and ſo neither in this, without reſpect had to the particulars aftermentioned.

That a man therefore may have peace as to his undertaking, we conceive there is a concurrence of ſeveral things needful to be obſerved: as, 1. There is a neceſſity of a ſingle end, viz. God's glory, others edification; and, in part, may come in his own exoneration as to ſuch a duty. It is not ſelf-ſeeking, nor getting of a name, nor ſtrengthening ſuch a particular party or opinion, that will give one peace in this matter. 2. It is neceſſary, not

only that the thing be truth, but that it be edifying, profitable, and pertinent at ſuch a time; God's call to any thing doth ever time it, and tryſt it well, as moſt ſubſervient to the ſcope of edification. Hence, that which is error or impertinent, can never plead a call in writing, more than in preaching; yea, we conceive, the writing of many light, frothy ſubjects, or of ſpeculative janglings, and contentions about words, are exceedingly contrary to edification, which ought to be the end, and alſo the rule of our practice in writing.

3. Beſides theſe, there are circumſtances in the concurrence of providences tryſting together, in reference to the perſon writing, to the ſubject written of, the time wherein, and occaſion whereupon, and ſuch like; which being obſerved may contribute to give ſome light in the thing: as, 1. If the perſon be called publicly to edify the church; if he be of that weight as his teſtimony may prove profitable in the church, for the ſtrengthening and confirming of others, or the like conſiderations, though no new thing be brought forth by him: which ground, as a moral reaſon, Luke gives to Theophilus of his writing the goſpel, Luke i. 1.

2. Conſiderations may be drawn from the ſubject: as, 1. If it be a neceſſary point, that is controverted. 2. If the ſcripture opened be dark, and obſcure, and poſſibly not many ſatisfyingly writing of it. 3. If the way of handling it be ſuch as gives any new advantage to truth, or to the opening of that ſcripture, though it be not ſo accurate every way, that is, if the manner be more plain, or more ſhort, or more full, or touching at ſome things others have paſſed, or clearing what they have miſtaken, or confirming what they aſſerted only, or ſuch like caſes wherein they may contribute and be uſeful for the underſtanding of what is already written, or occaſion others to form and mould their invention, and what God hath given them, for better advantage to others; ſeeing ſome hath the faculty of inventing, others of improving what is invented. Thus both are made uſe of for one end, when they are brought forth together; even as in building, ſome are uſeful for plotting or contriving, ſome for digging ſtones, ſome for hewing, others for laying by ſquare and line, yet muſt be furniſhed by the former: ſo is it alſo in an edifying way of writing; every one hath not all, yet ſhould none refuſe to contribute their part.

3. The time would be conſidered, if ſuch a truth be preſently controverted, or ſuch a ſubject neceſſary to be ſpoken unto now; if ſuch a perſon's interpoſing may be uſeful, if ſuch a duty be neglected, or if ſuch a ſcripture be not made uſe of, and the like. Theſe may have their weight to put folks to it, even though they ſhould ſay little more than what is ſaid by others, becauſe then all are called to put to their hand to help; that is the time of it. And there is this advantage, that when many do write, it ſerveth not only to confirm and ſtrengthen what another hath ſaid, but it occaſions ſome to read that ſubject, that readily would never have read it, had not ſuch a man written thereon, ſeeing another book of that ſubject might poſſibly never have come to their hands; and withal, this is advantageous when more are engaged in the ſame ſubject. This conſideration is alledged by *Bellar praefa. in tom. prim.* out of Auguſtine, as a reaſon to put men to write, who were not of the moſt excellent parts, that it was edifying and better than nothing, yea, that it was beſeeming, at ſuch a time, to ſee many armed, in the camp of Chriſt, againſt his adverſaries, although all be not leaders and captains.

4. Occaſion alſo may be from God's putting one to have thoughts of ſuch a ſubject, when others are otherwiſe taken up, ſome not having acceſs to be edifying otherwiſe; as when occaſion of ſtudy is given, and the thing by public delivery, or ſecret communication is known to others, and called for by them to be made public; or that they would ſet themſelves to it, God giving occaſion of health, quietneſs, means, &c. for it: the thing getting approbation from ſuch as are ſingle and intelligent, judging ſuch a thing uſeful; in this the ſpirits of God's ſervants would be ſubject to others. Such conſiderations are frequently mentioned by worthy men, in their prefaces to their books. And it is obſerved *in vita Pellicani*, as ſwaying him to publiſh his writing, though not accounted, by himſelf at leaſt, to be of accurate learning, that, *mediocriter et ſimpliciter ſcripta, mediocriter doctis placitura videns, et quod illorum major ſit copia, quam, eximie doctorum, gratificari petentibus voluit.* For as the moſt learned preachings do not always edify moſt, ſo neither is it in writing: and tho', as a learned man obſerveth in a preface, that which is accurate edifyeth moſt intenſively, and beſt explaineth the thing; yet often, what is more popular, edifieth moſt extenſively, and proves profitable to many who are but of ordinary reach.

Of READING *and* HEARING.

IN the laſt place, It is alſo clear that people are not indifferently, and without warrant, to read or hear, except they know that they be warranted therein: for this command of writing is not only inſerted for the confirming of John in his call to write, but alſo tendeth to warrant theſe who are written unto, confidently to receive and make uſe of what is written. And it follows upon the former: for if a call be neceſſary to ſpeak or write in the name of the Lord, then ought alſo people ſomeway to be clear, that in their reading and hearing they may be walking according to God's rule and call to them, in reading what he calleth them to read, ſeeing men cannot be ſuppoſed to be left to arbitrarineſs therein. Hence it is, that where the Lord diſowneth the commiſſionating of ſuch to teach, and accounts them guilty for running whom he hath not ſent, and that either by writ or word, as may appear by Jer. xxiii. and xxix. 24. &c. So alſo doth he reprove the people that do countenance ſuch in their hearing or reading, while as their call is not evidenced to be of him. Hence ſo frequently, both in the Old and New Teſtament, are we commanded not to countenance ſuch, but to beware of them; and that muſt reach the reading of their writing, as well as converſing with their perſons, the one being as dangerous as the other is; for one of theſe two muſt neceſſarily follow, ſuppoſing them not to be called of God thereto.

1. Either they are enſnared by ſuch and ſuch errors, as others take on them to vent, and they are brought to give heed to lies inſtead of truth; and ſo though reading and hearing be good in itſelf, yet that wiſe advice of Solomon, Prov. xix. 27. doth here take place, *Ceaſe, my ſon, to hear the inſtruction that cauſeth to err from the words of knowledge.* This effect is frequent, the Lord thereby in his ſecret juſtice, puniſhing the lightneſs and curioſity of preſumptuous perſons that dare hazard upon any ſnare. Hence it is, that ſo often that lightneſs and indifferency in the practice of reading and hearing ſuch as are not called, hath with it an itching after ſome new doctrine, and a ſecret diſcontent with ſound doctrine, which putteth them to this, *to heap up teachers to themſelves*, which is ſaid, 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3. 1. To ſhew the difference that is betwixt teachers ſent of God, and ſuch as people chuſe to make ſo to themſelves, without his warrant. And, 2. It ſheweth what ordinarily doth accompany that itching practice, ver. 4. *They turn away their ears from truth, and are turned to fables.* For as it is ordinarily a luſting to vent ſome ſtrange doctrine, which doth make men write or preach without God's call thereunto, ſo it is an itching after ſome ſuch thing, or at leaſt a loathing of ſound ſimplicity, that makes people thus beſtow their time in the reading or hearing of ſuch. And if no ſuch thing be at firſt ſenſible, yet doth ſuch perſons tempt the Lord to give them up unto it.

2. Or if this follow not, we are ſure that it ſhall no way prove uſeful unto the followers thereof, as that word, Jer. xxiii. 33. is, *I ſent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they ſhall not profit this people at all.* And ſeeing edification is God's gift, can it be expected but in his way? or can that be accounted his way which he hath not warranted? at beſt, it putteth, 1. The perſon in the hazard of a ſnare, which hath taken many off their feet, which ſometime ſeemed to be ſtrong; and can they pray unto the Lord that they may not be led into temptation, when they do caſt themſelves into the ſnare? 2. It carries offence along with it, in reference to the party who runs unſent, it proves a ſtrengthening and confirming of him, and ſo a partaking of his ſin; in reference to others, it either ſtrengthens them, by that example, to caſt themſelves in that ſnare, which poſſibly may be their ruin; or it grieves them and makes them ſad who are tender of ſuch things; or gives occaſion to make all difference of that kind to be thought light of: all which ſhould be eſchewed. At leaſt, it doth this, it diverts men from that which might be more profitable, and to which they might expect a bleſſing, which they have not a promiſe of, nor can expect in this.

And ſeeing reading is a ſpecial mean of edification, if well employed, and a great ſtep to deſtruction, when otherwiſe, as experience doth prove, people who are commanded to watch, and to chuſe that which is moſt excellent, cannot be left in an indifferency in this; yea, the ſpending of our time rightly, being the improving of a ſpecial talent, which, in reading many things, may be exceedingly miſpent, if not hurtfully abuſed; Chriſtian wiſdom therefore is mainly called for in this, that a right choice may be made. Eſpecially, conſidering that it is but little time that many can ſpend in reading;

therefore, by a wrong choice, they incapacitate themſelves from reading that which may be more profitable for their caſe and ſtation. And alſo, ſeeing every one hath not that ability to diſcern poiſon from good food, there muſt be therefore a neceſſity that people regulate their Chriſtian liberty in this rightly, leſt it become looſeneſs, and turn to be a ſnare. Alſo, though ſome whom God hath furniſhed with gifts, and by their place and ſtation calleth them to convince gain-ſayers, may, and are called to acquaint themſelves with writings of all kinds; yet ought not all to take that liberty to themſelves, more than they durſt hazard publicly to debate with adverſaries of any kind, ſeeing the ſtrength and weight of their errors are ſtuffed into their writings, and we are no leſs unable to encounter their writ than their word.

In matter of hearing, it is not ſo hard to diſcern who are to be accounted to ſpeak without God's commiſſion; becauſe ordinarily, ſuch have either no warrantable call at all, no not in the outward form, and ſo cannot be accounted but to run unſent, or by palpable defection from the truth, and commiſſion given them in that call, they have forfeited their commiſſion, and ſo no more are to be accounted ambaſſadors to Chriſt, or watchmen of his flock, than a watchman of the city is to be accounted an obſerver thereof, when he hath publicly made defection to the enemy, and taken on with him. For we are here to reſt in the external call, and not to diſpute that which is inward, becauſe it paſſeth our reach: and Chriſt hath furniſhed his houſe with external ordinances, for the warranting of his peoples peace in reference to theſe things. There is therefore great difference to be placed here between one that is called, and one whom we think not worthy to be called: it is the firſt that warrants hearing, whereof we may afterwards have ſome occaſion to ſpeak.

It is more difficult to give directions in reference to reading; yet, ſeeing that now God hath furniſhed his people with many uſeful books, that in experience have been found to be ſuch, we may, for the help of the weaker, propoſe theſe general directions: 1. That they would ſpend their time in the reading of ſuch books as judicious tender Chriſtians have found good of before, or ſhall commend to them; ſuch as, to ſay ſo, have been tried and taſted, and therefore may be, as good food in which there is no hazard, meddled with. And there is no difficulty here; for ſuch and ſuch books are commonly eſteemed ſuch, and it is eaſy to attain to the knowledge of them. 2. Some reſpect may be had to the author ſo far as may help to a deciſion in this, whether ſuch and ſuch a book may be made uſe of if it be known to be his? that if, by other writings, preaching, or otherwiſe, he be known to be ſound and ſerious, ſuch a book may, with the more confidence, be hazarded upon: it is for this that frequently the names of authors are inſerted in their writings, as is done by John frequently in this book. For though no man's name ought to bear ſuch ſway with any, as to make them digeſt any thing without trial becauſe it cometh from him; yet it may give to one freedom to make uſe of the writings of ſuch, rather than of another, of whom there is no ſuch ground of confidence. 3. Where books and authors are noted by the judicious and godly to be dangerous and unprofitable, and in experience have been found to have been ſo to others, diſtance would be kept with ſuch, leſt we find the proof thereof by our own experience, which we would not learn from others. 4. Where books and authors are both unknown, we conceive, that it is more ſafe for private perſons for a time to abſtain the reading of them, until it be found what they are by ſome others, who may more judiciouſly diſcern the ſame, and, in the mean time, to ſpend that time in the reading of ſuch as unqueſtionably are profitable; becauſe by this we loſe no time, and this may be done in faith, knowing that we are not hazarding ourſelves upon a temptation, which, by reading the other that is unknown to us, cannot be. And ſeeing men uſually take this way in making choice of phyſicians for the body, who are in experience found by others to be ſkilful and uſeful, rather than to hazard on any who are yet unknown, and have given no ſuch proof: wiſdom would ſay, that no leſs ſhould be required in the making uſe of phyſicians, or remedies, that tend to our ſpiritual edification, it being of no leſs concernment than the other. And if theſe things were obſerved in writing, reading, and hearing reſpectively, as they may be applied in caſes, the church of Chriſt might be preſerved from many errors and offences, which by this liberty is occaſioned; and many perſons ſaved from much hurtful and unprofitable labour, both in writing and reading.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *Unto the angel of the church of Epheſus, write, Theſe things ſaith he that holdeth the ſeven ſtars in his right-hand, who walketh in the midſt of the ſeven golden candleſticks:*
2. *I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canſt not bear them which are evil; and thou haſt tried them which ſay they are apoſtles, and are not, and haſt found them liars;*
3. *And haſt born, and haſt patience, and for my name's ſake haſt laboured, and haſt not fainted.*

FOlloweth now the particular epiſtles to the ſeven churches, wherein our Lord maketh them know how privy he is to their actions, ill or good, commending the one, and reproving the other, with ſome promiſes and threatenings intermixed. There are ſome things common to all theſe epiſtles; ſome things peculiar to the churches he writes unto, as they are commended only, as Philadelphia and Smyrna; or diſcommended only, as Laodicea; or ſomewhat of both, as the other four.

1. It is common to all to have their epiſtles agreeing in the form, though different in the matter: as, 1. To be divided in an inſcription, comprehending the party to whom and from whom. 2. A narration, or body, comprehending the particular meſſage Chriſt ſends to them. 3. A concluſion, comprehending ſome promiſe to the overcomers, and an advertiſement to all hearers to profit.

2. All are directed to the angels, or the miniſters of the churches, and not to the churches themſelves immediately, though the firſt direction, chap. i. 11. be to them. And in the cloſe of every epiſtle, it is ſaid, *What the Spirit ſaith unto the churches.* If any aſk how the churches and angels or church-guides, are ſo indifferently and promiſcuouſly named? *Anſw.* For theſe reaſons: 1. Becauſe the church, and the collective body of officers, are ſo exceedingly near of kin each to other, and in their intereſts ſo interwoven, that, in the ſcripture phraſe, to write unto the church, and to write unto her officers, are one; as *to tell unto the church*, Matth. xviii. and to tell unto the church-officers, are one. 2. Becauſe the church is virtually comprehended, to ſpeak ſo, under her officers, who are not only the ſpecial members, but alſo, the repreſenters of that body: and as one, writing to an incorporation or burgh, and directing his letters to the magiſtrate thereof, may be ſaid to write unto the burgh, even ſo it is here: For though miniſters, in reſpect of their authority and adminiſtration of the ordinances, do not repreſent the church, but Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe ambaſſadors they are; yet, in reſpect of their united way of acting together, and their ſympathizing with all the members, and their joint intereſt in all the affairs belonging to the members, and the reciprocal ſharing that is between them and the members, of all good or evil temperatures, they may well be ſaid to repreſent the church, whoſe ſervants they are for Chriſt's ſake; even as the magiſtrate acting in his duty, repreſenteth God, yet, in ſome ſenſe alſo, may be ſaid to repreſent the people. 3. Becauſe there is ordinarily a great ſuitableneſs and likeneſs between the miniſter and people of that church whereof he is miniſter; he lukewarm, and they are lukewarm; he lively, and readily it is ſo with them, as we will ſee in all the ſeven epiſtles following; and therefore the writing unto and deſcribing of one, doth, by conſequence, include both, eſpecially, conſidering that whether the churches eſtate be good or ill, the miniſter hath much influence on it, and therefore, both in reproofs and commendations, the firſt word is directed to him. 4. Becauſe the order Chriſt hath inſtituted in his church doth ſo require: he reveals not his mind immediately to the people, but firſt to his miniſters, and by them to the church; for our Lord's way is orderly, ſo as may prevent confuſion in his church; which is done, not by putting it in the hands of people, but by putting his miniſters to it in theſe things which concern their ſtation; and theſe being ſuch things as belong peculiarly to miniſters to be amended, in the epiſtles, therefore, doth he particularly direct it to them.

3. All the titles given to Chriſt, are, for the moſt part, taken out of the viſion, chap. i. only they are choſen and pitched on as may beſt ſerve

the ſcope of every epiſtle; as the Lord is to diſcover their caſe, or, accordingly, to threaten or promiſe, the title is wailed which is moſt ſuitable to that end: as here Chriſt's preſence, care, and ſovereignty over his churches and miniſters are laid down, when he is to diſcover a ſecret fault in them, and to threaten the unchurching of them for it; there being ordinarily in every epiſtle two titles, one reſpecting the caſe of the church written unto, the other the promiſe or threatening which is annexed: and therefore are they upon the matter, often in plain terms reſumed in the cloſe of the epiſtle, which may give ſome inſight into the meaning of them.

4. It is common to them all to begin with this word, *I know thy works;* that ſo there may not only be an evidence of Chriſt's Godhead, but alſo to remove all exception which might be made againſt his teſtimony. We take it to look ordinarily, not ſo much to his approbation, as to his omniſcience, ſimply; becauſe it is indifferently made the ground of reproof, as well as of the commendation, and therefore is uſed in the epiſtle to Laodicea, where no commendation is given.

For more particular uſe-making of theſe epiſtles, conſider. 1. The immediate ſcope of them which is to ſtir up the ſeven churches, according to their ſeveral conditions, to hold faſt what was right, and to amend what was wrong, having in them the diſcovery of the then eſtate of thoſe churches, and ſome warnings ſuitable to that end: and ſo they are not in a prophetical way primarily to repreſent particular churches in ages following; yet, 2. Are they uſeful, in a ſpecial manner, to other churches, being doctrinally applied to their caſe, as the Lord applieth the words of Iſa. xxix. 13. Matth. xv. 7. *Hypocrites, well did Iſaiah propheſy of you, &c.* whereas Iſaiah's words do principally reſpect the people in his own time, yet may they be applied to all hypocrites in ſuch a caſe, as if it had been intentionally ſpoken of them: ſo may it be here in the application of them to particular churches in the like caſes: yea, to particular perſons according to the common cloſe, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear, &c.* And the epiſtles may be ſo much the more uſeful in the application than other ſcriptures; becauſe, in one map, they comprehend together the complex caſe of a church, with the particular directions, reproofs, and encouragements which befit the caſe. 3. The epiſtles being directed to both the angels and churches, to the one mediately, to the other immediately, as we ſhew, we would beware of confounding the directions, and matter contained in them, as equally agreeing to both, as alſo, of too rigid ſeparating of them, as if what principally belonged to the miniſter, did no way belong to the people, and contrarily; but to look what may agree to either without confounding of ſtations or ſexes. As in all other ſcriptures we take directions in things belonging to magiſtrates to be given them, and ſo to others in all ſeveral ſtations reſpectively; ſo here, what belongeth to miniſters, apply it to them: as for inſtance, preaching, and judicial trial of corrupt men, that, ſo far as it is authoritative, belongs to officers; yet ſo far as people have acceſs in their ſtations to promote ſuch ends, as many ways they may, in ſo far it belongs to them, and ſo in other caſes.

Verſe 2. Followeth the body of the epiſtle, for the inſcription is opened, chap. i. except what concerneth the application of it to the eſtate of this church, and it hath ſeveral ſteps in it: 1. A general word, which is the ground of our Lord's pronouncing his cenſure, *I know thy works*, to hold out his omniſcience without approbation or commendation. The meaning is, I know all thy works, inward and outward, thy form and way of adminiſtration of all things in the church, all thy outward carriage in things, the things themſelves, and thy frame in going about them, the matter and manner of doing them, and the end thou hadſt before thee in them; and I know them perfectly, exactly, and throughly; a thing that in the entry to his ſervice, and every other thing, we would look to and bear in mind, that Chriſt is acquainted with all our carriage, and every thing that eſcapeth us. And this being often repeated, it ſaith, that Chriſt counts this a main part of his meſſage, to have ſouls convinced of his perfect and thorough knowledge of their works.

He proceedeth to the commendation, ver. 2, 3. The commendation is, 1. Shortly ſet down. And, 2. More particularly explained: primarly, it is applicable to the angel, but ſecondarily, to others. It is ſhortly ſet down in three ſteps in the words, *thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canſt not bear them that are evil.* Having told them in the general, that he knew all their works, good and evil; he tells the particular works he commends: 1. Their *labour;* the word in the original,

κοπὸς, the labour which is properly applied to miniſters in their miniſterial work: it is that word, 1 Tim. v. 17. *Let the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, eſpecially theſe who labour in the word and doctrine;* and, 1 Theſſ. v. 12. *Know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord;* and it is a word that ſets out the great carefulneſs and painfulneſs of the miniſtry: and being ſpoken eſpecially to the angels, the meaning is, I know thy painfulneſs and care in the work of the miniſtry, committed to thee, eſpecially thy painfulneſs in preaching, although proportionably we are to look upon Chriſt's taking notice of, and approving the carriage of the ſeveral members of this church in reference to their duty. 2. Their patience: this reſpects their ſuffering, labour in duty, and ſubmiſſion in ſuffering, go well together. I know, ſaith he, very well all the perſecution and ſuffering thou art under, all the ill-will of ſome within, all the malice of others without, againſt thee, and all the troubles thou haſt met with from Satan and his inſtruments, and how patiently, ſubmiſſively and conſtantly thou haſt born them all. The 3. thing whereby they are commended (and it relates eſpecially to the miniſters) is their zeal in executing diſcipline, *they could not bear them which were evil:* and therefore, for as patient as they were under croſſes; yet they were ſtout, couragious, and zealous againſt corrupt men; by trying, cenſuring, and giving no toleration to them. And this he alſo points at, with a commendation.

2. He explicateth more fully theſe three ſteps: beginning at the laſt, firſt: and ſo goeth backward through the three. 1. He beginneth at and explicateth their zeal, in not bearing with corrupt men, *thou haſt tried them which ſay they are apoſtles, and are not, and haſt found them liars.* Wherein theſe three particulars are explained. 1. Who the ill men were whom they could not bear, even falſe teachers, that took upon them to call themſelves apoſtles, as if they had been endued with an infallible Spirit, and had an univerſal charge. And it is ſet out as a part of their zeal and commendation, that theſe falſe teachers, that pretended to ſuch a commiſſion, and to be ſo forward for Chriſt, were yet put to proof and trial by them. 2. The orderlineſs of their proceeding, is commended, that they took not things by gueſs, nor upon hear-ſay, but tried them: they firſt tried their doctrine by the touch-ſtone, and then by the doctrine, whether they who preached it were of Chriſt or not, or had a call or commiſſion from him: it holds out an exact and judicial way of proceeding and trial of them, both in their doctrine and call. 3. That as they were not indeed apoſtles, though they called themſelves apoſtles; ſo they found them out to be what they were, liars and deluders of the people, eſpecially in alledging a commiſſion from Chriſt, when they had none. And this being a main part of the commendation of the angel, and of his exerciſe, it is moſt largely inſiſted on.

Verſe 3. He explaineth their patience, *and haſt born, and haſt patience:* their bearing looks to the ſufferings they met with from the falſe apoſtles, in the proſecuting of their trial: wherein they met with many afflictions; yet they endured to proſecute their duty as good ſoldiers do, 2 Tim. iv. 2, 3. *And haſt patience;* which relateth to the quiet and patient manner of their ſuffering affliction. It is nothing to ſuffer, when folk cannot eſchew it; but they ſuffered patiently in the doing of their duty, and continued in patient ſuffering. 3. He commends and explains their labour: *for my name's ſake, thou haſt laboured and not fainted:* which firſt words, *for my name's ſake,* will agree well to the word going before; and ſo is the ground of their ſubmiſſion and patience under croſſes: or, it may look to the words following; and ſo the meaning is, for zeal to my glory thou haſt endured all theſe pains; for my name's ſake, thou haſt been at pains in doing, and haſt overcome all rubs in the way. *And haſt not fainted:* that is, thou haſt not been wearied of, nor ſcared or boaſted from, thy duty: nor made to deſert it for all the ſuffering thou haſt met with, but reſpect to my name, hath made thee perſevere. So then, their labour, as it was ſpoken of before, points at their painfulneſs: and here it reſpects their ſingleneſs, that it was not in a way of ſelf-ſeeking, *but for his name's ſake.* 2. That it was conſtant and continuing: they were carried on without interruption in proſecuting their zealous intention.

If it be aſked here, how ſuch as call themſelves apoſtles, or do account themſelves not ſubject to the diſcipline of a particular church (as theſe who pretended to be apoſtles behoved to do) can be or-

derly proceeded againſt by church-trial and cenſure, eſpecially of a particular church?

Anſw. 1. There is no apoſtle nor angel, in the preaching of the goſpel, that is altogether above trial: they are, as ſuch, above erring in doctrine, yet may and ſhould their doctrine be tried according to the word, Acts xvii. 11. Gal. i. 8. Becauſe, even apoſtles are but ambaſſadors, and are not lords over the faith of God's people, but helpers of their joy, 2 Cor. v. 20. 1 Pet. v. 3. &c. *Secondly*, Apoſtles in the guiding of a conſtitute church, oftentimes uſed not their extraordinary authority, as acting by themſelves by virtue of their infallibility; but jointly with others, in an ordinary way, clearing and confirming their doctrine and practices from ſcripture, and God's call warranting them in that particular, as appears by Peter's apology, Acts xi. and Paul with the reſt of the apoſtles their proceeding, Acts xv. In which two reſpects, it is ſuitable for believers, to try the ſpirits, 1 John iv. 1. *Thirdly*, We ſay, that no preſumptuous title aſſumed by ones ſelf, nor any irregular walking, as belonging to no church, or not to ſuch and ſuch a particular church, can exempt any member of the catholic church from trial, and, if need require, from cenſure of the particular church, where ſuch perſon, or perſons ſhall reſide; which we ſhall confirm from theſe reaſons. 1. Not from trial: becauſe in ſo far the doctrine and practices of the apoſtles themſelves (who were not fixed members of any particular congregation for their memberſhip, and their office behoved to be of equal extent) were ſubject to trial, that it might be known whether they were of God or not, as is ſaid. Yea, 2. Neither from cenſure, (ſuppoſing it poſſible that they ſhould err, and them actually to have erred) as we may ſee by Paul's ſuppoſition, Gal. i. 8. *If I preach another goſpel, &c.* and alſo by Paul's open rebuking of Peter when he was to be blamed, Gal. ii. 14. 3. This ſame practice may confirm it, the church rulers of Epheſus were not ſcared by that title, nor yet by their not having memberſhip among them, (as it ſeems ſuch could not have, being readily ſtrangers, and thereby having the greater acceſs to give out themſelves for the thing they were not) yet they went on to try and cenſure, which is particularly commended in them by Jeſus Chriſt. 4. It may be confirmed from that power that Chriſt hath given to his church-officers for edification, and for preſerving the church committed to them from infection, which would ſeem to be defective, if men had liberty (under the former pretexts) to vent error and commit ſcandalous practices, for the inſnaring of others, in churches whereof they were not properly members: and though it might be ſaid, that ſimply ſuch perſons were not under the trial and cenſure of ſuch a church; yet *catenus* and in that reſpect, as it is neceſſary, for the good of that church, to have theſe perſons tried and cenſured, they do fall under their authority; and warrantably it is put forth for putting ſome note on them, for the preventing and removing of offences from the people. 5. It may be confirmed from the unity of the catholic church viſible, by which any member thereof, if no particular thing impede, may claim the privileges of a member by communion in public ordinances of word and ſacraments in whatſoever church, though he be no particular member thereof: and therefore *a pari*, he ought alſo to be liable to the diſcipline of Chriſt in any particular church, where he ſhall fall to be: (ſeeing that claiming the privileges of a church, and ſubmiſſion to the ordinances thereof, are in themſelves reciprocal) and though ſome profane wretch renounce his own privilege; yet that makes not the church to loſe hers; but ſo long as he continues a member of the catholic viſible church, as long is he under cenſures of the church, which are put forth in particular congregations. 6. It may be confirmed from the abſurdities, that otherwiſe would follow: as, 1. There might be a ſcandalous member of the catholic viſible church, who could not be reached by church-cenſure. 2. One Chriſtian might offend and ſtumble another: and *telling to the church*, would be no remedy to it, Matth. xviii. if no particular church had power over ſuch a one, which is contrary to Chriſt's ſcope. 3. A door would be opened to a looſe liberty within Chriſt's houſe: for, in ſuch a caſe, men could neither be cenſured, nor caſt out of the church, nor in any eccleſiaſtical way, be compelled to take on church-memberſhip, or live regularly in the church; by this, there might be ſome Chriſtians ſick and needing this cure of diſcipline, to whom it could not be applied: by this the ordinance of diſcipline would not be of equal extent with the ſacrament of baptiſm: all which are abſurd.

Obſerve 1. Chriſt would have us always walking in the ſenſe of his omniſcience, which makes him begin all theſe epiſtles with this, *I know thy works*; a profitable, but a difficult truth to be believed by Chriſtians.

2. Chriſt is an unprejudged witneſs, and ſhould be eſteemed ſo by his church; he beareth teſtimony unto them, as he taketh notice of their good, as well as their evil.

3. Such as Chriſt never called, may take on them higheſt titles in the church, pretend confidently to a moſt immediate call, carry fair, and gain reſpect, and have ſome gifts for that end, as it ſeemeth theſe had who called themſelves apoſtles.

4. That diligence in duty, and difficulty in the performance of it, often go together: to do, and to bear, are often joined: two things that in our reſolution and practice we would not ſunder: and if it were believed, we would not ſcare at the very ſhadow of ſuffering in, or following upon our duty, as we do.

5. Patience in ſuffering, and impatience againſt corruptions and corrupt men, can well ſtand together. This people is ſaid to bear and ſuffer, and yet it is ſaid, they could not *bear*: the reaſon is, becauſe their patient ſuffering or bearing, in the one word, relates to their enduring of croſſes; and their not bearing or ſuffering, in the other word, relates to corrupt men, and their zeal againſt them. It were a good thing to knit theſe two together, not to let our zeal wear away our patience, nor our patience prejudge our zeal. There is a kind of zeal that puts folks always to do, to the end they may ſhun ſuffering, that is not good; and there is a ſort of patience and meekneſs that wants zeal and ſharpneſs in reference to the purging of Chriſt's houſe, a patience that can bear with ill men, and this is no more to be commended than the former. This angel is commended that he eſchewed both, and had both patience and zeal in exerciſe running in their right channel, and put forth toward the right objects; and would God theſe were more ſeen and diſcernible in our practice; the one would make our zeal to ſhine, and the other would make our patience and humility praiſe-worthy; and if they be not joined, our zeal ſhall be carnal, and our patience lukewarm, and neither of theſe will be commended of Chriſt.

6. There is no name, privilege, or title, that ſhould ſcare people, eſpecially the miniſters of God, from ſearching or trying corrupt men, that bring corrupt doctrine, pretending a commiſſion from Chriſt when they have none, though they ſhould have the pretext of miniſters and apoſtles, and never ſo great gifts (for very like theſe men who took this name to themſelves wanted not gifts) or ſo ſmooth a carriage to inſinuate themſelves on people, and to commend their preſumption to them, for it was commendable zeal in this angel to try them, and diſcover them.

7. If folks will put to proof and trial many things and perſons that have fair names, they will be found very unlike the names they take. It is a time wherein we had need not to take every thing on truſt from all perſons, though their gifts were great, and they had big titles and names, but humbly and ſoberly to wait on God for light and direction, ſearching and trying both men's carriage and doctrine, and the commiſſion they pretend to in carrying of it.

8. Where an immediate call is pretended unto, and great titles aſſumed, ordinarily it is to carry on ſome ſtrange doctrine or deſign, and is therefore to be ſuſpected by the people of God, 2 Cor. xi. 13.

9. The cenſuring of corrupt unſent miniſters, is a moſt difficult taſk, what from their nature, and ſometimes from their parts; what from the addictedneſs of many unto them; yet it is a ſpecial duty: and although it be often difficult to follow, and be miſtaken by many others; yet that it is acceptable before Jeſus Chriſt, may appear from theſe conſiderations. 1. That the ſcripture holdeth forth no kind of perſons as more abominable in themſelves, and more hateful to him; for which cauſe, they are called *dogs, and dumb dogs that cannot bark*, Iſaiah lvi. 10. *Salt without ſavour, wolves, idle ſhepherds, ſuch as feed themſelves, and kill his flock, blind guides*, &c. Hence it is, that there are not more ſad expoſtulations with complaints of, or threatenings pronounced againſt any, than againſt theſe: our bleſſed Lord Jeſus multiplies woes unto ſuch in a more terrible manner than was uſual to him, Matth. xxxiii. 2. There is no kind of perſons that prove more diſhonourable to our Lord Jeſus, and to his goſpel than ſuch: theſe make the law to be deſpiſed, Mal. ii. and the ſacrifices and ordinances to be counted vile and contemptible, 1 Sam. ii. Such eſpecially open the mouths of profane men againſt

religion, and the author thereof, and exceedingly derogate from the authority of him they pretend to have ſent them, and to the ambaſſage they are ſent with, while as they look ſo unlike him. And upon this account it is amongſt others, that ſuch particular directions for the ſingular qualifying of church-officers, are given in ſcripture: and the cenſuring of ſuch, and that by Chriſt's own authority, vindicateth him, which cannot be but honourable and acceptable to him. 3. The ſcandalous miſcarriages and unfaithfulneſs of miniſters, bring a ſpecial blot upon all religion, as if it were but mere hypocriſy, and tended to the foſtering of ſuch ills: and profane men are exceedingly ſtrengthened in ſuch atheiſtical apprehenſions, when theſe ills are not taken notice of, and cenſured by church authority: whereas by this ſeverity in the exerciſe of diſcipline, the faults are ſeen to be in perſons, and not in religion, or the ordinances thereof. 4. There is no ſuch contempt done to our Lord Jeſus, as for one to pretend to have commiſſion from him; and yet to be running unſent by him, or having gotten commiſſion, to miſcarry by unfaithfulneſs in it: this is a betraying of truſt, and cannot but be looked on as a high contempt againſt him. 5. As there is a ſuitableneſs in the cenſuring of ſuch church-officers to Chriſt's mind, ſo there doth appear in the ſame, a tenderneſs of, and zeal unto his glory. Hence it is, that his moſt zealous ſervants, as Elias, Paul, (yea, and himſelf when on earth) did ſet themſelves moſt againſt that generation. 6. There is no ſort of men more hurtful to the church, by obſtructing Chriſt's end in his ordinances, viz. the edification of his people: for, ſuch profit them not at all, Jer. xxiii. yea, they ſtand in the way of their profiting, ſometimes by corrupt doctrine; ſometimes by example; ſometimes by ſadening and weakening of theſe who look more tenderly to the practice of Godlineſs: and if no other way; yet, by filling the room, and ſo ſtanding in the way of the people's being provided with ſuch as might be helpful and faithful. Now, conſidering the great reſpect that our Lord Jeſus hath to the edification of his people; and conſidering the weight that he hath placed upon this miniſtry, as a mean for promoting of that end, and withal, the great obſtruction that follows to that end, when this mean diſappoints, it cannot but be accounted acceptable to him to remove ſuch an obſtruction. Yea, 7. Conſidering that there is nothing he commends more than mutual love to his diſciples, and there is nothing wherein love can appear more to them, than in ſeeking their ſpiritual edification, which was that wherein his own love eminently kythed; and there is nothing wherein this kind of love kythes more to him or them, than that they be fed with knowledge and underſtanding, by paſtors according to his own heart, according to his word to Peter, *Peter loveſt thou me?* then *feed my lambs:* it cannot therefore but be looked on by him as acceptable ſervice. And indeed, if it be commendable to relieve a neighbour's beaſt from hazard, when there is a ſlothful ſhepherd: or to relieve the bodily life from temporal hazard, how much more muſt it be commendable to prevent the eternal hazard of immortal ſouls, which by corrupt miniſters cannot but be in hazard? 8. There is nothing that more rejoiceth and hardeneth corrupt men, than when they are like people, like prieſt, and have paſtors according to their own heart; and there is nothing that they are more provoked and diſpleaſed with, than the cenſuring of ſuch: yea, even men who have no reſpect almoſt to religion at all, yet abhor and oppoſe the cenſuring of ſuch, as if it were a piece of religion or rather of oppoſition to religion, to do ſo: which certainly ſheweth, that the following of this trial, muſt be a main furtherance to Godlineſs, and cometh near the kingdom of Chriſt. 9. Not only is there an obſtruction to Godlineſs by ſuch, but they have a main influence upon the advancing of profanity, and the kingdom of the devil, as if profeſſedly they had confederated with him againſt Chriſt. Hence it is ſaid, that from them doth profanity go out to the whole land, Jer. xxiii. And they are called miniſters of Satan. 2 Cor. xi. as ambaſſadors employed by him in his ſervice. And where it is thus, not only are ſcandalous practices committed, but avowed, as it were in contempt of Godlineſs, and of faithful miniſters, who ſeriouſly ſtudy the promoting of it. Hence it is, that often there is a kind of ſtated enmity againſt faithfulneſs and faithful men, not only amongſt ſuch miniſters themſelves, but in their congregations and followers; which ſheweth the prejudice that cometh by them, and ſo the neceſſity of removing them.

It may now look like cruelty, it may be, rigidly

to purſue ſuch, and like pity to ſpare them which may be much applauded by many: yet if we could conſider what hazard may come to immortal ſouls in a ſhort time by the want of a powerful miniſtry, much more by the having of corrupt men either in life or doctrine in that ſtation, and what thoughts ſouls will have of that cruel pity in the day of judgment: we are perſuaded horror would affect the hearts of theſe who are concerned; conſidering how many are palpably in hazard through defect in this: can it be thought that Chriſt's ordaining of a miniſtry, was only to have men bearing ſuch a name, and not to have ſuch as effectually and ſeriouſly would promote his deſign? and can that be expected, whilſt men unfit for it, or unworthy of that calling, poſſeſs the room? and if it be a deplorable condition to have congregations deſolate without the ordinances, and living like heathens, or as ſheep without a ſhepherd, or blind men without a guide, is it any leſs, yea, is it not much more lamentable to have ſuch as rather mar than further the main deſign? which breedeth confidence and ſecurity in ſome natural men, occaſioneth profanity and looſeneſs in others, and almoſt ſerveth to no end, but to keep ſuch a congregation from one that may guide them, and them from knowing their want, or hazard: and, in ſum, to obſtruct, and put in a non-entry, their edification, more than if none were there at all: for, Chriſt's way appointed for edifying of his church, is not only to have the form of ordinances, by men, ſupplying theſe places; but to have ſuch as may by his approbation follow his way of attaining his end. We conceive that the regulating of the entry of church-officers, ſo that none but ſuch as are thereby approven may be admitted, and of the trial of theſe who are in, that ſuch who carry themſelves unworthily may be removed, is one of the main ends why church authority is given by Jeſus Chriſt for the edification of his body, as the ſpecial directions to Timothy and Titus, which do regulate church-officers, eſpecially in the admiſſion and accuſation of elders, do demonſtrate: and if this main point be neglected by church-officers, it may juſtly provoke God to weaken, if not to break that authority to them, and to make them and it in their hands juſtly to become deſpicable, which nothing furthers more than the admitting and permitting of corrupt and unmeet officers to be in the church. And if people delight to have it ſo, and fret at any thing which may amend it, much more if they affect the continuance thereof, and concur to the ſupporting of ſuch, it may be that the Lord will give them a fill of their own ways; and by error, confuſion, or ſome other way, ſo bring it about in his juſt judgment, that either they ſhall have no face of ordinances at all, or have the carcaſs of them as a ſnare and a curſe unto them, who received not the love of the truth, that they might be ſaved, but contented themſelves to have the ſhape and form of Chriſt's ordinances only among them without reſpect to the end for which he appointed them. That zealous and pungent diſcourſe which Mr. Baxter hath to this purpoſe in the cloſe of his *Agreement*, is moſt weighty and convincing; and the matter thereof, ſo far as concerns this, worthy to be conſidered. All which is ſtill to be underſtood of ſuch legal trials as are followed on ſolid grounds, and in an orderly circumſpect manner; for ſuch was this trial of the falſe apoſtles, by the angel or elders of the church of Epheſus, which uſually is cited by divines to confirm the power of the church in cenſuring her officers.

LECTURE II.

Ver. 4. *Nevertheleſs, I have ſomewhat againſt thee, becauſe thou haſt left thy firſt love.*
5. *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the firſt works, or elſe I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candleſtick out of his place, except thou repent.*

OUR Lord Jeſus is the faithful and true witneſs, who impartially teſtifieth, both of what is right, and what is wrong in his church: we have heard his commendation, ſhewing what was right; he began at that, to make way for the other part of his teſtimony, which is to diſcover what was wrong; and it is ſet down, verſe 4. 1. More generally by a tranſition from the commendation, *Nevertheleſs, I have ſomewhat againſt thee;* that is, though all theſe things be true, and thou be

commendable in them, and I commend thee for them; yet, there is a *Nevertheleſs* added: that is not all, there are ſomethings wrong, which I alſo take notice of, and will quarrel for, though there be many things right. This ſhews, 1. Our Lord Jeſus his impartiality in taking notice of all, good and ill. And, 2. It ſhews the extent of duty which conſiſts in an univerſal reſpect to all his commands; and, failing, in ſome things, may be as a dead flie in a box of ointment, to mar the ſavour of the reſt. And, 3. That it is meet for believers to know their whole eſtate, their ill as well as their good: both are uſeful to them to be known, and both are repreſented by our Lord Jeſus unto them, his commending of them, alters not what is juſtly reprovable, his reproof prejudges them not in what is commendable: this way believers ought to take in reference to themſelves. 4. It ſhews, that even believers ſhould take a reproof, as well as a commendation, eſpecially when it cometh from our Lord Jeſus his mouth; yea, though in many things they be right; yet, ſhould a reproof notwithſtanding thereof, be digeſted in any thing wherein they are wrong.

2. The particular reproved, is ſet down, *Thou haſt fallen from thy firſt love.* 1. By *Love* here, is not underſtood the object beloved, as it is ſaid of widows, 1 Tim. v. 12. who had caſt off their *firſt faith;* it was not ſo here: there was no public defection in matter of doctrine, as the commendation preceding clears. Nor, 2. Is it neceſſary here to be underſtood principally of a decay of love in the habit itſelf, but in the exerciſe and fruits thereof, as is clear by the oppoſition following, *do the firſt works:* which points out the fault reproved, to have conſiſted in the neglect of theſe, which is again removed by the performing of them; though we think there is a ſuitableneſs between the habit and its fruits, as it is with the one, ſo it is with the other: and few acts and fruits do evidence the habit thereof to be cold and languiſhing. 3. Neither do we underſtand here by *falling*, from their firſt love, a total falling from fruits: but comparatively a falling from ſome former acts and degrees, or their vigorous manner of acting from love, as they had wont formerly to do, called *firſt love* here, and afterwards, *firſt works.* By comparing then this reproof with the commendation, we conceive, it doth include theſe three, 1. A falling from theſe duties, wherein eſpecially true love to God, and charity to others conſiſted; that is, they were much in outward reformation, profeſſion and zeal that way; but wanting inwardly, heart burning love and affection to God, and ſo in ſome meaſure were hypocritical; in that their love within was not anſwerable to their profeſſion without, but were more taken up in their external fruits, than in the inward exerciſe of love, in ſo far agreeing with the Phariſees in that fault reproved, Luke xi. 42. *Ye tithe mint*, &c. *but paſs over judgment and the love of God.* 2. As it looks to others, it may ſay, though there was zeal in the external worſhip of God; yet there was great defect of that love, ſympathy and affection of one of them, with and to another, that ſhould be; this being ordinary, that love inflamed to God-ward, and love one to another, go together; and therefore as it importeth they had fallen from their former warm impreſſions of love to God; ſo alſo from their kindly affections one to another, and had fallen in part to be more in ſacrifice, and externals of worſhip, than in mercy and love one to another, Hoſ. vi. 7. and Mat. xii. 7. The third, is a decay of love in the manner of doing duties; ſo that though they continued in the practice of former duties towards God, and towards others; yet, in reſpect of love to God, as the principal acting them in ſuch duties or affections towards others, they had much decayed; and therefore may be charged to have fallen from their firſt love, though they continued in the external performances, becauſe the former native vigour and life in thoſe duties was decayed. Whence we may gather, that there may be many things commendable in a church, or in a perſon, and yet there may be a ſecret quarrel between Chriſt and them, as Pſal. lxxviii. 34, 35, 36. compared together, do ſhew; yea, that there may be many things right in a believer in reſpect of externals, and yet a diſſatisfaction to Jeſus Chriſt in their ſecret condition. That this angel, and many of theſe written to in this church, were believers, this reproof clears, which ſuppoſeth them once to have had love; that they have many things commendable, the former verſe is clear, viz, pure profeſſion of truth, zealous exerciſe of diſcipline, diligence in doing, and labouring, patience in ſuffering, honeſtly in their end, *for Chriſt's name ſake*, and continuing in all theſe without fainting; yet is there a *nevertheleſs* added, which may make

hearts to tremble, and not to reckon their condition from external performances; and ought to put believers to it, to see how they will free themselves from this part of the challenge. 2. Our Lord Jesus doth especially take notice of the love of his people, and is much swayed in his commendations and reproofs according as he findeth it in exercise towards him, and towards others. 3. Love within may be cold, when folks practices without look very hot, and upon the matter may be accepted of Christ. 4. Believers often at their first engaging to Christ, have their love more warm towards him, and towards others, than afterwards it will be; or, believers ordinarily slip from that warmness of affection that accompanieth their entry, and become more cold in their affections towards God, and towards others; the first love continueth not. 5. Backsliding and declining from what folk have been, either in profession or practice, is, and will be a special article of Christ's charge. Hence is it, that *hold fast* is so frequently repeated in the following epistles: not only to intimate what is our duty; but also to evidence how ill the Lord taketh declining when he finds it among his people, Heb. x. 38. *If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.* 6. Every decay is a *falling*, and hurts the work of grace proportionably, as gross commissions do; and it is as impossible for a man to sit up in the exercise of inward graces, and not to hurt them, as for a man to fall from a height, and not be wounded.

Verse 5. Followeth the direction, which our Lord prescribeth as the duty suiting their case, and the threatening wherewith he backs it. The direction hath three steps, every one of them making way for another. The first is, *Remember from whence thou art fallen;* that is, advert and consider how it is with thee, by what it was at the beginning; that so, by reflecting upon themselves, and comparing their present condition with what is past, they might be brought to take up their own condition. In sum, it implieth, that there had been in them an inadvertancy unto, and forgetfulness of their own condition for a time, which had made them without challenges slip into, and continue in that backslidden condition. Unto this, *remembering* is opposed, which taketh in, not only a simple act of memory, but a sensible exercise of the conscience and affections also, following upon their reflecting on themselves; like the word, Ezek. xvi. 16. *Thou shalt remember thy ways,* &c.

The second part of the direction is, *Repent:* this is the fruit and end of the former, relating also to what was past, that not only they should look upon their ways, but that their eye should affect their heart, for the upstirring of them in the exercise of repentance: which includeth these two; 1. A kindly indignation against their sin, and against themselves for their sin, so as in some part, they avenge God of themselves in the judging and censuring of themselves in the behalf of God, as it is in 2 Cor. vii. 11. 2. It taketh in inward and outward change of their way for the time to come, which is ever a fruit of true repentance; when the party is brought not only to confess, but to forsake their sin, as the words following clear in the third direction; which is, *Do the first works.* This relateth unto the time to come; that is, what once they had been at in the performance of worship to God, and in duties one to another in the manner, as well as in the matter, and were now fallen from, as we hinted at in the reproof, that they should by all means set themselves to recover the same, this being a native fruit and companion of repentance, carefully to abstain from the evils, and perform the duties which they have been most touched with in the challenge. These three go well together, and notably prescribe the remedy of a foul backslidden from liveliness to deadness, and directs to the recovery of their former state, which will not be attained by lazy prayers, and fainting complaints; but by serious upstirring, and exercise of these three, *Self-Searching*, *Repentance*, and *Practice*, and that in the native order as they ly.

More particularly, from the several directions, *Observe*, 1. That as forgetfulness of our own condition, and not reflecting on ourselves, is the great cause of much declining and backsliding in heart, and of continuing therein: so, upon the contrary, self-examination, and remembering of our own way, and reflecting on ourselves, is a notable mean to prevent decay, and to entertain a good frame; as also to further the exercise of repentance, and to recover a frame when it is lost. 2. Believers may fall into that neglect. 3. When believers become negligent, they decline in part, though not wholly. 4. When believers fall, they are to take the same way for their recovery. 5. Believers may be under great decay, and yet not take great notice

of it, nor from whence they are fallen; yea, it implieth further, that where the decay is within, and the carriage fair without, as here, it is hard to get them convinced of it.

From the ſecond ſtep of the direction, *Repent*, &c. *Obſerve*, 1. That repentance is a duty incumbent even upon believers, 1 John i. 8. 2. That it is called for, wherever there is ſin, even of omiſſions, as here. But, 3. Eſpecially where there is declining. 4. Change of practice, where there hath been ſin, will not be ſufficient, if repentance for what is paſt do not accompany it.

From the third ſtep, *Do the firſt works. Obſerve*, 1. That believers firſt works are often more commendable, than theſe which come after. 2. There may be great difference in the ſame works on the matter, even of the ſame perſon, in Chriſt's account, 3. Works, and works livelily gone about, are called for from believers: Chriſt Jeſus was no legal preacher; yet doth he require both repentance and works from theſe Epheſians.

The third thing in this epiſtle, is, The threatning, or certification, wherewith this direction is preſſed, (which doth the more confirm the former doctrine) *or elſe I will come unto thee quickly, and remove thy candleſtick out of its place, except thou repent:* in which words, we are to conſider the thing threatened. 2. The perſons threatened. 3. The certification, upon which it is pronounced. 4. The perſon threatening. And laſtly, the ſpeedineſs or ſuddenneſs of his performing what he threatened. The thing threatened, is the *removing of the candleſtick out of its place.* By candleſtick, chap. i. verſe 20. is underſtood the church: therefore by the removing thereof, muſt be underſtood the unchurching of them; ſo that Epheſus now a church, and candleſtick, ſhould have that removed, and not be continued a church: this is in effect like that, Zech. xi. of the Lord's breaking the two ſtaves, and refuſing to feed that people any more. This is a ſad, though a juſt threatening, which may put us to enquire wherefor the Lord thus threateneth this angel, and church, beſide any other? eſpecially conſidering they were not the worſt, as was ſeen in the commendation, why then is ſhe threatened? and how uſually the Lord doth execute this, ſhall be ſpoken unto, when the words are opened.

2. The perſon threatened, is moſt eſpecially and immediately the angel, as is clear by uſing of the ſingular number, thy candleſtick, and I will come to thee, &c. And with him, we conceive, that the threatening reſpects moſt theſe who were really believers in that church: becauſe eſpecially, the charge of falling from the firſt love, and direction of doing the firſt works, agree to them. The threatening alſo of removing the candleſtick would be moſt laid to heart by them. Thus Chriſt uſually threateneth; yea, correcteth his own, when he lets others ſlip, Amos iii. 2. Neither doth he here ſo particularly charge and threaten the heathens for refuſing the goſpel, nor yet the falſe apoſtles, or Nicolaitans, for open abuſing it, as he doth this zealous angel; the reaſon is not becauſe he loves them leſs: but becauſe their ſins come nearer his honour, and he is more affected with them; and becauſe he mindeth their good, he judgeth and chaſteneth them, leſt they ſhould be condemned with the world, 1 Cor. xi. 32. whereas he ſuſpendeth his judging of the reſt, and beſtoweth not a reproof upon them, until judgment altogether ſurprize them.

3. The certification upon which this great judgment (which is greater than either ſword, famine, or peſtilence) is threatened, is, *Except they repent;* by which we may gather the neceſſity of repentance in itſelf, and its acceptation by Jeſus Chriſt, not as if there were any merit in it to deſerve, or any moving impulſive virtue in it to perſuade him to pity, as humiliations uſe to perſuade men, he is not capable of ſuch motives: nor yet as if he had any delight in the ſadening, and exerciſing of his people; but that he may ſhew the peremptory connection between repentance and pardon, which in the order of ſalvation he hath laid down, thereby to make the ſinner know ſomething of the ill of ſin and worth of grace; which is the reaſon why the preaching of the goſpel ordinarily begins with this. By repentance here we do not underſtand ſtrickly the grace of repentance, as it is contradiſtinguiſhed from faith, much leſs any natural or worldly ſorrow, which may be in a hypocrite, but we take it as it comprehendeth the whole work of converſion, and faith in Jeſus Chriſt, as ſometimes it is taken, Matt. iv. 17. compared with Mark i. 15. becauſe it is propoſed here as the way to prevent wrath which is due for ſin, which cannot be done without faith.

The fourth thing to be conſidered, is, The per-

ſon threatening, *I will come*, I Jeſus Chriſt, who walk among the golden candleſticks, I the Lord of the vineyard, Matt. xxi. 40, 41. This is mentioned, 1. To let us ſee Chriſt's abſoluteneſs and ſovereignty over his churches, to diſpoſe of them as he pleaſeth, that miniſters and people may learn to hold their church-being of him. 2. To hold forth Chriſt's peculiar authority in churching and unchurching; and that peculiarly this belongeth to him: there is no man, nor enemy, nor perſecution, &c, can looſe the relation of a church in its being, but Chriſt Jeſus, or they as ordered by him.

The fifth is, *I will come quickly*, yea, and *unexpectedly*, as the word imports. This is added, to ſhew that Chriſt's threatenings are in earneſt, and that hearers ſhould not dally with them. It ſheweth alſo, how eaſily he can overturn a church, and make no church of it; he hath often gathered churches quickly, and can he not diſſolve them when they look to be in their prime? Who, having read the commendation of Epheſus in the former verſes, would have expected ſuch a threatening in the cloſe?

The words now being opened, we may inquire 1. *How this threatening of unchurching a church uſeth to be executed?*

Anſ. We conceive it doth not neceſſarily imply the overrunning, waſting, and deſtroying of ſuch a city or land, that it ſhould be no city, but that it ſhould be no church. Sometimes indeed, God will even by ſuch a mean bring about this thing threatened; but here we take it to hold out ſome other thing, than if he had threatened ſword or peſtilence upon them: it is the ſame upon the matter with that, Matth. xxi. 43. *The kingdom of God ſhall be taken from you, &c.* which was Chriſt's word to the Jews, and is eſpecially theſe ways brought to paſs. The firſt is ſinful; that is, when a church ſell themſelves to falſe doctrine, which overturneth the foundation: in which ſenſe, Hoſ. ii. the Lord denies Ephraim to be his wife, becauſe of her ſpiritual whoredoms, whereby ſhe had broken her tie: thus a people may be ſaid to unchurch themſelves by their unbelief, confuſions and errors, inconſiſtent with the foundation, according to that Iſa. l. 1. and Rom. xi. the Jews are ſaid to have broken themſelves off by their unbelief. The ſecond way is penal, that is, when the goſpel hath not fruits among a people, the Lord removeth the light, and his ordinances from them, taketh down his hedge from about them, and, as it were, ſendeth them a bill of divorce, refuſing to own them afterwards as a church; not by giving them up to outward enemies oppreſſion, which for a time they may be free of, but by ratifying their own ſentence of rejecting of the goſpel, as it is, Acts xiii. 46. and thus the kingdom of God was tranſlated from the Jews; and they became no church, when the goſpel was taken from them and ſent unto the Gentiles. A third way may be mixed, partly ſinful, partly penal, a people upon the one ſide not receiving the love of truth; and therefore upon the other ſide, God gives them up to ſtrong deluſion, whereupon they proceed from evil to worſe in the believing of lies, as it is, 2 Theſſ. ii. 10. However, this is certain, this flouriſhing church of Epheſus, hath now long ſince been a proof of this truth; for error growing to an height, and deluſion and ignorance following upon the back of deſpiſing the goſpel, hath brought that church into the eſtate that it is now into.

For the ſecond queſtion, *Why the Lord peculiarly threatens the church of Epheſus with theſe puniſhments.*

Anſw. It is not becauſe his diſcontentment was more with her than with other churches, but, 1. It is like they thought outward honeſty and reformation enough for their church-ſtate, and there was no cauſe of fear of unchurching, ſo long as they continued pure in profeſſion, and zealous in purging, &c. and therefore, to beat down this conceit, and to ſhew the neceſſity of power, as well as of form, for continuing of a church-ſtate, he doth ſubjoin this threatening of unchurching, eſpecially to this church. 2. Becauſe theſe here threatened, would lay more weight on this threatening, and be more affected with drawing to the ſhore to be unchurched, than with either ſword or peſtilence, &c. the Lord therefore applieth wiſely that which he thinks moſt conducible to this end. 3. It is like their outward church-ſtate was ſomething thought of by them, and the external frame by ordinances in purity, and that of dicipline in vigour, might be reſted on, and too much eſteemed of, eſpecially by the miniſters, it being too ordinary for men to think too much of external forms; the Lord therefore, in his threatening, toucheth the fault that might ſtick ſecretly to them, even in their zealous proſecuting of ex-

ternal reformation. 4. Becauſe he would have all men knowing the reſpect he hath to ſincerity, and the influence which the exerciſe, or not exerciſe of grace hath upon keeping or loſing of external privileges. Therefore doth he ſo threaten this church, when no outward cauſe of ſuch controverſy ſeemeth to be before men.

If it be aſked further, *Why this church is called the angel's?* for *thy* hath reference to the angel, and by the candleſtick is meant the church itſelf. Or, 2. How this becomes a threatening to the miniſter, it being liker a plague unto the people? Or, 3. How the people can be plagued for a ſin in their miniſter? We ſhall conſider the firſt by itſelf after we have gone through this epiſtle. And now to the ſecond queſtion we ſay, This threatening becomes his plague: 1. Becauſe of his intereſt in them, and affection to them: nothing can come on a people but it affects the miniſter; their ſtroke is his, yea, often it is ſorer which is on them, than what is on himſelf, 2 Cor. xi. 29, 30. *Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?* was Paul's touch of infirmities of the people. 2. It is the neareſt ſtroke can be on a miniſter, to be ſtricken in his charge, or blaſted in his miniſtry, &c. in this he is ſtricken as a miniſter, in things peculiar to a miniſter: other ſtrokes are common to all men. Yea, thus to be ſmitten, in the unchurching of his flock, is ſtriking at his crown, and his joy, 1 Theſſ. ii. ult. for a faithful miniſter will ſo account it. 3. it is probable it was ſome contentment to him, to ſee things go right in his outward miniſtry, cenſures to be weighty, diſcipline vigorous, the people to give him credit and countenance, &c. without reflecting on his own ſpiritual condition, or aiming at the inward warming of love in the hearts of his people, but thought all well, and who but he that had ſuch a well ordered church? the Lord, therefore, threateneth to take that ground of boaſting, or ſelf-pleaſing, from him. It is a ſad thing when a miniſter cannot carry even when things go well, and cannot look to himſelf and the people alſo, and be humble when he is countenanced: want of this ſpilleth many hopeful beginnings in miniſters hands. And this relation, *thy*, is particularly mentioned here, to make the threatening touch him the more; it is not *the candleſtick* but *thy candleſtick*, which was to be removed. For there be two things that make a thing to be in eſteem with men, and the loſs thereof to affect them. The firſt is, that it be in itſelf *το αγαπητον*, i. e. a thing lovely and deſirable. The ſecond, that it be *το ιδιον*, i. e. a thing which is a man's own, theſe two going together, That it is both an excellent thing in itſelf, and withal a man's own, when once evil befals that thing, it doth exceedingly preſs a man. Now both theſe are here, *a golden candleſtick*, there is its excellency in itſelf, and, *thy candleſtick*, there is the angel's intereſt and propriety in it; both are ſet down to affect him the more. And indeed a church being in its bloſſoming and riſing condition, and all things ſeeming to go well therein, even then to be threatened thus, cannot but greatly affect the heart of a faithful miniſter.

To the third, *How can people be puniſhed for miniſters faults?*

Anſw. If they were altogether innocent, it might ſeem hard, but when they alſo are guilty, yea, and it is like here under the ſame guilt, there is no wrong, but it is the correcting of two by one whip, both miniſter and people, for their formality and reſting in outward forms without power. 2. Though people in one particular be innocent, yet a miniſter's fault may occaſion a plague on the people, who are guilty by other ſins, even as the fault of a magiſtrate, as we may ſee in David's numbering the people, and God's plaguing him in the people for it, though they were in many things free from that particular ſin, and, as ſheep, what had they done? So when a peoples outward profeſſion, or obſervance to the miniſtry and ordinances, become the ground of a miniſter's pride or boaſt, they may, by ſome confuſion, be put through-other, and ſo his pride and glory is ſtained, and their hypocriſy and formality puniſhed; even as on the other ſide, a peoples vanity of their miniſter may have influence on the Lord's blaſting of him, that it may be ſeen all fleſh is graſs. Which conſideration ought to make miniſters and people walk reſpectively one to each other, yet ſoberly, leſt the Lord be provoked againſt both.

From this threatening obſerve, 1. That no church or miniſter hath a leaſe of a church-ſtate and the goſpel, if they abuſe it. Epheſus is now no church; yea, Iſrael was broken off. 2. It is one of the greateſt threatenings that can be, to be unchurched; ſword and peſtilence are not like it. 3. It may ſurpriſe a church in a very flouriſhing

outward condition if love be wanting. 4. Nothing hath more influence in procuring of judgment than coldneſs in love to God and others. 5. The ſtate, good or ill, of God's own people, hath moſt influence on the continuing or removing of the goſpel. It is not for the guilt of the Nicolaitans, or falſe prophets, that this is threatened, but for their ſin who once had love. 6. Repentance and diligence hath great influence to prevent ſuch a threatening. 7. Miniſters and people may have much influence on one another's good or ill condition; and ſometimes we may read our own diſtemper and ſcourge in the diſtemper of one another.

LECTURE III.

Ver. 6. *But this thou haſt, that thou hateſt the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I alſo hate.*
7. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the ſpirit ſaith unto the churches; to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midſt of the paradiſe of God.*

THE ſixth verſe containeth the laſt thing that is comprehended in the body of the epiſtle to Epheſus, and it is a kind of mitigation of the ſharp reproof and threatening going before: as he began with a word of commendation, ſo he will cloſe with it, and will let them ſee, that though he had marked their ſin, and reproved them for it, yet he was the ſame in his love, and had the ſame thoughts he began with towards them. And it is in ſum this, For as much wrong as is in you, and for as much as ye are fallen from your firſt love, yet there is ſome ſpark of zeal in you, ye have this good thing, that the corrupt doctrine of the Nicolaitans (which began ſoon to corrupt the ſimplicity and purity of the doctrine of Chriſt) is hated and abominated by you, even as it is by me.

To clear this a little more we ſhall ſpeak to theſe three things, 1. What theſe Nicolaitans were, 2. What this hatred was. 3. How it was commendable, or what is the ground on which it is commended.

For the firſt, we ſhall conſider what theſe Nicolaitans were. 2. What was the occaſion and riſe of this error, or erroneous doctrine.

For the firſt, what they were. There is not much recorded of them in ſcripture, yet it ſeemeth from all that is written of them (being compared with what is written of them in this chapter) that they were ſuch a ſort of ſchiſmatical heretics, as had corrupt doctrine in their mouths, and corrupt and licentious practices in their converſations. Therefore their deeds are ſpoken of in this verſe, and their doctrine, verſe 15. both which are ſaid to be hated of Chriſt, there being a ſuitableneſs between their doctrine and deeds.

For the particulars of their doctrine and deeds, many are aſſerted by the antients, but two things mainly are pitched on. 1. In their doctrine they opened a door to licentiouſneſs, and maintained, that fornication and adultery were no ſin, and they cried down matrimonial chaſtity, though called for and approven of God. 2. In their practice, without all reſpect to offence and ſcandal, they lived as they liſted, eating things ſacrificed to idols (a thing much ſtumbled at in thoſe days) abuſing their Chriſtian liberty to licentiouſneſs and looſeneſs taking advantage of, and abuſing the decree of the apoſtles, Acts xv. 20. that Chriſtians would *abſtain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things ſtrangled, and from blood*, as if all theſe things had been of one and the ſame nature, as indeed, at that time, they were all neceſſary to be abſtained from, as if they had been of one nature. Theſe are granted by all to be the two main things that theſe Nicolaitans were guilty of: though there be that add many more, as Epiphanius doth, and if we look to the 14 and 15 verſe of this chapter, it is not unlike, that the Lord points at theſe two faults: for in the 14 verſe, he tells Pergamos, that ſhe had them that held the *doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to caſt a ſtumbling block before the children of Iſrael, to eat things ſacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication:* and in the 15 verſe, *So haſt thou alſo them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.* Where they that maintained the doctrine of Balaam, and the Nicolaitans are the ſame: and he meaneth as Balaam taught Balac to enſnare the Iſraelites, by drawing them to their idol feaſts, and commit fornication with the daughters of Moab; ſo ſaith the Lord, ye have the Nicolaitans that follow the ſame footſteps, and teach the ſame doctrine.

2. There is more difference concerning the occaſion and riſe of this hereſy. It is commonly and by the moſt part, if not by all, attributed to that Nicolas, that Acts vi. is mentioned among the ſeven deacons that were choſen to wait upon the tables, and who gets there a teſtimony, that he was a man full of the Holy Ghoſt: but there being various opinions about the occaſion and riſe of it, I ſhall name two that are ſpecial, and chuſe which of the two we think ſafeſt.

1. Some write of him, that having fallen from his integrity, and become diſſolute in his practice. he ſtrove to maintain it in his doctrine (a thing too common to draw our doctrine to maintain our practice) and formerly taught this error, and begat many profane followers. Neither, ſay they, is it like, that ſuch a vile ſin would have been fathered in ſcripture on ſuch a man, if he had been innocent. Others ſet it down with more mitigation and charity to Nicolas, thus, that this Nicolas having a beautiful wife, was ſuſpected to entertain jealouſy of her, it is like from ſome others, members of the church; and being too inadvertent and raſh in the way which he took for removing that ſuſpicion to make it be ſeen that he had none, he brought his wife in public, and holding her forth, ſaid, he cared not who converſed with her, ſo far was he from being ſuſpicious of her honeſty.

This raſh act, though flowing from a good intention, ſay they, was abuſed by ſome to patronize the errors formerly mentioned beyond his intention: and they were called Nicolaitans on this occaſion; not becauſe he taught ſo, but that they concluded ſo from that his practice, and fathered what they maintained on that worthy man: as it is ordinary for corrupt men to father their corrupt opinions upon, and to ſhelter themſelves under grave and godly mens names. This laſt, in the doubtfulneſs of this caſe, (it being aſſerted by the moſt antient, viz. *Clemens Alexand.*) we rather embrace, partly, becauſe of that man's commendation, Acts vi. where it is ſaid, *he was a man full of the Holy Ghoſt:* and partly becauſe it is moſt charitable: and therefore is ſafeſt, eſpecially where ſuch a teſtimony is given to the man in ſcripture. And for as abominable as this was, it was for many centuries of years, revived and continued with many additions in the church, by Gnoſtics, Baſilides, &c. by thoſe called the Saturnians, Carpocratians, and many others, who made a pretext of Nicolas for their patron. A thing to be wondered at, that ſo ſoon after Chriſt, while John the beloved diſciple was living, Satan ſhould aſſault and ſet upon the church with ſuch errors: and yet as wonderful, that after thoſe errors were refuted by an extraordinary apoſtle, ſpeaking from Chriſt's own mouth, they were vented and maintained by thoſe heretics, a ſymptom of that peartneſs and impudency that corrupt men are led with, when ſo ſoon, at ſuch a time contrary to ſo clear reproofs, men durſt vent and abide by ſuch groſs things: O what force and efficacy hath the ſpirit of deluſion when it is let looſe! and what a height may it come to! tremble at the beginnings of it: it is hard to conceive, with what audacity and boldneſs it will bear itſelf out, and though our Lord would write an epiſtle from heaven, deluſion will ſo blind folks, that they will not queſtion their errors.

The ſecond thing to be ſpoken unto in this commendation, is, that they *hated the deeds* of the Nicolaitans: not their perſons ſimply, but their deeds, and them as promoting theſe deeds: tho' the church had theſe men among them and was ſevere in her diſcipline; yet the Lord taketh notice of this eſpecially, that ſhe kept a ſecret, ſincere abhorrency of them in her heart: not only did not the angel and church countenance them, nor only cenſure them, nor only forbear their company; but they had ſuch an abhorrence of their deeds and of themſelves, in carrying on theſe deeds, that the thinking of them was abominable; as ſaith David Pſal. cxxxix. 21, 22. *Do not I hate them that hate thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred*, And Pſalm cxix. 104. *I hate every falſe way.* So this hatred in reference to theſe Nicolaitans, was not carnal, nor in reference to their perſon ſimply; but in theſe three reſpects eſpecially. 1. In reſpect of their deeds and doctrine, it ſtruck at their deeds as hear, and at their doctrine as verſe 15. and 2. Looking upon them as inſtruments and miniſters of Satan, made uſe of by him for corrupting and poiſoning of ſouls, and ſhaming of the goſpel, they abhorred them conſidered as ſuch, whatever pity to their perſons or deſire to their ſalvation they had. 3. As they conceived them to be hateful to Chriſt and hated by him, ſo did they hate them; ſquaring their hatred as they did conceive Chriſt to hate.

Obſ. 1. That there are ſome things and perſons, eſpecially at ſometimes, that it is not enough for the people of God to abſtain from them in their practice, if there be not an abhorence of them in their hearts. The way of error and corrupt practices that follow on it, ſhould be abhorred, as any other ſin, how groſs and ſcandalous ſoever; hereſy as murder, and ſchiſm as witchcraft, Gal. v. 19. and that there is good reaſon for it; for if folk be not ſerious in hatred of, and ſo out of love with the thing, they may ſoon fall in the practice of it; and ſimple abſtinence will never be counted ſincerity before God, whoſe trial is how it ſtands with the heart and affections, how the heart is affected or diſſaffected toward the thing?

2. Our Lord Jeſus counts it ſome mark of ſincerity, when there is a ſingle hatred of the way of error, as it is in itſelf evil and hateful to, and hated by him.

The third thing in this mitigation, is the ground on which their hatred is commended; it is conformity with Chriſt, *which I alſo hate.* I hate them; therefore it is commendable in thee to hate them; it is a ſure ground of commendation to hate what he hates, and to love what he loves. This ground of commendation implyeth two things. 1. That it is well done to hate what Chriſt hates. *Obſerve*, God's people ſhould love and hate one thing with Jeſus Chriſt; they ſhould ſtudy to be conform to him in the exerciſe of all their paſſions and affections. 2. It implyeth a likeneſs to Chriſt's hatred in the nature thereof, that they hated them as they were hated by Chriſt, and not as they were enemies to them. *Obſerve*, It is a good way to ſquare folks hatred and zeal ſo, as it degenerate not into paſſion: to look to the matter that it be ſuch as is hated by Chriſt, and to the manner that it be ſuch as he is ſingle, and zealous; and that it be on that account, becauſe hateful to him; otherwiſe, men may carnally and ſelfiſhly hate, but without commendation. 3. It implieth alſo, that corrupt doctrine is moſt hateful to Chriſt Jeſus, and ſhould be to his people.

Verſe 7. Followeth the concluſion; wherein we have two things, 1. A general advertiſement, or exhortation common to, and repeated in, all the epiſtles, *let him that hath an ear hear.* 2. A particular promiſe for upſtirring of them to wreſtle and overcome, *to him that overcometh will I give, &c.*

For the exhortation, it is ſhortly the Lord's giving this watch word and warning to all that are in Epheſus, and all that ſhould hear this epiſtle, to obſerve what the Spirit ſaith to them. 1. Becauſe, it is of Epheſus' concernment as well as the angel's. 2. Becauſe it is of particular believers concernment as well as the churches; therefore, he would have all hearers looking on it as particularly ſpoken to them. 3. Becauſe uſually all hear not. 4. Yet theſe that have ears ſhould hear.

The ſcope implieth theſe three notes. 1. The Lord ſuppoſeth here, that every one this word cometh unto, will not have hearing ears, they will not hear this word ſo as to lay weight on it, and give themſelves up to it. 2. It implieth that folk that have any conviction, wakening, or life, fitting them for hearing, ſhould eſpecially be buſy in improving the word heard; *to you it is given to know the myſteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given, &c.* It would become believers, whatever others do, to be buſy laying up ſome promiſes, directions, reproofs, threatenings, &c. it is mainly for their uſe written and taught, to make the man of God perfect. 3. It implyeth, that hearers would labour ſo to make uſe of the word ſpoken, (to whomſoever it be firſt ſpoken,) as if it were particularly and eſpecially ſpoken to them; this being the excellency of the word, that it contains in it many conditions, and ſuits many generations, and ſome in this place, as well as in Epheſus.

2. The laſt and ſpecial part of the concluſion, is a promiſe, *to him that overcometh, will I give, &c.* wherein, 1. The party is deſcribed, to whom the promiſe is made, *to him that overcometh*, in the ſingular number: to point out that our Lord Jeſus taketh notice not only of a church that fights, but of every particular believer in it. This deſcription of the party, implieth, 1. A caſe or exerciſe that theſe to whom the promiſe is made, are ſuppoſed to be in, and it is, that they are wreſtling or fighting: theſe are the object of the promiſe. It implieth, that believers have difficulties to fight with, and a fighting life of it while here. 2. Their duty to fight and wreſtle with theſe difficulties, outward and inward. 3. That there is an actual fighting, according to their duty. 4. A victory, overcoming, a getting of their foot ſome way on theſe difficulties; a victory follows

the wreſtling to every believer: whatever he be, that in the way of duty meets with difficulties, and ſetteth to, to overcome them, he ſhall get the victory: yea, fighting ſeriouſly, is ſome advancement in victory; therefore it is in the preſent tenſe, to the overcomer, or who is overcoming: becauſe fighting and victory are never ſeparated, finally, in this caſe. 2. The promiſe made to the overcomers, for their encouragement, is, *I ſhall give them to eat of the tree of life, &c.* It is an alluſion to that tree planted in Eden, Gen. ii. 3. That tree was called *the tree of life &c.* not for any phyſical efficacy that was in it, as papiſts gloſs here, (though God might have made it inſtrumental as a mean of it) therefore, when ſin entered, there was no uſe of that tree; neither could it do any thing; but it was ſo called, to hold forth to Adam ſacramentally the eternity of life, which he might expect by keeping the covenant of works; that tree was given him to ſignify, and ſeal up that life to him, upon condition of his obedience; and in alluſion to it, Chriſt ſaith here, to the man that fighteth and overcometh, I will make him partaker of eternal life, not in any earthly paradiſe, but in heaven; for ſo paradiſe is taken in the New Teſtament, Luke xxiii. 43. *This night ſhalt thou be with me in paradiſe.* By eating then of the tree of life, we mean heaven, with all the great advantages of it, eſpecially Jeſus Chriſt, who makes up that life to fallen ſinners, which that tree could not do.

From this promiſe, *Obſerve*, That our Lord Jeſus would have his followers cheerful in their ſervices; therefore he ſetteth a recompence in their view: not to make them mercenary and ſervile; but hearty and cheerful in their obedience, becauſe they ſerve ſuch a good maſter. It is a great miſtake in ſome, to ſay, that looking to the reward, maketh a ſoul ſervile; upon the contrary, it maketh a ſoul free and willing: and this is the ground of God's giving promiſes of rewards; and the uſe which the ſaints make of them, Heb. xi. Moſes had reſpect to the recompence of reward, and it ſweetened his croſs, and made him cheerful in obedience.

2. From the particular promiſe he maketh, *Obſerve*, That there cannot be a greater promiſe nor encouragement for duty, than the happineſs that God hath provided for his people in heaven, when it is rightly eyed: and the frequent laying down of this promiſe is for this end, to make believers bear difficulties patiently, and wade through them willingly; a broader ſight of heaven, and faith, and hope ſtrengthened, in expectation of it, would make folks fight ſtoutly.

3. The thing he promiſes for their preſent ſuſtaining is heaven, as that which they might hope for after this life. *Obſerve*, 1. That Chriſt's followers would ſuſpend their full life, till after this life; they would not expect an other life or heaven here. 2. The hope of heaven, ſhould comfort wreſtlers before it come. Believers, take your wreſtling life here, and expect and look for a quiet life hereafter; and look not for it till then. Chriſt ſpeaketh of the wreſtling, as here, *to him that overcometh;* and of the victory, as in heaven, *I will give him to eat of the tree of life.* The not thinking rightly on this, maketh us ſo often grumble, when we want ſatisfaction in the things of a world. We propoſe to ourſelves a quiet life, whereas the word of God never promiſes quietneſs, and a complete victory and triumph here: yet the time cometh, when wreſtlers ſhall be conquerors over croſſes and corruptions; and carnal men, who live now as kings, without any fight, ſhall ly under wrath: there is no ſuch promiſe made to them.

Before we proceed to any other of the epiſtles, there are ſome things inſinuated in this, the clearing whereof may be uſeful in many of the reſt: we ſhall therefore take occaſion to ſpeak ſomewhat now, once for all, to theſe three. 1. To church-government and diſcipline in general. 2. To that relation which is betwixt a particular miniſter and his flock. And, 3. To the nature of the difference that is betwixt ſaving and common grace. All which will be uſeful for the underſtanding of many things in theſe epiſtles.

1. *Concerning* CHURCH-GOVERNMENT *and* DISCIPLINE, *in general.*

THE matter of diſcipline is much inſiſted upon in theſe epiſtles; and often the great weight of the commendations or reproofs that are given in them, is laid on this, as they were faithful or defective in the adminiſtration thereof: which doth certainly ſhew, not only the lawfulneſs of church-government and diſcipline; but alſo the uſefulneſs and neceſſity thereof to the

church of Chriſt, when faithfully exerciſed, as being a ſpecial mean and ordinance appointed by Jeſus Chriſt, for the edification thereof, and a thing that is not indifferent to her officers to exerce or forbear at their pleaſure, but lieth on them to be diſcharged, as they would have Chriſt's commendation on the one ſide, and as they would eſchew his ſharp reproof on the other, and as they would prevent the offence and deſtruction, and promote the edification of the people, over whom they watch, as they that muſt give account. It is therefore no wonder, that the devil hath in all ages, either ſought to oppoſe, or corrupt ſo excellent a mean of the church's edification: He began even under heathen emperors to traduce this government, as inconſiſtent with civil authority; and did provoke perſecutors by nothing more than this, that Chriſt was accounted a king by Chriſtians, and that accordingly they did keep diſtinct courts under him which the Politicians of the world did account inconſiſtent with governments, as may appear from the hiſtory of primitive times, and the apology of Chriſtians, particularly of Origen againſt Celſus wherein he doth particularly and fully inſiſt upon this. When the Lord had vindicated his ordinance of government, (with all his other ordinances,) the devil ſet himſelf to corrupt the ſame and to prevent it in its nature, and divert it in its exerciſe, from the appointed end of edifying the church, to be an occaſion of offence to her, and tyranny over her, by the many debates concerning precedency, which he ſtirred up after the churches freedom from heatheniſh perſecution, till at laſt he brought antichriſt to tyrannize over the face of the viſible church, that thereby he might either make the government hurtful or odious to the members thereof and others. Even as in reference to the doctrine of Chriſt, he did endeavour the corrupting thereof by error, when he could not altogether ſuppreſs the ſame. Again, when the Lord brought the light of the goſpel to public, at the time of reformation, and antichriſt's tyranny is by many caſten off, he ſeeketh by all means to effectuate one of theſe two, viz. that either the church ſhould have no diſtinct government at all, or that, at leaſt, it ſhould be of another form, and of another nature than is appointed in the word. Hence it is, that there have ever been ſuch debates in the church concerning the government and diſcipline thereof, and even whether there be ſuch a thing or not: and although the oppoſers thereof, do not profeſſedly oppoſe the truth of the goſpel, nor intend confuſion in the church; yet hath it with it no little advantage to the kingdom of Satan, and prejudice to Chriſt's.

For, 1. By this means Satan obſcures the beauty and excellency of the church of Chriſt, and draweth men to undervalue the ſame; as being at beſt but a refined piece of civil policy, as but ſubſervient to politic ends, and the upholding of temporal greatneſs of men in place. Hence it is, that we will find the moſt wordly-wiſe and politic men, (that are leaſt zealous ordinarily in things of God) to be the greateſt favourers and abbettors of this: and it is no wonder, ſeeing Chriſt's way of government, even as his doctrine is fooliſhneſs to the wiſdom of men: it is obſervable alſo, that where this opinion hath place, there is little account of any other ordinance; the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper is proſtituted promiſcuouſly to all; the miniſtry, is either accounted a thing indifferent, or miniſters made the ſervants of men, and arbitrarily to be put out or in, as they are pleaſing or diſpleaſing to them; and it is ſpecially intended to curb free faithful ſpeaking, and to be a ſnare to make them flatter magiſtrates and powers. All which ſhew the undervaluing principle that this opinion doth proceed from.

2. This opinion hath ordinarily with it more licentiouſneſs, and that both in doctrine and practice; for, neceſſarily, one of theſe two do follow: either many errors and ſcandals in practice, are accounted light and not cenſurable at all; or, if that in way of reaſon be granted, yet in practice it is never performed. And can it ever be made out in any practice paſt, or poſſibly to come; that offences in people or miniſters have been ſo exactly taken notice of, and reſtrained, or removed, where church-government hath been denied, as where it hath been in exerciſe?

3. Although ſuch magiſtrates might be found, as would take notice of every thing exactly; yet their meddling with it furthers not ſpiritual edification, ſo as the way of church government doth; for at beſt, it would make men but civil, and make religion look like the way of ancient philoſophers, who preſſed the rectifying of nature; whereas a church reproof or cenſure, hath both more edification to others, and more convincing ſhame

to the parties themſelves, in reſpect of the ſin thereof, as flowing more immediately from Jeſus Chriſt, and more directly repreſenting to them his authority, and their reckoning to him, who more ſingularly binds in heaven, what by his officers is bound on earth. And we conceive, that even the profaneſt, in experience will find this true, that a verbal church-cenſure, (which conſidered of itſelf, is but light) will yet have more impreſſion as to the ends aforeſaid, than ſentences of a civil magiſtrate, that in themſelves may be heavier; and this will be, even when the parties in their outward carriage will ſeem to reverence the magiſtrate, and to contemn the church.

4. Although it ſhould be yet ſaid, that magiſtrates could make things more effectual, as in cenſuring of corrupt miniſters, and ſuch like, which indeed is a benefit in itſelf to the church; yet, conſidering this manner of performing it, eſpecially being compared with the performing thereof by the church's own authority, it proveth more diſparaging unto the church of Chriſt: becauſe, if miniſters and church-members ſhould be apt to fall in ſcandalous offences, and yet the church have no authority, but what is extrinſic for the remedy thereof, then is ſhe apt to be looked upon as a ſufferer of profanity, and as a neſt to unclean perſons of herſelf, if by the magiſtrate, courſe were not taken with her: and although, by his means ſuch ſhould be purged out, yet in the opinions of natural men, this imputation ſticks to the church, as if ſuch things and perſons were well conſiſtent with her profeſſion, and approved of by her ſpecial officers and members. Now, cenſuring of theſe by their own authority, doth fully and only vindicate her and them from theſe aſperſions, which are frequent upon the out-breakings of ſuch ſcandals in the mouths of many profane men. And this revenging of diſobedience, and vindicating of the church of Chriſt, is none of the leaſt ends of this church authority, which by no other power can be attained. And no queſtion, the devil loves to have ſcandals breaking out in the church, eſpecially in her officers, which do once put a blot upon her. And if it be to be taken notice of at all, he had rather that ſome other did it than the church herſelf: becauſe ſo the commendation becometh theirs, and the blot ſticks to her: and thus, as it were, he proclaims to all, what ſort of perſons would theſe church-officers, and church-members be, for all their profeſſion, if they were not even as other men, by ſome other hand reſtrained? And thus the wiſdom and holineſs of our Lord Jeſus is reflected on, as if he had approven corrupt mens deſigns, who love to have a blot on the church; but not to have her vindicated from it: becauſe, by this, the church is capable to give offences; but, not in a capacity to remove them, or to vindicate herſelf from them: which ſtandeth not with that zeal, which our Lord Jeſus hath to his own glory in the church. And certainly, it is not the puniſhing of faults ſimply, that vindicateth the church's holineſs; but it is the cenſuring of them in ſuch a way as evidenceth the church's abhorrency thereof, and doth it: otherwiſe, Chriſtians and heathens, living under one commonwealth, might be ſuppoſed to have the ſame indignation at ſcandalous ills. And ſo the denying of the church's authority, if it doth not permit faults to be unpuniſhed, at leaſt all, yet it ſecludeth ſuch a way of cenſuring them, as may vindicate the church, and Chriſt Jeſus the King thereof, in a ſingular manner: and if we may ſo ſay, put her, yea, the Lord himſelf in their reverence, whether ſhe ſhall be free of corrupt teachers and members or not? or whether ſhe ſhall ly under that blot or not?

5. By the denying of this ordinance, the other ordinances which are acknowledged, are made weak and obſtructed in their exerciſe. Concerning the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper, it is clear: for, by this the rail whereby it is in a ſingular manner ſeparated, is broken down; many offices of the church, as theſe of elders and deacons, are made void; and that of preaching, made contemptible or maimed. For, public authoritative rebuking of all, and ſometimes of ſome in particular, is a ſpecial part thereof. Now, where church-government is denied, either the miniſter muſt do it arbitrarily by himſelf, and ſo he is more liable to a ſnare, and the party reproved to be ſtumbled, as having only to do with the miniſter, who may partially proceed therein; or, it muſt be forborn, and ſo his miniſtry be made obnoxious to deſpiſing, which, by his rebuking, with all authority, is to be prevented, and every way plainneſs and freedom, even in preaching, eſpecially towards theſe in place, is ſo far as can be reſtrained.

6. By this, the devil aimeth ſtill either to make religion to ſuffer as a thing that men may carve on

according to their intereſts, as in other matters of policy; therefore he mixeth all together; or, he doth continually lay grounds of jealouſy and difference between magiſtrates and miniſters; thereby to cauſe, that miniſters and theſe who will be faithful, ſhould either ſinfully connive at what may prejudge the kingdom of Chriſt, or by their teſtifying againſt the ſame, make themſelves more odious to the rulers: for, lay this once for a ground, that there is no church-government but what the magiſtrate hath, then either the miniſter muſt ſay, that none ought to be admitted to civil government, but ſuch as both for ſkill and conſcience are fit to manage the matters of religion (which civil ſtates will not always be content with, neither often is it poſſible) or, they muſt account any man, who may be fit to manage civil things, fit alſo to manage the affairs of Chriſt's houſe, which in conſcience cannot always be done, whereby neceſſarily, they muſt be brought, in tops with magiſtrates, except we ſay that either unſkilful magiſtrates uſe not to be in place, or that ſuch yet may be tender and dexterous in the managing of every church-matter that comes before them. And on the by, we may ſay, that ſeeing qualifications, fitting one for any place and government are ſimply called for in theſe who ſhould ſupply the ſame (though ſometimes *de facto* they be not ſo qualified) and ſeeing ſpecial qualifications are required for governing of the church of Chriſt, which are not required in theſe that govern a civil ſtate, and will not be accounted ſimply neceſſary to them: it muſt therefore follow, that by the Lord's ordinances, theſe two governments are not conjoined in one perſon, ſeeing he hath not always conjoined the qualifications that are requiſite for both. We ſhall inſiſt no more on this: the reading of theſe epiſtles will ſufficiently ſhew how concerning this truth is: and although this controverſy be abundantly cleared by the writings of many worthy men, that there needeth no more be ſaid thereon; yet, having ſuch occaſion from theſe epiſtles, we ſhall, once for all, touch ſome things concerning church-government, as it is holden forth therein: whereby we find it clear. 1. That there is ſuch a thing as church-government, diſtinct and independent from the civil. 2. Wherein it conſiſteth. And, 3. Who are the ſubjects thereof. And, 4. We ſhall lay down ſome concluſions or obſervations concerning the ſame, as they may be gathered from the text.

1. The church of Chriſt is furniſhed with a government and authority within herſelf, for the ordering of her own affairs, trying and cenſuring of her own members, and that immediately from Jeſus Chriſt, diſtinct and independent from any civil government on earth. That there is ſuch a thing as government and authority in her, is clear by theſe, 1. The practice of the angel of Epheſus, in the trying and cenſuring of the falſe apoſtles which cannot be done without authority and government 2. This practice of theirs is commended by our Lord Jeſus: it can therefore be no uſurpation in them. 3. In the church of Pergamus, we will find the angel reproved, that *they had them that held the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, &c.* which doth ſuppoſe authority in them, even to have cenſured and cut off theſe from their ſociety. For, if they had not had authority to do it, it was not their duty to have done it; and if it had not been their duty to do it, our Lord Jeſus had not reproved them for omitting it. 4. The church of Thyatira is reproved alſo, *for ſuffering the woman Jezebel to teach and ſeduce* his *ſervants;* which doth imply an authority and government, fitting them to whom he writeth, to have marred and hindered her preaching, and ſomewhat to have been in their power to have done, which was not done by them: otherwiſe our Lord Jeſus would not have ſo reproved them. The making out of theſe three will confirm this. 1. That the thing commended in Epheſus, and deſiderated in the other two churches, doth imply authority and power. 2. That this is in the church, as diſtinct and independent from any civil government. 3. That this is a thing perpetually belonging unto the viſible church, and was not temporary, as peculiar to that time.

That there is an authority implied here, the conſidering of theſe three will make out. 1. If we conſider what is commended in Epheſus, and deſiderated in the other two; the very expreſſions and acts do bear forth an authority. As, 1. That is commended in Epheſus, *That they cannot bear them which are evil, but have tried falſe apoſtles, and have found them liars.* All which hold forth a judicial way of proceeding and *trying*, which implieth a citing of ſuch a party and witneſſes, for the diſcovering of ſuch and ſuch

things, according to the rule given to Timothy, 1 Tim. v. 19. *Againſt an elder receive not an accuſation, but before two or three witneſſes:* for, there can be no trial without witneſſes; there can be no witneſs without power to call them, and exact oath of them, that being the end of all ſtrife, which cannot be done without authority: the word added, *and haſt found them liars*, doth confirm, that it is a judicial finding after trial, whereby they decide.

1. In the general, that ſuch and ſuch things are evidences of falſe apoſtles; and then in particular, that ſuch and ſuch things are found to be in them: and therefore that they are falſe apoſtles, which preſuppoſeth this trial before they judicially pronounce; than which, nothing doth look more judicature-like. Which will be the more clear, if we conſider, 1. That this *trial* and *finding*, proceedeth from their zeal, and not bearing with evil men; and therefore cannot be a trial for private information. 2. It is a trial, tending to the edification of the church, and the preventing of that ſnare amongſt the people, which no perſonal or private thing could effectuate. 3. It is a trial and finding, oppoſite to what is reproved in Pergamos and Thyatira, and ſuch a proceſs and ſentence as rid that church of them, which no private or perſonal act could do. 4. It is a proceeding and trial, which relates to theſe directions, which Paul giveth to Timothy and Titus as the coincidency of the matter, ſcope, and other circumſtances do demonſtrate; ſuch as, 1. *Receive not an accuſation, but before two or three witneſſes:* which is the ground of that which followeth, ver. 20. *Them that ſin rebuke before all.* Now, if that rebuke be an authoritative act, as cannot be denied, which yet is but the execution of the ſentence that followeth the former trial, then the trial itſelf muſt be judicial and authoritative alſo; and therefore ſo muſt this trial be here underſtood. To ſay that this is a miniſterial act, and that that trial preceding, is only the miniſter's private act, for his own clearing, cannot be admitted: for, that trial belongeth to many, as after will appear. 2. To whomſoever it be ſuppoſed to belong, it inferreth an authority to try, and ſo to conveen and examine; otherwiſe that trial might be made ineffectual: and ſo the party wanting authority, not to be chargeable with ſhort-coming therein. Or, 3. This trial muſt be commended to church-officers without authority to effectuate it, and ſo it will not be a mean ſuitable to the end. 4. Miniſterial trial and reproof will not be enough to gain the end, and to make a corrupt member to be no member of ſuch a church, which is the thing deſiderated in Pergamos and Thyatria. And conſidering the commendation of theſe angels and churches, it is not like that they were defective in their perſonal averſeneſs from and rebuking of theſe errors, and yet they are reproved as being defective; which muſt infer that they came ſhort in reſpect of that judicial trial and cenſure, which is here commended in Epheſus, as the conſidering of them will clear.

2. Pergamos reproof, ver. 14, 15. is, *Thou haſt there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, and them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans:* the fault is, not that they approved that doctrine or connived at it; for, they denied not the faith; and Antipas is commended as a faithful martyr amongſt them: nor is it their fault, that ſuch lived in the town; or, as other heathens might, did ſometimes enter the congregations: nor is his quarrel only againſt theſe Nicolaitans themſelves, but againſt the angel of the church; becauſe they *had them* in their ſociety as members with them, and had not cut them off: and ſeeing this cutting-off, is ſuch a thing as made them ceaſe to be members of that body, and relateth to that which Paul wiſheth to the troublers of the church, Gal. v. and commends to Titus, chap. iii. *Him that is an heretic, reject, &c.* it muſt imply an authority and power, without which this cannot be done, this unmembering or unchurching of a perſon being a cenſure of higheſt concernment, and that ſame which we call excommunication; it followeth then, that this church had that power, and ought to have executed it againſt theſe corrupt members, ſeeing her failing therein doth make her reprovable.

If it be ſaid here that this doth imply no authority and power, but what is common to all ſocieties by the law of nations and nature, ſuch as companies of chirurgions, wrights, and ſuch like, have in excluding men from their own ſociety: which yet is no diſtinct authority, but ſubordinate to, and derived from the magiſtrate.

We anſwer, 1. That even theſe ſocieties in theſe things act by authority, however it be derived: and ſo the argument holds, that the excluſion of

members from church-communion, doth imply an authority: and what is ſaid of the neceſſity of ſuch a thing by the law of nature and nations, doth confirm the ſame: for, if every ſociety be furniſhed for the maintaining of itſelf by the law of nature, ſo muſt alſo the church be; except we ſay that it is more defective than other ſocieties. Beſides, even ſuch ſocieties could not do ſuch a thing, were not privileges granted them by authority for that end.

2. We anſwer, that although the argument hold in the general, that there is an authority neceſſary; yet will it not prove it to be dependent in the church, as in theſe ſocieties it is. For, 1. The derivation of authority from the magiſtrate to theſe ſocieties, is clear: for ſuch and ſuch ſocieties have that power, becauſe it is granted to them by the ſuperior magiſtrate; and others want it, becauſe it is not granted them: but I ſuppoſe none will plead for a derived power to the church from the magiſtrate in this place: yea, the greateſt oppoſers of church-government do acknowledge that it is not derived from him, as *Led. Mol.* pag. 654. There is no reaſon therefore that church-government ſhould be ſubordinate to magiſtracy as other ſocieties are, which ſhe exerciſes, as they ſpeak, by a proper right and divine, without delegation, *Jure proprio et divino, non delegato.* 2. The magiſtrate may enter by his authority ſuch and ſuch perſons to the rights and privileges of ſuch ſocieties, and exclude others from them, though poſſibly it may be done unjuſtly; yet, was it ever heard of, that a magiſtrate might privilege any with the privileges of church-memberſhip, or, by his authority, unchurch any? The parallel therefore cannot be univerſal in theſe. 3. All other ſocieties, as ſuch, are parts of a commonwealth, and together make up the body: and therefore, in reaſon, ought to be ſubordinate to the common government: but the church, as a church, is no eſſential or integral part of a commonwealth: there is therefore not the like reaſon for their ſubordination.

If any ſhould yet except, and ſay, that an authority may be immediately from God, and not derived: and yet be by him appointed to be ſubordinate to the civil magiſtrate, as is inſtanced in that power, that a huſband hath over the wife, or a parent over his children.

We anſwer, 1. That it may be queſtioned, if a parent, as a parent, be ſubordinated to the magiſtrate, although, as a man and member of the commonwealth, he be, for he may command his children without any authority from him, yea, contrary to the commands of magiſtrates, and in ſome caſes warrantably, ſuppoſe in their marrying, adhering to the truth of God, &c. neither can the magiſtrate increaſe or diminiſh their power, altho' they may ſtrengthen them or mar them actually in the exerciſe thereof: yea, ſuppoſe a parent to incline to match ſon or daughter in a way that is not ſinful or inconvenient, and for this end, to command them to give obedience; and again, ſuppoſe the magiſtrate to command them otherwiſe to match, the magiſtrates command here will not looſe the child from the parent's authority; becauſe, although both parent and child be the magiſtrate's ſubjects, yet their obedience is called for in reference to theſe things that belong to a magiſtrate only. Hence that caſe of a magiſtrate's requiring one thing, and a parent's commanding of another to the ſame child, is by divines ſolved by this diſtinction, That in things belonging to the magiſtrates command, the child ought to be obedient to him in what concerns the duty of a ſubject; but in things that concern the duty of a ſon properly, he is to be obedient to the father, whatever the magiſtrate command; which ſheweth, that ſimply the commands of a father, as a father, are not ſubordinate to the magiſtrate: and ſo that in reference to ſome perſons, there may be two ſupreme powers, upon divers conſiderations, who may command without ſubordination one to another, and yet their authority be no way inconſiſtent together.

2. We anſwer, That although the authority of fathers and huſbands were ſubject to the civil magiſtrate as ſuch, yet can it not weaken this conſequence, [if the authority of the church be not derived from the magiſtrate, then can it not be ſubordinate to him;] for the authority of parent, huſband, &c. is perſonal and natural, that is, founded in nature, and therefore is derived by nature to parents, huſbands, &c. and ſuch do not make a body of themſelves, but are members of another greater body; whereas a church is a ſociety and incorporation complete in itſelf, and as ſuch is not founded on nature, but by God's poſitive grant and foundation is ſuch, and therefore authority muſt be immediately derived to the church by the

ſame mean, viz. of a poſitive grant, by which its being as a church is derived. And can it be inſtanced that there is any ſuch, viz. a complete incorporation, having immediate power from Chriſt for the governing of itſelf and ſhutting out of corrupt members without any derived power from the civil magiſtrate, who yet are ſubordinate to his power in the exerciſe of theirs. We grant indeed, that the church, conſidered as ſubjects and members of the commonwealth, are ſubjects to him; but it will no way follow, that the authority or government wherewith ſhe is furniſhed, as a church, is to be ſubjected to him. Neither can this be thought ſtrange, that a church-judicatory conſidered as ſuch, ſhould be accounted independent, as to the civil magiſtrate, ſeeing we muſt either ſay, that a miniſter, in his miniſterial and paſtoral duty, acteth by an authority immediately from Chriſt, without any dependence on the civil magiſtrate; (which yet readily cannot be admitted in any other caſe, viz. that a perſon ſhould command without dependence on the magiſtrate) or we muſt ſay, that the miniſter preacheth and acteth in his miniſtry, in the magiſtrate's name, mediately, and by his authority, or by none at all; which I ſuppoſe none will affirm. And what greater inconſiſtency is it with civil power, to have diſtinct authoritative courts, than to have rulers diſtinctly and authoritatively commanding perſons, eſpecially themſelves?

3. If we conſider the epiſtle to Thyatira, where much is commended, yet there is a *notwithſtanding* and reproof caſt in upon this account, *becauſe thou ſuffereſt that woman Jezebel, that calleth herſelf a propheteſs, to teach and ſeduce my ſervants.* This *ſuffering* can be no defect in reſpect of civil authority, for that was not in their power, or is it any defect of any perſonal or private duty, becauſe none ſuch can impede other perſons teaching, if wilfully they will ſet themſelves to it; nor can they be thought defective in that, that are ſo commended for faith, charity, works, &c. and that even in reſpect of their thriving and growing in their private conditions: it muſt therefore be a ſuffering of her in ſo far as by church authority ſhe was not cenſured and reſtrained, that thereby the ſeducing of Chriſt's ſervants, might be prevented, whoſe edification is the end of this as of all other ordinances: and ſo conſequently, the church of Chriſt is furniſhed with power and authority in reference to her own affairs and members.

2. This will alſo be clear by conſidering theſe who are primarily in this reſpect commended and reproved in theſe epiſtles: it is not the body of private chriſtians, but the church-officers, as peculiarly diſtinguiſhed from them; ſo that theſe threatenings and reproofs do otherwiſe belong to them than to the church, as we will find in the progreſs. And there can be no other reaſon given of this, but becauſe theſe faults were the faults of theſe that had authority to right them, and did it not; which will be more clear afterward, when we conſider the ſubject of this power.

3. Theſe acts are either acts of private Chriſtians, or perſonal acts of the miniſters and church-officers (both which are already overturned by the fore-mentioned reaſons) or it muſt be by ſome extraordinary act, as Peter's ſmiting of Ananias and Saphira; or it muſt be the exerciſe of ſome ordinary power and authority; there is no other thing conceivable; but none of the firſt three can be ſaid. Not one of the firſt two, for the reaſons given; nor the third, becauſe, 1. There is no warrant to look upon theſe officers as furniſhed with that gift; nor was it ordinary to the church, and her ordinary officers, ſuch as theſe were. 2. That would not attain the ſcope propoſed here, which is, in part, the recovering of the offending party; therefore ſaith the Lord of Jezebel, verſe 21, 22. *I gave her ſpace to repent;* and doth threaten her but conditionally: which ſheweth, that he meaneth no ſuch extraordinary off-cutting of them. It remaineth then, that it muſt be the exerciſing of an ordinary authority and government; and therefore ſuch muſt be in the church.

The ſecond thing to make out the argument, is, that this authority and power in the church is diſtinct and independent from any civil government; which from the text may thus appear, 1. The ſubject is diſtinct, viz. church-officers. 2. The object is diſtinct, viz. the church and the members thereof alone, and as ſuch; it is not the inhabitants of Pergamos and Thyatira, but the church-members that are under the ſame. 3. The matter falling under that cognition is diſtinct, viz. that which is hurtful to ſouls, as the ſeducing of Chriſt's ſervants, and ſcandals conſidered as ſuch. 4. The cenſures inflicted are different, viz. no ci-

vil mulct upon eſtates, nor puniſhment upon bodies, nor cancelling of the freedom of the burgherſhips in towns, or ſuch like, but ſecluſion from church-privileges and memberſhip. 5. The end is diſtinct, viz. the reclaiming of the party offending, and the bringing of them to repentance, and the preventing of ſoul hurt to others, and the vindication of Chriſt's name. 6. The manner is different, there is no external pomp, nor power, or force in the managing thereof, ſuch as is in civil governments; for that is not here conceivable, conſidering the afflicted and perſecuted condition of theſe churches, but the ſword of the mouth, and trial and cenſures. And, 7. They differ in their riſe, civil power being derived from ſuperiors to inferiors; but this hath no riſe or derivation from any civil power, although for the time theſe cities and nations wanted it not, but did ariſe from that intrinſic oeconomy and power which accompanies the very being of a church, and which, by Chriſt's appointment, doth reſide in ſuch a number of perſons, conſidered as a church, which did not reſide in other inhabitants of the ſame towns, nor did in theſe before their church-ſtate. 8. The account upon which this government doth conſider perſons and actions is diſtinct from the civil; men are not conſidered as men, nor as indwellers in ſuch and ſuch places only, but as Chriſt's ſervants; and actions are not conſidered either as profitable or hurtful to men ſimply, but as profitable or hurtful to their own ſpiritual ſtate. And therefore, it is ſeducing of Chriſt's ſervants, and as ſuch, the deeds of the Nicolaitans and Jezebel are to be taken notice of by it.

2. We ſay, as it is a diſtinct government from a civil, ſo it is independant as to it: and if the former be true, that there is an authority and government included here, and in the former reſpects exerciſed as diſtinct from the civil power then in being, it will alſo neceſſarily follow, that this authority was independantly exerciſed in reference to that civil power?

For, 1. There is no derivation of this church-power from that civil power, as is ſaid; therefore it cannot be dependant on it, ſeeing it neither did nor could derive it. And although ſome except, as was hinted, that there may be a power in fathers, huſbands, and other ſuch natural relations, over children, wives, &c. which yet is dependant on the magiſtate; yet ſuppoſe that by the law of nature, parents did combine in one ſociety and government among themſelves, as a church doth, and in that caſe had a diſtinct government, could that authority and government be accounted dependent, ſeeing no ſuperior authority could mar them in the exerciſe of their power without injuſtice, more than a magiſtrate can mar a father in the exerciſe of his authority toward his children when he doth it juſtly? So the church-power, not being a perſonal privilege, but belonging to her as a body and ſociety of many members combining together, having that by the law of nature, as is granted (and we add, if Jeſus Chriſt allowed them) ſhe cannot therefore be marred by any authority in the exerciſing of that government, whatever unjuſt violence may do.

2. It appeareth to be independent in this, that there is a church-government among Chriſtians, even when magiſtrates were ſetting themſelves to undo the ſame: if then government be neceſſary to the church, and yet it be ſo ordered in the Lord's providence that civil government may be for hundreds of years enemies to the church, as it was in theſe primitive times. Then it will follow, that the church-government and authority is not placed in the magiſtrate, or civil governors: becauſe, in that caſe, either ſhe ſhould have no government at all, which by theſe epiſtles will be found falſe, or ſhe muſt have a government and authority deſtructive to her, which is contrary to the end thereof; or, in the laſt place, her authority muſt be independant, ſave of Jeſus Chriſt alone: and if it were not ſo, conſidering now that theſe to whom Chriſt writeth were not civil magiſtrates, there had been no ſuch acceſs to expoſtulate with them for their omiſſion, if they might not have acted independantly on them.

3. It may appear thus, that if the civil magiſtrate cannot repeal by his authority any of their ſentences, then is their authority independant as to him. Now, ſuppoſe a church juſtly to degrade, or depoſe a falſe teacher, or to cut of a rotten member, could any magiſtrate, by his authority, continue that man to be a miniſter, or that member to be a church-member, whatever violence might do? Suppoſe ſome emperor, as in ſome caſes Julian did, had taken the recognition of Epheſus' ſentence againſt theſe falſe apoſtles, and

had declared it null, would not ſtill their ſentence have ſtood in force notwithſtanding? Or, ſuppoſe Pergamos, or Thyatira, had cut of Jezebel or the Nicolaitans from their ſociety, could any civil magiſtrate, heathen, or Chriſtian, have enacted them to be continued church-members? And this doth not only flow from the injuſtice of the matter; for ſuppoſe a pro-conſul had juſtly degraded ſome judges of Epheſus; and the town of Epheſus, had juſtly caſten out ſome members from their ſociety; yet, by the emperor's interpoſing his authority, as the ſupreme magiſtrate, both might have been fully reſtored, though unjuſtly, ſo as they might have been really again magiſtrates and burgeſſes of ſuch a city: which cannot be ſaid in this caſe. No emperor's authority could have conſtituted ſuch, though unjuſtly, to have been officers, or members, at all of theſe churches. The difference, then, I ſay, cannot conſiſt in the injuſtice of the matter alone; for both are unjuſt; but it muſt conſiſt in this, that civil ſentences are ſubordinate to the ſupreme magiſtrate, but church ſentences are not: although, by violence, they might have countenanced ſuch and ſuch perſons, and have made the effects of the ſentence in many things void: yet could their authority have never reached to the formal removing of them as in civil caſes was hinted.

Thirdly, To make out the argument, we ſay, that this diſtinct independent power here mentioned, is a thing that agreeth to the church in all ages and conditions, and is not peculiar to any one time: as ſuppoſe, becauſe the church wanted Chriſtian magiſtrates at this time, it had been lawful to exerciſe authority independant from them; which, in other caſes, where the magiſtrate is Chriſtian, is not to be granted. Therefore we ſay, 1. That which is attributed to theſe churches here, agrees to them as churches: and therefore to all churches at all times: for the duties are common, and the hazards are common to churches at all times. Therefore this remedy of church-diſcipline muſt be perpetual alſo, it being the cure that is appointed for ſuch a diſeaſe. And, that often repeated word, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the churches*, doth ſpeak in all ages to the end of the world, as well as then. 2. If all other directions exhortations, &c. in theſe epiſtles, be perpetual and binding to the church to the end of the world, then this muſt be ſo alſo; and there can be no reaſon given why this is to be accounted temporary, more than the other; eſpecially, conſidering that Chriſt's ſending of this Revelation, is for the good of his ſervants unto the end of the world: and that eſpecially is aimed at in theſe epiſtles, as the fore-cited cloſe doth confirm. It muſt then be injurious to Chriſt's mind, to ſcrape out ſo much as concerneth governments, as not belonging to his church for ſo many ages. 3. If the grounds, requiring the exerciſe of this power in the churches, during this time, be perpetual, agreeing to all ages. Then it is not to be aſtricted to the time of the church's being under heathen magiſtrates alone; but the grounds are perpetual: for, that is not becauſe the magiſtrate is a heathen; but that the perſon offending may be brought to repentance; and the ſeducing of others may be prevented: now theſe ends are perpetual, which the church is to ſtudy in all times: and ſeeing church-authority and government is here holden forth, as a mean appointed by Jeſus Chriſt for attaining of theſe ends. It muſt therefore be of perpetual uſe to the church alſo.

Although theſe truths be clear from the word; yet there are ſome things, which are partly exceptions; partly objections, inſiſted on by adverſaries, which we ſhall ſpeak a little to, as the nature of our intended purpoſe will permit.

A fore-cited author, p. 545, doth confidently undervalue all arguments to this purpoſe; and denieth all diſtinctneſs of government in the church by any power diſtinct from that of the magiſtrates; and to maintain it, doth, 1. aſſert, That all ſort of power whatſoever, is ſupremely in the magiſtrate, whether heathen or Chriſtian, by that place, Rom. xiii. 2. he heaps up with many big words ſeveral abſurdities that accompany, as he alledgeth, that opinion of a diſtinct church-government, which he calleth, invidiouſly, the building of an empire within an empire. Yet, 2. he granteth, that where the civil magiſtrate taketh not on him the care of the church, and maintaineth it not: in that caſe, by the law of nature and nations, the church cometh to have an authority, or ſomewhat equivalent in the place of that, whereby ſhe is qualified for the ordering of what concerneth her members, during that caſe of ſuch a magiſtracy alienarily; and denieth any other authority to have been in the church, du-

ring the time that theſe epiſtles were written, but what was by voluntarily confederacy, and aſſociation of members amongſt themſelves; and therefore ſaith, that they had and exerciſed no leſs authority during that time, in civil things: for which end he maketh uſe of that place, 1 Cor. vi. 1, 2, &c.

In reference to all which, we ſay, 1. That authority cannot be denied here, however it be derived, ſeeing it is a power to excommunicate and exauctorate officers and members which they aſſume, as he ſpeaks, p. 654. Yea, a power equivalent to that of the magiſtrates, becauſe it is a power adequate for the time to this end of governing the church, p. 554. And therefore, we ſay, if this confederating, or up-making of this government, be a thing *jure* called for, and neceſſary to be done, for this end; it is the thing which we aſſert alſo; and, in reſpect of the particular circumſtances; that is, what places or perſons are to aſſociate together, is to be regulated by Chriſtian prudence; but if it be meant of a voluntary aſſociation and confederacy, ſuch as trades and crafts uſe in their ſocieties, as that alone which is the ground of this power. This we altogether deny: becauſe, 1. If that confederating be called for, by the law of nature, then it is not voluntary and free. And this authority is not grounded merely upon voluntary confederating: becauſe, as it is not arbitrary to a converted Chriſtian to be baptized or not; ſo being baptized, it is not arbitrary to him whether to join with the church or not. And being joined, ſubmitting to its government, is a neceſſary duty to him. And it becometh not authority to him: becauſe he ſubmits to it; but he is to ſubmit to it, becauſe it is authority: and therefore, ſuppoſing that theſe falſe apoſtles, or Jezebel, or the Nicolaitans, had never conſented to ſubject themſelves to the diſcipline of theſe churches (as, by their taking ſuch names of apoſtles and prophets to themſelves, it is like they never did) yet notwithſtanding had theſe churches authority over them, and it was their duty to ſubmit unto them. 2. It is granted, that the authority that the church hath in ſuch a caſe, is equivalent to what the magiſtrate hath and might exerciſe: and if it be not equivalent to this, then the church of Chriſt under ſuch magiſtrates would not be ſo perfect as to their church-ſtate and well-being, as otherwiſe; which cannot be ſaid without wronging the wiſdom of God, as if he had left his church deſtitute of inward power when ſhe had leaſt outward protection; but if it be ſuch a power, it cannot be arbitrary, and merely grounded upon the confederacy; but muſt be authoritative upon another account, and may authoritatively enjoin one to confederate: and ſo confederating, is not the ground that conſtituteth the power; but a mean, making way for the exerciſe thereof. 3. If it were aſked, *What evidence or proof could be given of ſuch voluntary confederating in the churches for that time?* It would be hard to ſhew, that univerſally in all the churches, there was ſuch formal compacting actually agreed upon; and yet, that there was government and authority in them all, is evident. 4. Suppoſe confederacies to have been; yet could they never have conſtituted an authority and government, diſtinct, and independent from the civil ſupreme power, eſpecially while the ſupreme power oppoſed the ſame; as ſuppoſing, to keep the ſimilitudes propounded, that many chirurgeons and tradeſmen of any kind, did live under a magiſtrate and laws, which would admit no ſuch, by their authority to live and confederate under them, will any ſay, that in that caſe, by voluntary confederating, they could aſſume an authority to themſelves; and cenſure any perſon, eſpecially againſt their will, without wronging and encroaching upon that authority, under which they live? Yet it cannot be denied to a church, and that without any prejudice to the magiſtrate: becauſe it in nothing leſſens his authority, or withdraweth any thing from his cognition, which formerly uſed to belong unto him: but as the ariſing of a new church within a nation, hath with it new caſes, actions, and conſiderations of perſons, and deeds; ſo it is reaſon, that it ſhould have with it a new authority to govern the ſame. 5. If the church had another kind of intereſt, in reference to ſpiritual offences, than in reference to civil debates, then this confederacy cannot be the ground of ſuch an authority: this will not be denied according to the former principles, which do parrallel both theſe in the primitive church, and make this the proof of the former; but it is clear, that the church-authority did far otherwiſe reach church-members in ſpiritual offences, than in civil things: which may thus be made out, 1. They might ex-

communicate and unchurch for ſpiritual offences, and for diſobedience in theſe, if a brother did not hear the church, and oft-times they did ſo: but it cannot be ſaid, that if a brother had been diſobedient to an arbitrary decree in civil things, that upon that account, they would have proceeded againſt him to excommunication, and conſtrained him to have ſubmitted: ſure we are, it was never put in practice, at leaſt till Antichriſt aroſe. 2. In that chapter. 1 Cor. vi. 7, 8. the apoſtle reaſoneth for ſubmiſſion to this; and exhorteth Chriſtians, ſo wronged, to ſuffer the wrong, rather than to purſue it before infidels: which doth ſuppoſe, that the church was not furniſhed with authority to redreſs civil wrongs, as ſhe was to redreſs ſcandals. And therefore, Matth. xvii. our Lord giveth order to proceed, in caſe of non-ſatisfaction, to the higheſt degree. And by the by, we may ſay, it is an odd thing to expond that place of Matthew, by this place of Paul. As if the Lord did only there warrant a man to purſue injuries before heathen judges, when he would not ſubmit to the advice of church-members, ſeeing expreſly Paul enjoineth them rather to ſuffer wrong, than to make the goſpel contemptible before infidels, by the contentions of Chriſtians; which yet that expoſition of Matth. xviii. will approve of: which ſheweth, that it muſt be underſtood to ſpeak of church offences: in reſpect of which *ſuffering* and *bearing* with them, is condemnable, as we ſee in theſe epiſtles. 3. If what the church did in civil things, be common to any perſon or perſons in any rank or condition whatſoever, and to Chriſtians in any time and caſe; that is, that they may and ſhould ſubmit their differences to ſome; and theſe to whom they are ſubmitted, may decide: and, upon the other ſide, if what the church exerciſed in reference to eccleſiaſtic offences and cenſures, be not common, but ſo that no ſubmiſſion to others, but ſuch as are in power could warrant one to draw forth ſuch cenſures, as are here mentioned, (yea, according to the principles which we oppoſe, it were not lawful for Chriſtians to do ſo now in civil things; for, they ſay, it is not lawful to do now in church-things, as theſe did at that time.) Then the church's authority was not equal in civil things, as in ſpiritual things: and ſo conſequently, no confederacy can warrantably ground this church authority; but the former, we conceive, is clear: therefore, &c. 4. It may be clear by this, that the church did never exact civil fines, or inflict bodily puniſhments: which ſheweth abundantly, that ſhe did not exerce authority in civil things equally, as in ſpiritual: and yet had her authority been only grounded on the voluntary confederacy, ſhe might have inflicted the one as weil as the other. 5. Suppoſe a church-member had wronged an heathen by his miſcarriage; no queſtion, church-diſcipline would have reached him; which is not the intent of that, 1 Cor. vi. Therefore that cannot be the ground of their power alone. 6. That direction, Matth. xviii. *Tell the church*, was given, before this was written: ſeeing then this is the foundation of civil aſſociation, as is pretended, that of Matth. xviii. muſt be of another kind. 7. This opinion will infer the ſetting up of a civil power in civil things, where the magiſtrate is Chriſtian; yet, that was never aſſerted by any. 8. The adverſaries themſelves grant, that in ſuch caſes, the church may do much more in church-matters, than in civil: becauſe that the magiſtrate doth allow his power to rectify civil things: and yet, this doth make both equally lawful. 9. Suppoſe the magiſtrate had repealed a ſentence, paſt in civil things; no queſtion, it had bound them, though it had been unjuſt; yet ſuppoſing he had repealed one of their church cenſures, and declared excommunication void, it had not done ſo; nor had been acknowledged, yea, had he inhibited them to decide a particular in civil things, they would not have proceeded; but when he did inhibit cenſures, notwithſtanding, they did proceed, and actually did ſuffer martyrdom on that account: which, in a civil action, I ſuppoſe they would not have done. 10. That, 1 Cor. vi. admitted any to be judge that men ſubmitted unto, or had wiſdom; but church-things were governed only by theſe who by office were rulers. All which do ſhew the vanity of that aſſertion, that they equally meddled with both kinds, and yet, this one thing, is the ground of all that is ſaid to evert this authority. Add that, 1 Cor. vi. the parties offending are reproved for going to him; here, the church-officers, for not cenſuring theſe that offended: which ſuppoſeth a power to be in them. And it cannot be thought, that the angels had been ſo cenſurable, had they not decided civil buſineſſes, as for this.

Beſides, page 548. He denies that there was a neceſſity of obedience in civil things: which yet clearly, is here aſſerted in theſe church-cenſures. Whereas it is ſaid, as a further evidence, that the church's authority during this time, was only built upon this voluntary confederacy, that after ſupreme magiſtrates became Chriſtian, they did intermeddle with all church-power without any contradiction, page 544. It is either a meer miſtake or an untruth: a miſtake in this, that it accounteth their meddling in a civil way with many things, which the church ſtill meddled with as formerly, and adding of their civil ſanction thereto, for ſtrengthening, not for diminiſhing the church's power; to be an aſſuming of church-power and authority, which are things moſt diſtinct; even as a Chriſtian magiſtrate, doth command the ſon of a Chriſtian parent to do the ſame things, which his parent doth command him in reference to the Chriſtian religion, which a heathen magiſtrate did not; yet is the parent's power and authority over his ſon no leſs, than when the magiſtrate was heathen, becauſe the magiſtrate's command is not private; but cumulative to the parent's authority: even ſo is it here. And there can be no greater reaſon to ſay, that church-power and authority over Chriſtians, did ceaſe in ſpiritual things, after Conſtantine became a Chriſtian, than to ſay, that the power and authority of a Chriſtian parent, and a Chriſtian maſter, did expire at that time. And ſeeing it is granted, that church-power, and parental-power, are both immediately from God, without any mediate derivation by the magiſtrate; it is reaſon that they ſhould be of equal duration and continuance alſo. And in matter of fact it is clear, that the church continued to exerciſe the ſame power, which formerly ſhe did; and alſo that the magiſtrate concurred in his ſtation for the ſtrengthening thereof: and there is not the leaſt ſhadow for any delegation after that, more than formerly; but, that now by the approbation of civil authority, the church had acceſs to do that, for which before that time ſhe was perſecuted, even as there was full liberty given to preach the goſpel, which formerly was inhibited: yet, none will ſay, that that power of the key of doctrine, was derived from the magiſtrate. For, what is alledged of the emperor's calling of councils, that will prove him to have put them to the exerciſe of their power, but not that it was derived from him, more than when before that time provincial councils were called by ſome eminent biſhops. It will prove that their call did authorize them; but rather both theſe calls do ſuppoſe authority to be before in theſe that are called. And therefore there is no queſtion, that if Conſtantine had called others than church-officers, to judge and cenſure in reference to theſe differences eccleſiaſtically, he could not have derived authority to them, ſo as to have made them equally rulers, and with the ſame authority as if they had been church-members and officers: which yet might have been done, if their authority had reſided in him alone. Beſides, he commanded the preaching of the goſpel alſo, as is ſaid.

Whence we may ſee that Chriſtian magiſtrates, did not meddle with that power and authority, which formerly reſided in the church: neither ever was it heard of, that a magiſtrate did excommunicate, authorize or ordain a miniſter, and ſuch like, wherein church-power is exerciſed. And though it be ſaid, that he doth theſe things immediately, by putting the church to it, and by calling church-officers to conſult in eccleſiaſtic things, which he doth confirm by his authority; even as he doth govern other ſocieties, as phyſicians, lawers, &c. by authorizing ſome of their own number to manage what concerneth ſuch callings and functions; (in which reſpect, ſay ſome, the function is different from the magiſtrate,) yet he is not the lawer, nor the phyſician, more than he is the miniſter; but the authority is on him alone. To this we ſay, 1. That the parallel is moſt unequal: becauſe although a magiſtrate be not by his ſtation a phyſician, or lawer; yet ſuppoſing him to have ſkill he might lawfully do any act incumbent to theſe ſtations: which doth indeed ſhow, that the ſame authority, whereby they act, doth reſide in him; but ſuppoſe he had the theory of eccleſiaſtic things, and ſkill in them; yet he might not ſtep himſelf, to act the acts of a miniſterial function; nor as a magiſtrate, to ſentence with church-ſentences, adminiſter ſacraments, as he might do in the ſentences of inferior magiſtrates and courts: which doth ſhew, that that authority doth not reſide in him. 2. We grant, that he may be ſaid to govern mediately, as he may be ſaid to teach and preach mediately: (for, he ought to provide for that) but that will not infer, that the

authority of preaching is derived from him: yet no way doth the weight of this controverſy ſo much ly on matters of fact, what churches or magiſtrates did ſince the apoſtles days, as by what right and warrant they did what they did.

The laſt aſſertion therefore, although made out could prove nothing without the former; nor will the inſtancing of exorbitancies in church governors, infer any nullity of that power, more than the enumerating of miſcarriages of men in civil place, will enervate that ordinance of God: yea, we are ſure, much ill hath come by magiſtrate's intruſion in this church-power, and many have miſcarried in it; much leſs will heaps of ſlanders againſt moſt faithful men do it, whom God eminently countenanced, and who ſingularly by ſuffering were honoured to teſtify for him, ſuch as Mr. Welſh, Mr. Melvil, Mr. Davidſon, and others; who, we are perſuaded, in the great day, will be as bold in reference to their being approven in their ſtations, as any of there oppoſers or traducers on this account. This way of writing, will not be found to proceed from zeal for the Lord, which hath ſo little reſpect to ſuch, who eminently adhered to him; and let theſe traducers of his ordinances and ſervants, prepare for giving account for both to him, to which we leave them.

For the abſurdities wherewith he doth load this truth, they being for ſubſtance the ſame, which often have been fully wiped away, we ſhall only ſay theſe two, 1. That either they are no abſurdities: or, 2. Not ſuch as the grounds acknowledged by him will infer. For, 1. It is no abſurdity ſimply, that a man in diverſe conſiderations ſhould be ſubject to divers co-ordinate powers, as a ſon is to the magiſtrate as a member of the commonwealth, to his parent as a child and member of the family: and in ſome things, as formerly hinted at, he is obliged to be ſubject to the parent, that no command of a ſuperior can looſe him from it; and in other things, ſo ſubordinated to the magiſtrate, that therein the parents authority hath no place. And the ſame may be ſeen in wives, who, in ſome things are ſubject to their huſbands commands, and no authority can warrant them to do otherwiſe. 2. We ſay, that this ſame abſurdity might have been inſtanced in theſe churches, that the Lord writes to, ſuppoſe (as he doth in the other caſe, that the magiſtrate had appointed ſome, whom the church had called to her ſynods (as for example, to that mentioned, Acts xv.) to ſome other civil employment, as they were ſubjects; would not the ſame abſurdity of the interferring of the two authorities have followed? he muſt either then ſay, that ſuch a caſe was not conceivable in theſe times; or he muſt ſay, the abſurdity muſt be evited, or it will be faſtened upon the way approven by the holy Ghoſt, as the church's governing of herſelf diſtinctly is granted to be, at leaſt during ſuch a caſe: and when he loſes and vindicates his own conceſſion, it will be eaſy to anſwer his objection. 3. It cannot be denied, but that a miniſter may independently command a magiſtrate in the name of Chriſt according to the word, and that not only by reaſon of the matter, as any other private ſubject may do; but by virtue of his office and authority: In which reſpect, he is not only a reporter, to tell what is truth, but a meſſenger and herald, authorized to charge all hearers to the obedience thereof, as John the Baptiſt did Herod, who in ſome reſpect might be ſubject to Herod, as in other reſpects Herod was to him: and if this be no abſurdity in reference to particular governors, why ſhould it be thought abſurd in reference to the powers by which theſe govern? ſupreme church-power then, and ſupreme civil-power in diſtinct perſons, cannot be abſurd. And we ſuppoſe there can be no authoritative officer, that upon any civil account can ſo independently command the civil magiſtrate: church-power therefore is not to be regulated in every thing, as the civil is. It is ſtrange to ſay, that it is lawful to a magiſtrate to receive miniſterial injunctions, or not as he pleaſeth, or at leaſt no more than a ſick perſon is ſubject to the phyſician, can it be ſaid that a ſent miniſter can have no more authority in preſcribing duty in the name of Chriſt, than a phyſician in giving directions for health? or, will it be thought equally ſinful or lawful, to diſobey the directions of the one as of the other, even laying aſide the matter? Or, ſhall every one, ſkilful in divinity, be counted of equal authority with a miniſter, as the counſel of one that is ſkilful in medicine, is to be counted of the ſame weight, as if he were a graduate phyſician, if his reaſons be as weighty? or, is there any exception of ſome, more than others from miniſterial power, becauſe of any outward place or grandeur? Theſe things can hardly be conceived with-

out wronging the ordinances of Chriſt. 4. It is thought abſurd to ſay, that the magiſtrate is not blindly to act according to church concluſions, and determinations, but deliberately to try his own act, and yet not to be the proper judge thereof. It cannot be denied, that a miniſter is to try and judge of what commands the magiſtrate ſhall lay on him in reference to his duty; if therefore the magiſtrates ſubſequent judgment, did demonſtrate him to be ſupreme in eccleſiaſtic things, the ſame will prove the magiſtrate's judgment in the caſe foreſaid to be ſubordinate to the miniſter's: that therefore is no abſurdity. 5. An ambaſſador from one king to another, or to ſome inferior magiſtrate, is in his perſonal carriage ſubject to the authority within whoſe bounds he is; but as an ambaſſador in the following of his commiſſion and inſtructions, and as ſuch, he is only countable to theſe that ſent him: and never was it heard that one ſubjected his ambaſſador to the authority of thoſe to whom he was ſent, even amongſt men, but that was reſerved at leaſt, for ſome other appointed for that end by him: neither doth a magiſtrate account an ambaſſador's independency on him to be inconſiſtent with his authority. Now miniſters being ambaſſadors ſent by Chriſt to magiſtrates as to others, we muſt either ſay theſe to whom they are ſent, muſt judge when they faithfully exerciſe their commiſſion or not, in their maſter's name: which is abſurd amongſt men, and could not but look partial like; or we muſt ſay, they are not countable or cenſurable on earth; or, that Chriſt hath intruſted his ambaſſadors and church-officers with this power of cenſuring men, who ſhall walk unworthy of their truſt.

If it be ſaid, *That an ambaſſador is no magiſtrate, and hath but an inſtructed power?*

Anſw. Yet is it a power, and in that reſpect ſuch as church-officers have; and ſuppoſe there were a plurality of ambaſſadors for a king, or ſtate within the dominions of another, inſtructed to act jointly for his affairs, and to cenſure any of their own number, or retinue, that ſhould walk unworthy of their place; would any magiſtrate think that theſe wronged his power; if they ſhut ſome from their fellowſhip without his warrant? or could he claim to recogniſce their deed; although in a criminal caſe, he only might have acceſs to puniſh even their members in that place?

For that qualification of his conceſſion, which is to allow this confederate authority only to the church that lived under ſuch a magiſtrate, as doth not undertake the care thereof; we ſuppoſe it will not be eaſy to free it of abſurdities, if this diſtinct government be not acknowledged to be perpetual.

For, 1. Do not the ſame ſcriptures (that place all authority in the Chriſtian magiſtrate; and require abſolute obedience from his ſubjects to him) in the ſame manner belong to any magiſtrate, as a magiſtrate, and his ſubjects under him, and particularly that place, Rom. xiii. And ſuppoſe the magiſtrate ſhould not aſſume that power, and put it in exerciſe; yet if eccleſiaſtic power be in that ſame gift committed to the magiſtrate with the civil power, no private perſons could upon any pretext meddle therewith. For ſuppoſe the magiſtrate ſhould abſtain to puniſh ſome kind of murthers, witchcrafts, &c. no private perſons could confederate themſelves to aſſume a power of puniſhing theſe: becauſe civil power to puniſh theſe things, is not committed to them; but to the magiſtrate. If then the church might cenſure ſcandals, without encroaching upon theſe ſcriptures at that time, why may it not do ſo, even when the magiſtrate is Chriſtian? This church-power then cannot be underſtood to be comprehended under the magiſtrate's commiſſion, ſeeing, Paul is exerciſing it, even while he is extending to the utmoſt the magiſtrate's commiſſion in all things, and quarrelling Chriſtians for encroaching upon any thing due to him; and no queſtion he knew beſt the extent of theſe directions.

2. There is no magiſtrate, who will profeſſedly diſclaim the charge and government of any people; although in practice many of them prove negligent of the church of Chriſt. Now it may be aſked, if this neceſſity of confederating for exerciſing of church-authority doth ly upon the church only, when the magiſtrate is profeſſedly heathen, or if alſo when erroneous or atheiſtical and prophane, or in practice negligent and careleſs (like Gallio) in what concerneth the church? It cannot be aſtricted to the firſt: becauſe the church is no more obliged to an erroneous magiſtrate, than to a prophane and careleſs magiſtrate (though he be not profeſſedly an heretic or erroneous) if that authority be not improven for them: and ſo according to theſe principles, the church is to confederate and exerciſe authority within herſelf,

even then: which will come to this that the church is called to assume this authority, except in such cases as the magistrate doth take it on him and exercise it for her good, (for if he exercise it for her hurt, it is better to want it) and so it will turn near to this, that the church is to assume this power, save where the magistrate is godly, and according to conscience doth exercise his power for her good. And then it may be asked, (supposing that the magistrate profess willingness to govern the church,) how shall it be judged whether such and such a magistrate be to be admitted to govern? Or, whether they be to assume government to themselves? It will come to this, that it must rest in the judgment or discretion of these private Christians, whether they will admit the magistrate to govern, or not? And according to the principles of that author, if they judge him according to their light, to be one that taketh no care of the church, they should assume that power to themselves: for elsewhere he affirmeth the judgment of discretion to be the great decider; and that a man had better do according to the light of an erring conscience, than against it.

Yea, 3. According to his grounds, they may not only assume power in ecclesiastic things, but equally in civil things also. And will he say, that the church of France may take power in civil things as they do in ecclesiastic, and not wrong the magistrate? or can it be said this is a privilege to the magistrate, which makes him so to depend, both in things ecclesiastic and civil, upon a people's estimation of him?

4. By these grounds, either a church should never assume power under any magistrate however careless and profane, and so, as is granted, wrong herself contrary to the law of nature; or by assuming power they declare that they account the magistrate a Heathen, erroneous, or atheistical, &c. And is not that a greater irritation, and probable occasion of division betwixt the magistrate and church, than to continue this power distinct under all magistrates equally? And truly it looketh not like God's ordinance, that putteth his church oftentimes in this strait, that it must either suffer prejudice, or disclaim and provoke the magistrate, so as to account him an atheist unworthy of government, but to have forfeited so much of his power, &c. And suppose a profane son succeed in the magistracy to a gracious father, or profane men be chosen to succeed others who bore rule before them, even in church-affairs, (which case is often incident) what strait would it be to the church, either to continue to be governed by the magistrate as formerly? or, with so much disadvantage upon personal considerations, to assume a power which formerly they did not?

5. Either the church assumeth that power contrary to the magistrate's command; and so there is clear ground of a persecution and war; or it is with his goodwill, or, at least, permission; and that must presuppose this, that he doth account himself heathen, erroneous or profane, which cannot easily be expected, especially from a man not so denied and mortified, as such a magistrate is supposed to be: for delegated it cannot be, seeing in that case this assuming of authority is not called for.

6. It may be asked, what degree of erroneousness, profanity, or carelessness in a magistrate, may warrant a church to assume this power, seeing even amongst Heathens there are degrees? and if so, then how can that be judged? Suppose a Christian magistrate should neglect church-affairs, otherwise than as they fall within the compass of civil-government: in which respect heathens did own them? or suppose he should own some sentences, punish some scandals, which, it seemeth *Aurelian* did in expelling *Samosatenus*, and *Severus*, in commanding to give again to the church a place where they used to meet, that some rogues had violently put them from, saying, that it was fitter that God should be worshipped there, than that it should be employed for such an use. Now, what is called for in such a case might be a debate; whether might not such heathens be accounted to take care of the church, and so it became not these primitive Christians to have retained power during their reigns? or, what may be thought of Christian magistrates that do no more, and, it may be, less than these? whether are these to be retained or not?

7. It may be asked in such cases, whether is explicit confederating for that end necessary or not? and suppose some would not submit willingly, how could they be compelled? or, if so, were they liable to no censure, because of their obsti-

nacy? It were good that these things were cleared, if it be supposed that this be a practicable thing, and often to be practised.

It is farther said, *That the church's greatest hazard, is from the great power of church-men, and not of the civil-magistrate, as experience sheweth: Therefore it is dangerous to give them power. Answ.* So the greatest danger of error, is from church-teachers: shall they therefore have no teachers? So the greatest hazard of tyranny to a state in civil things, is from a civil-government: Is it not therefore to be allowed? Yea, this is the reason of it, that corrupt church-officers wrong the church most, and that both in government and doctrine: because in both they come nearest her heart: and therefore when they miscarry, it cannot be but worse than when an authority more extrinsic doth miscarry? and by their power they had ever greatest access to do her good or evil: and this rather confirmeth what was said, That properly the power doth belong to her, and had need to be well managed, because *corruptio optimi est pessima.* But was it ever heard of, that church-authority, well managed, did hurt the church or state either, under whatever magistrate? It followeth only that the abuse of church-power is ill, but no more.

2. We come now in the second place to consider wherein this authority is exercised: which we shall speak to only in so far as these epistles give ground, and we will find it to be in these four.

1. There is a *trial, thou hast tried them that call themselves apostles, &c.* Which trial inferreth authority to cite and warn parties, to call and examine witnesses, 1 Tim. v. 19. to take oaths; which is requisite to trial and witnessing, as that alone which putteth an end to strife among men, Heb. vi. Therefore, Mat. xviii. the Lord giveth the same rule concerning procedure by witnessing in the church, which Moses gave in reference to all courts, *That out of the mouth of two or three witnesses, &c. shall every matter be established.* This sheweth also, that they may receive the complaints of offended brethren, as in Matth. xviii. keep meetings for that end, lead enquiry upon the crying fame of offences, as is like they did in the case of Ephesus, and in a word do every thing that is needful for compleating trial: for where the end is approven, the means that are necessary to the attaining thereof must be approven also.

2. There is a power here to judge and determine, *thou hast found them liars:* which doth respect these two, 1. The nature of offences: they must judge what is truth and what error; otherwise they cannot tell who is a false apostle and who a liar. And they must judge what is scandalous in practice, and so what is lawful, or not; otherwise they can make no progress in trial or censure: for they must find such a thing to be an error or scandal, and so not to be suffered in the church. 2. It hath reference to persons: there is power in judging such and such persons to be guilty, whereby they pronounce not only such doctrine to be erroneous, but such a minister or person to be guilty thereof, as is clear from the text, and so must judge what is proven or not, and every thing tending to that, as citing of witnesses and parties, hearing exceptions and answers, *&c.*

3. There is a power of censuring a person found guilty. These words, *thou canst not bear them, &c. thou hast them, and sufferest them,* do import that, as is cleared: this *having* of them, implying a fault, which was, that by their authority such were not cut off from the church; which is the highest degree of ordinary censures; for if it be a priviledge and benefit to be admitted to the visible church, and the ordinances of Jesus Christ therein, it cannot but be a high degree of censure to be cut off from both, and yet this is implied here, to be in the power of these churches, and they cannot be conceived to have cutted off such from their society, so as not to have had them or suffered them to remain therein, but by this which we call excommunication. From which necessarily this followeth, that not only the church hath a power of censuring; but particularly of censuring thus, by cutting off one from church membership, and from the priviledges of the external ordinances thereof. This is called by our Lord Jesus, Matth. xviii. an accounting of one *a heathen and publican,* 1 Cor. v. 13. *a putting away of the wicked person from among them; a cutting off of troublers,* Gal. v. 12. and Tit. iii. 10. *a rejecting* of them. There is nothing almost more frequently and clearly held forth in scripture than this, both in doctrine and practice. The Lord hath furnished his church

with this power to cenſure, that he may preſerve a majeſty in his ordinances, which appear to the moſt part but fooliſhneſs and weakneſs; and that he may have weapons of his own kind, to batter down the proud imaginations of church-members, and revenge all diſobedience, as the apoſtle ſpeaketh, 2 Cor. x. 6. for which cauſe he calleth it *a rod*, 1 Cor. iv. 21. and *a puniſhment*, 2 Cor. ii. 6.

4. There is here a power of ordering and making laws of what concerneth the affairs of the church, as may be gathered, 1. From this, that they try officers: whereby it is apparent, that the church had her laws in reference to the admiſſion of miniſters, before they could be accounted ſuch; and that theſe who were found by their trial, to be liars, ſhould not be accounted apoſtles, or church-officers: otherwiſe authority, in the former reſpects, would be maimed and defective. 2. It may be gathered from this, that they might conclude what was offenſive, and what not, who was to be tried, and upon what grounds, when the trial was to proceed; who and what was to be ſuffered in the church, and what not; who might preach, and what might be preached, and in every thing that concerneth doctrine, worſhip, and order, according to the rule of the word, and the great end of the ordinances, viz. the edification of the people: beſides which, there is no church authority any where, it being a power indeed, but a power given for edification, and not to deſtruction, 2 Cor. x. 8. and xiii. 10. This power being exerciſed, maketh decrees: therefore ſuch Acts are called, Acts xvi. 4. *The decrees that were ordained of the apoſtles and elders:* and by *Paul a ſetting of things in order*, 1 Cor. xi. 34. And 1 Cor. xvi. ſuch were contributions for the poor, orderlineſs for preventing of confuſion in preaching and hearing; calling of the people to faſts, as Acts xii. 5. and xiii. 3. and chap. xiv. 23, &c. trying, proving, admitting, or cenſuring of officers, and ſuch like, as in the epiſtles of Paul to Timothy and Titus, are clear.

The third thing we are to enquire for in theſe words, is, who are the proper and firſt ſubject of this authority and power? and we anſwer, 1. Negatively.

1. The civil magiſtrate, is not the ſubject of this power: for they to whom Chriſt writeth theſe epiſtles, are the ſubject of this power; but the civil magiſtrate is not the party to whom Chriſt writeth theſe epiſtles, as is clear, and it can be alledged by none: therefore it is clear, that the civil magiſtrate is not the ſubject of this church-power. Yet, no queſtion, our Lord Jeſus knew beſt to whom it belonged: neither is it like when he accounts them to have authority, that he doth account them to have it from voluntary confederating for the time: for, he accounts the neglect of the practice of it, to be a ſin againſt, and breach of their duty; even as he quarrelleth with the angel of Sardis, for being defective in the doctrinal part of his miniſtry; and he commendeth the angel of Epheſus, for his labour in doctrine, zeal and diſcipline, as duties equally belonging to the miniſtry, upon one and the ſame account. And it muſt either be ſaid that a magiſtrate, in his election to be a magiſtrate over a church, is neceſſarily to be qualified in reference to theſe affairs; or that the government thereof, doth not belong unto him; or, that one may be called of God warrantably to a government over a ſociety, and that in reſpect of things and perſons of no leſs concernment than the civil ſtate; and yet it be not neceſſary that he ſhould be qualified in reference thereunto: which is abſurd.

2. We ſay, that it is not the body and communion of the church and people, to whom this power is committed: which appeareth thus, 1. By the ſame argument, theſe are the ſubject of this power, to whom Chriſt principally directeth his epiſtles, whom he commendeth for the exerciſing of this power, and reproveth for the omitting thereof; but theſe are church-officers, contradiſtinguiſhed from the reſt of the church, as appeareth not only by the common inſcription, *Unto the angel of the church, &c.* whereby they are diſtinctly conſidered; but alſo chap. ii. ver. 5. where the church is diſtinguiſhed from the angel in the threatening, *I will remove thy candleſtick &c.* which ſaith, that what he had ſpoken in the former commendation of that trial, did peculiarly belong to the angel, whom he conſidereth as diſtinct from the church, ſpoken of under the term of *candleſtick*. Alſo in the epiſtle of Thyatira, the officers are eſpecially reproved, as appeareth from ver. 24. *But unto you I ſay, &c.* that is, the church-officers, to whom he had been formerly ſpeaking; and to the reſt in Thyatira, that is, the

members, as diſtinct from them. It is hinted alſo, in the epiſtle to Pergamos, as the expoſition thereof cleareth: and no where in any of theſe epiſtles is that diſtinction ſo clear, as in theſe, where he ſpeaketh of the exerciſe of this power: thereby the more clearly to ſhew where it reſideth. And though it be ſaid in the cloſe, *Let him that hath ears, hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the churches:* yet, that is not to extend every thing equally to all the members: for, then the miniſtry of the doctrine, would be common to all alſo. It is therefore to be underſtood with reſpect to their places and ſtations, as was ſaid in our entry to ſpeak upon the ſecond chapter. 2. The church here, is divided into *angels* and *candleſticks*, that is, officers and members. Now, we muſt either give the power to the whole, that are comprehended under the title of *angel*, that is, officer; and *candleſticks*, that is, churches and members; or, we muſt give it to the officers alone, as diſtinct from the churches: for there is no warrant to give it to the angels, and to ſome of the church-members, and not to all: for, that were again to ſubdivide the church, as if all its members were not, as to government, of one rank, contrary to the way kept here. And indeed we know no other reaſon more palpable, why officers and members of the church, are ſo diſtinctly ſet forth; but that their diſtinctneſs in this reſpect might be held forth: but the firſt cannot be ſaid, that all come in equally in government, who are members; becauſe that would take in women and children: therefore it muſt belong to the officers, as diſtinct from the other three; ſeeing much of this church-power, is converſant about things of that nature, as trying of falſe apoſtles, corrupt doctrine, &c. which do require both fitneſs of qualification, and continuance in reſpect of time, and painfulneſs, beyond that which always church-members uſe, or, are called to have in reſpect of the one, or can beſtow in reſpect of the other. And ſeeing theſe are certain truths, that theſe who are ordinarily called of God to the exerciſe of any authority, are to be fitted for it, and patiently to follow the trial, for here theſe who are to cenſure, are alſo to try, it will follow therefore that this power in ſuch things cannot be thought to be committed unto the body of the people: eſpecially, if we conſider theſe two. 1. That in the choice, even of a deacon, there is ſuch exactneſs required in the trial of his qualifications, and authority to his admiſſion to that office: yet the power of governing, doth not belong to this officer, as ſuch; but he is inferior to that. Now if it be ſuppoſed that the people generally have intereſt in government and ruling: then it will follow, 1. That there are more qualifications required in a deacon, which as ſuch, is but a ſervice, than there is required in theſe that govern in the higheſt things. And, 2. That to be a member of the viſible church, hath more authority in it, than to be a deacon, at leaſt than a deacon can have as ſuch; becauſe the one governeth by authority in the higheſt things, and the other as ſuch but ſerveth: and by the inſtitution and rules for the election of deacons, it would ſeem that there is by that office an acceſſion of ſomewhat to them, like authority, more than they had before, or other members have: and ſeeing this acceſſion hath no authority with it, it will ſeem ſtrange to ſay, that a church-member, that is overſeen by an ordinary deacon, hath authority in him, which the deacon, as ſuch, hath not.

In the ſecond place we may add this conſideration, that it is ſimply impoſſible for all church-members, even the generality of them, to underſtand many queſtions that may be agitated; yea, we may ſay further, they are not called to underſtand them; and again, others cannot poſſibly give their attendance for the trial of intricate things, which may draw a great length. For it is aſſerted by the learned Thomas Hooker of New England, part 3. chap. 3. page 36. and 37. *That the preparation is to be made by the elders, becauſe the body of the people, if numerous, they will be unable with any comely conveniency to conſider and weigh all the circumſtances with all the emergent difficulties, which will certainly and neceſſarily occur in ſuch agitations, nor can in reaſon beſtow their time and pains upon them, as the intricacy and perplexity of the work will ſometimes require.* Thus far he, which doth certainly render it at leaſt exceeding ſuſpicious, that they ſhould be inſtated with authority to judge and determine, who cannot poſſibly wait on the trial; eſpecially, conſidering that in all judges and governments, mentioned in the ſcripture; and particularly in theſe epiſtles, theſe two are joined together, viz. *trial* and *cenſure*.

3. We ſay, that it is not one perſon or church-officer above other church-officers, to whom this power and authority is committed. Becauſe, 1. It is to the officers who are contradiſtinguiſhed from the people, and are not comprehended under the title *candleſtick* or *church*; but that muſt be underſtood of all miniſters, and not of one only. 2. By this one *angel* collectively taken, many rules governing one body in an aſſociated manner, are to be underſtood as was cleared, chap. i. ver. 20.

And therefore, 4. The aſſociated number of ruling church-officers, is the proper ſubject of this church-power: becauſe it is to them that Chriſt directeth theſe epiſtles under this name *angel*, as was ſhown in chap. 1. ver. 20. It is theſe he commendeth and reproveth; it is thoſe to whom the overſight of the people belongeth in reference to theſe ſnares, Acts xx. 28. &c. It is theſe to whom the power of trial and admiſſion of church-officers pertaineth, 1 Tim. iv. 14. which is the work here commended in Epheſus. And if this be true, that by *angel* here is to be underſtood a plurality of united church-rulers, as was ſaid, Then this aſſertion laid down will alſo follow: for, no other reſts to lay claim to this authority.

To cloſe then, in the fourth place, we may ſhortly lay down theſe concluſions further from theſe epiſtles, 1. That this diſcipline and authority is to be exerciſed on all ſorts of perſons, members of the church, whether they be pretended teachers, as *apoſtles* and *prophets*, whether men or women; in a word, all who are capable to give offence, and to be edified by church-cenſures, which young children, mad men, and ſuch like, are not in the reach of.

2. It concerneth all ſorts of caſes, whether of error or practice; and is to be exerciſed in reference to the firſt, as well as to the laſt, as is clear from theſe epiſtles.

3. Theſe higheſt cenſures, are to proceed againſt errors and ſcandals of a high nature, as theſe mentioned in the text are; or ſuch as are aggravated with heightening circumſtances, as diſobedience and contempt in not hearing the church, &c. Matth. xviii. And which after trial, are clearly made out: that thereby the ſentence in its equality, may be convincing for the gaining of its end, both on the offending party and others.

4. It followeth here, that when offences are ſo circumſtantial in church-members, cenſures are to proceed againſt them, and they are not to be ſuffered to enjoy church-privileges, as if they were not under theſe offences, except they repent of them; yea, that unchurching and excommunication in ſuch caſes, is an ordinance of Jeſus Chriſt.

5. Church-officers may be often defective in reference to diſcipline as well as to doctrine, which is alſo guiltineſs before the Lord, as appeareth here.

Although a church be defective in the purging out of corrupt members; yet that doth not pollute the ordinances to others, or neceſſitate them to ſeparate from them. Theſe churches continue to be churches, and the ordinances to be ordinances of Chriſt, although ſuch were continued in communion with them; and notwithſtanding thereof, theſe who were free of theſe corruptions, are approven and commended by Jeſus Chriſt. And if it were not ſo, that a perſon's endeavouring in his ſtation to amend ſuch a fault, and to have ſuch ſcandals cenſured, did not exempt him from guiltineſs, ſo as to continue in church-communion, although the plurality of officers ſhould be ſhort of their duty: in that reſpect then there might be ſtill ſeparation after ſeparation *in infinitum*: which abſurdity the learned Hooker, and Norton of New England, do preſs for the obtaining of ſubmiſſion to their church-cenſures, and keeping of communion with their churches; even upon ſuppoſition, that the plurality of a congregation ſhould refuſe to ſhut out ſome deſerving the ſame. Otherwiſe, ſay they, when theſe did ſeparate, upon ſuch a new emergent occaſion, there behoved to be a new ſeparation, and ſo forth; becauſe no church or men can be expected to be ſo ſtraight, as either not to keep in ſome unjuſtly, or not to ſuſpect that ſome ſuch are keeped in: which alſo would be a ſnare to their conſciences who judged ſo, and be a cauſe of ſeparation, although it were not ſo indeed. And were this applied to the defects of Preſbyterial churches, there would be no preſſing neceſſity of ſeparating from them, or from communion in any ordinance with them.

7. We may ſee from theſe epiſtles, that altho' exact holineſs be *de jure*, required of all church-members; yet *de facto*, often, they are not all exactly ſuch, and that therefore the holineſs which is ſpoken of, as eſſential to viſible churches, or to membership in them, is not rightly to be extend-

ed to a reality therein. If this church of Laodicea (wherein nothing is commended, but much found fault with, be conſidered, it will be found that this holineſs will not abide a rigid trial: yet it cannot be denied, but they have what is eſſential to a viſible church, and memberſhip therein; even as her miniſters, were miniſters, although not anſwerable to their ſtations, as was ſaid; and if what theſe worthy men, Mr. Cotton Norton and Hooker, do aſſent unto in their writings, were accordingly adhered to in all practices, we conceive there needed not be any great controverſy concerning this point. The ſecond of theſe forecited authors, Part I. p. 20. layeth down the *pinch* of the difference in theſe words, as he calls it. *Whether ſuch as walk in a way of profaneneſs, or remain pertinaciouſly obſtinate in ſome wickedneſs, though otherwiſe profeſſing and practiſing of the things of the goſpel, have any allowance from Chriſt, or may be accounted fit matter according to the terms of the goſpel, to conſtitute a church?* Which authors alſo do acknowledge, that caſting out of a church, is but to proceed upon clear ſcandals of a groſs nature, convincingly made out, and no otherwiſe, Part III. p. 39. And if there be defect in the executing thereof, ſeparation upon that account is diſclaimed, as is formerly hinted, if the church in doctrine and adminiſtration of ordinances be pure, that is, without error.

The judicious Cobbet of New-England hath an excellent ſaying, as he hath many to the Anabaptiſt, againſt whom he writeth, p. 2. cap. 1. ſect. 11. *Better* ſaith he, *they who have not ſo peculiar a title thereunto be folded up in the church, than that one of ſuch lambs be left out in the wild wilderneſs.* And again, cap. 3. ſect 3. is full, to ſhew that there was no ſtrictneſs obſerved in the admiſſion of profeſſors to baptiſm; but rather an enquiry of their purpoſe for the time to come, in bidding them bring forth fruits, and believe in him that was to come, as from John's example, Matt. iii. and Paul's Acts xvi. where there is no mention of trying the faith of the houſholds of Lydia and the jailor: who yet were inſtantly baptized: as alſo were theſe Phariſees ſo checked by John, Matth. iii. and much more hath he well to this purpoſe, I have but hinted at theſe things, to ſhew that although there be many queſtions of church-diſcipline; yet they are not all of one nature and hazard, with all adverſaries. And the laſt doth rather concern the conſtituting of churches, and admiſſion of members, ſuppoſed yet to be without, than the governing of churches, and unchurched members: in reference to which, there is great difference.

8. We may ſee, that the ſuſtaining of, and ſubmitting unto this church-power, is a neceſſary and concerning duty: and if, what is ſaid of church-power and government be truth, then this ſubmiſſion muſt follow: otherwiſe there could be no government nor exerciſe of power, if thoſe who are called by their ſtations to be governed, were not ſubmiſſive thereto: and if it were the church-officers duty to try and cenſure, even by cutting off ſuch and ſuch ſcandalous perſons. Then it behoved to be their duty to ſubmit, and the church's to acknowledge theſe ſentences, as Chriſt's word is, Mat. xviii. *Let him be to thee as a heathen*, &c. And Heb. xiii. 17. it is thus expreſſed, *Obey them that rule over you, and ſubmit to them:* which certainly looks as well to the authority of diſcipline, that requireth ſubmiſſion, as to the obedience that ought to be given to the word in doctrine; for this cauſe officers are deſigned by the title, *Rulers:* which is often given to civil governors, and the fainting of ſuch ſoul-overſeers, is marked as a thing moſt unprofitable to the people themſelves: and therefore is the more to be ſhunned.

Amongſt other batteries againſt this ordinance of diſcipline, this is not the leaſt that is raiſed againſt it, that it hath no compulſive force, if men willingly do not yield, which indeed tends to place all authority in ſtrength and force: for, by that ſame argument, a ſtrong ſon rebelling againſt his father, or a people or army againſt their magiſtrate or general ſhould be exempted from their ſubjection to them; and the parent, magiſtrate or general, be denuded of their authority over them: becauſe they have not force to compel obedience. Authority lies in God's appointing of ſuch to rule, and ſuch others to obey; although ſome ſinfully ſhould invert that order, as ſome diſputes teach men to do. And the queſtion here cometh, if in reaſon a church-member may diſclaim church authority and cenſures, or ſimply *de jure*, though by power or violence they may do ſo *de facto:* yea, this doth indeed prove church-government to be diſtinct from the civil: becauſe it is not armed with worldly power and ſtrength, as other governments of the world are; and, in that reſpect,

is not of this world, as the Lord Chriſt ſaid of his *kingdom*, John xviii. yet was he ſtill a King, and it cannot be but a high guilt to mar this, either by overturning of it altogether, or by encroaching on it, and thereby to mar its freedom or enervate its power, or by refuſing to ſubmit unto, acknowledge, or authorize the ſentence thereof, as mens places call them to do.

We may therefore propoſe a word or two to all, but eſpecially to magiſtrates in reference to this. 1. Let magiſtrates, in the fear of God conſider what they do, leſt they involve themſelves in this guilt; it hath ever been hard to kick againſt the pricks: and although ſome would make encroachment on this government to be a ſweet thing; (which men eaſily admit in their own perſons without any reſtraint,) yet the end thereof is bitterneſs. And it would be conſidered, if ſuch counſels tend to commend religion and further it, or not? which at the beſt are but to mould and reſtrain it, ſo as it may be ſubſervient to their own greatneſs and ends, as in Henry VIII. of England did appear. 2. They would conſider if conſcience put them to it, or if the moſt zealous preſs it, or if ſome other thing drive it on, and to what ſort of perſons that deſign is moſt ſavoury? If it be not ordinarily the moſt profane, or otherwiſe erroneous? and ſhall magiſtrates be ſubſervient to ſuch? 3. They would conſider the abſurdities and conſequents alledged, if they be hinderances or ills to religion and godlineſs, or but to their own power and greatneſs, and that in pretext only? is it becauſe they will more zealouſly or profitably do it themſelves, or becauſe they had rather it were not done at all, than done by them, and ſuch like? If it be the ſtrengthening of their own power, more than of Chriſt's that moves them: for it hath often been a miſerable miſtake of the powers of the earth, to ſeek the ſtrengthening of their government by their enervating of Chriſt's, which hath proven to be the overturning of their own. If magiſtrates cannot in conſcience clear themſelves in theſe things, it cannot but be found to be an encroachment on Chriſt's ordinances, which are uſeful and neceſſary in his kingdom. 4. Conſider the conſequents, when things are marred and ly undone, when miſguided by undiſcreet hands, who love nothing more than to make ordinances deſpicable: for, if indeed a diſtinct government be inconſiſtent with the civil, then a diſtinct incorporation as a church is, muſt be inconſiſtent, even in its being, with a civil ſtate and commonwealth. And if church-government be needleſs, becauſe all things may be done by civil rulers that are incumbent to it, a miniſtry alſo will be needleſs, becauſe civil men that have knowledge may ſupply that: and ſeldom is any found that rejects the one, but he is, at leaſt, exceedingly lax in the other.

5. Suppoſe it be obtained, that this government be born down, what doth the magiſtrates gain thereby? It is but, either that ſuch things, that church-diſcipline takes notice of, ſhould altogether be ſlighted, that ſo there may be confuſion in the church: which is but a poor advantage: or, it is that the burden may be doubled on him who had it heavy enough before, and ſo he be made more immediately liable for all the defects that ſhall be in thoſe things. And at the moſt, ſuppoſing that they ſhould be diligent in the outward duties for the reſtraining of the outward man; yet doth never that come up to the uſe of edifying, as it doth by Chriſt's ordinance of diſcipline: for men are but puniſhed as men, and not as Chriſtians; and faults are but cenſured, as in other ſtates, and not as in Chriſt's church.

6. Let them conſider, that the eſtabliſhing of this power, as diſtinct from theirs, doth not exclude them upon the matter from having acceſs to any thing which may edify the church: for they are admitted to overſee the ſpreading of pure doctrine, and the reſtraining of falſe doctrine, error and vice, and to every other thing conducing to the end in edification in the way ſuitable to their places; only it bounds them here, that pure doctrine be preached by Chriſt's orderly called miniſters, and not by themſelves or others, upon their meer command, and ſo that order be preſerved, and diſcipline and cenſures be exerciſed, and made effectual in the church in the ſame method. And this is not to reſtrain them in government, and incapacitate them for edifying the church in their places, more than by refuſing them power to preach authoritatively, and to adminiſter the ſacraments as Chriſt's ambaſſadors; or, more than a father is incapacitated to exerciſe his fatherly power on an unruly child, becauſe a magiſtrate or church-judicatory doth concur with him.

7. They are no way weakened in civil things:

for, whatever the magiſtrate formerly poſſeſſed before the conſtituting of the church, or whatever magiſtrates in other ſtates, where no churches are, do poſſeſs, that is ſtill allowed to him, where this diſtinct government is erected: therefore it cannot be ſaid, that it doth encroach on him: for what caſes do flow from a ſtate as a ſtate, are ſtill left untouched by this authority: only what caſes flow from it as a church, or from the members thereof, conſidered as Chriſtians, theſe only are meddled with by it, viz. Trial of gifts, admiſſion of miniſters, cenſuring of church-officers and members, and that with church-cenſures, others than have been, or are uſed in any meer ſtate or commonwealth, and ſuch like, &c. And ſeeing none of theſe belonged to the magiſtrate formerly, and do but flow from this conſideration of their being a church: it follows, that the keeping of power diſtinct in theſe, can no way be ſaid to encroach on the magiſtrate's power, ſeeing he poſſeſſeth ſtill whatever any magiſtrate poſſeſſed: yea, ſeeing by the church, there is a new relation ariſing from what formerly was, it ſeems convenient and neceſſary, that there ſhould be a new diſtinct way of ordering and governing the ſame: elſe ſuppoſing, that a magiſtrate had under him both Chriſtians and heathens in the ſame incorporation, he were either not to cenſure Chriſtians otherwiſe for their faults than heathens: which is abſurd, ſeeing the fault of a Chriſtian hath a diſtinct notion from the ſame fault in a heathen, viz. It is an offence and ſcandal which ariſeth from this, that the perſon committing it, is a church-member, and ſo by their miſcarriages, they reflect more on their Head, and the profeſſion of the goſpel, than the faults of others: or, he muſt puniſh the ſame faults that are done by perſons under the ſame civil law with ſeveral and diſtinct puniſhments, which is no leſs inconſiſtent with the nature of a civil ſtate conſidered in itſelf, which admits not of diſtinct cenſures of the ſame faults and perſons, more than of a diſtinct power. And ſo if the conſideration of a new church-relation will admit of diſtinct laws and cenſures, without wronging the nature of a ſtate, and that equity which ought to be kept in reference to ſubjects, neither ought this diſtinct power to make theſe laws, and execute theſe cenſures, be thought inconſiſtent with magiſtracy, ſeeing it flows from the ſame new relation; and this equity among ſubjects, is no leſs eſſential to a well-ordered commonwealth, than univerſal ſupremacy and power to the magiſtrate. And the conveening of church-officers for the exerciſing of diſcipline, and that without dependence on the magiſtrate, can be no more inconſiſtent with ſubjection to him in civil things than the conveening of church-members for hearing of the word, and receiving of the ſacraments, even though it ſhould be expreſly contrary to his command.

8. It would be conſidered, that the right exerciſe of church-power, doth not only not weaken; but on the contrary, doth exceedingly ſtrengthen civil authority and obedience thereunto in the church. For, where this is, a magiſtrate hath all authority that civil laws can give him, and all the power that the word upon conſciences doth imprint; and he hath beſides theſe, church-power and cenſures concurring for his ſtrengthening: becauſe diſobedience to him, is accounted a ſcandal by the church; and therefore is amongſt other ſcandals to be taken notice of diſobedient children, ſervants and wives; which doth exceedingly ſtrengthen the authority of theſe relations in the church beyond that which can be elſe where. And thus the church's power doth confirm the power of the ſtate, when they cenſure diſobedience to them, and when they cenſure the ſame faults in the ſame perſons, which the ſtate doth, though under a different notion: and by ſo doing, they pronounce the power and proceeding of the civil ſtate to be juſt, when the thing puniſhed by it, are thus repreſented to them, and not only as faults againſt human laws, and inconſiſtent with civil ſtates, but alſo as ſins againſt Chriſt, and unbecoming his church: which certainly cannot but add a great impreſſion of reverence unto the civil power. Thus theſe two diſtinct governments, do no way interfer, but ſupport each other. And ſo as it is no obſtruction, but a great furtherance unto church power in the exerciſe thereof, (altho' it be ſtill diſtinct and independent as ſuch) to have civil power after its own manner concurring with it; ſo it is a ſtrengthening to civil power, to have the acceſſion of church-power in its kind, to concur with it. And if indeed we ſuppoſe magiſtrates to puniſh all things that are ſcandalous in the church, there can be no prejudice to the power by this, which doth cenſure the ſame things on another ac-

count. And if we ſuppoſe them not to do ſo, then there is neceſſity for this church-power, that ſuch things may be taken notice of, as hath been ſaid.

9. The exerciſe of this diſtinct church-power is a great advantage to the church; and ſo cannot but be well conſiſtent with magiſtracy; for theſe two ordinances, cannot but be conſiſtent. 1. It maketh ſin hateful. 2. It ſtrengtheneth the authority of all other ordinances. 3. There can be no ſuch way for trying qualified men fit to manage church-cenſures and church-affairs, as ſuch who are purpoſely choſen. 4. It hath what the magiſtrate can give, and this beſide. 5. It proveth more convincing and edifying to the perſon cenſured: for, whatever is ſaid to the contrary, experience doth prove, that no cenſure hath ſuch convincing weight on conſciences, as when it is diſtinctly adminiſtred by church-officers. 6. It doth more ſhew the holineſs of the Head Chriſt, and the completeneſs of his ordinances, and other advantages that may be gathered from what we ſaid at the entry to this digreſſion. In a word, if civil powers mind edification in their place, and to be a terror to evil doers, this proves ſtrengthening to them: becauſe it furthers that end. If they mind not that, it is no marvel ſuch a power be ſuſpicious-like, which tendeth only to the carrying on thereof.

It is ordinary to men to ſuſpect more the encroaching of church-men in power and their exorbitancy, than of any other, that being ever thought by natural men to be a bondage, and theſe ever eſteemed to be more proud, rigid, &c. and I know not what in the exerciſe of their power. But men would ſoberly conſider, 1. If that be the fault of the ordinance, or of the perſons, and if diſcipline well diſcharged and eccleſiaſtically followed with love, meekneſs, conviction, &c. if ſo it were not uſeful? And if the fault be in the perſons, why ſhould it be imputed to the power itſelf in this caſe, more than in other caſes? 2. Is there any thing in a church-office to occaſion this exorbitancy and miſcarriage, more than in another civil ſtation? This looketh not like in itſelf. 3. If more nearly we conſider church-officers, there is no ſuch reaſon to ſuſpect them: for, is there any rank of perſons ſo regulated, and to be tried in their qualifications for the exerciſe of their truſt, as by the ſcripture they are? Or, are any places more deliberately filled, that men conſcientious and fit for ſuch a truſt may be called thereto? and are there any ſort of perſons ſo bounded with profitable rules in the exerciſe of their authority? If there be defect in the obſerving of theſe, it ought tenderly to be remedied; yet, it cannot be thought but church-officers muſt be moſt fit to manage church-matters. 4. Let them that are employed in church-power be conſidered, without reſpect to that, are they not of themſelves men of tenderneſs, conſcience, and gifts proportionably, as men in any other ſtations are, ſo that it may be ſuppoſed for their qualifications and carriage, they might have been men of other ſtations; and if called thereto, judges, rulers, &c. without any juſt ground of ſuſpicion more than others? And if ſo, ſhall the very office, which ought to capacitate them more, only render them obnoxious to ſuſpicion? This had need to be adverted unto, leſt their office be reproached. And may not that power put in civil hands, be as ready to miſcarry as in theirs? 5. What church-men are uſually moſt miſtaken? Is it not they who ſtill have been moſt faithful and zealous in their duty? Have not ſuch ever alſo been thought moſt intolerable, even in reſpect of their freedom in the word, as we may ſee in the caſe of Elias, John the Baptiſt, &c. and the two prophets, chap. xi. Shall therefore doctrine and power in the word be thought inſufferable? Or, ſhall the falſe prophets of Baal, or of Antichriſt, be thought more fit to have place, than the Lord's faithful ſervants? This can be no good ground that doth reflect only upon theſe that are faithful, others being ready to apply themſelves to the pleaſing of men, both in word and diſcipline. 6. It would be conſidered, what may move men of judgment and parts, eſpecially if they be conſcientious, to top with magiſtrates? It is not like that ſelf-intereſts doth that; ſeeing flatterers that ſeek that moſt, take the contrary way and come ſpeed, when as the moſt faithful are often under a cloud. Or, is it like that the moſt zealous, humble and tender, ſhould be moſt ſubject to miſcarry? And if there be ground to reprove or cenſure either by word or diſcipline, is it not moſt profitable, even though moſt diſpleaſing, that it be done? 7. Conſider, who moſt readily fret at this power? It will be found they are ſuch, who from inclination to looſeneſs or error cannot abide any bands, or from a principle of politic indifferency in the matters of

religion, would mould all in a ſtate-frame; and ſuch are imbittered at freedom in preaching, as well as power in governing: or, they are ſuch as are led with a prejudice at the power of ordinances, which certainly men naturally are not free of, and it would be adverted in this. 8. Conſider, that this miſtake of church-mens power, doth often ariſe in ſuch caſes, wherein they are ſerving Chriſt: and men entertain it moſt in ſuch times, when their frame is leaſt ſpiritual and ſober, as the obſervation thereof in experience will evidence. What man at the approach of death, hath been comforted in ſuch an oppoſition, or challenged for ſubmiſſion? although contempt thereof hath lien heavy on many, and that to ſcar others from following their ways. All therefore of all ranks, would be obteſted to advert to this, leſt they be found even fighters againſt God: eſpecially at ſuch times, when this deſign by ſome is driven; leſt by putting to their hand to pull down this authority, they themſelves periſh in the fall thereof. And what doth the advantage at moſt amount unto? It is this, there ſhall be greater freedom to ſin, and fewer means to reclaim from it; or what cenſure ſhall be inflicted, may be done in ſuch a way as may ſtand with mens laughing at their ſin, without being affected in the conſcience by any convincing mean; Hath this ever profited any hitherto? Or, hath the right exerciſe of diſcipline ever been prejudicial to any? And do not ordinarily religion and diſcipline flouriſh together? And are not congregations in beſt caſe, where this ordinance is moſt vigorous? And do not the ſad effects of the want of this in other places, evidently demonſtrate the neceſſity thereof? People would conſider theſe things, eſpecially theſe who are engaged ſingularly for the ſupporting of this ordinance: for, a time of reckoning will come, when this exerciſe of diſcipline and ſubmiſſion thereto, according to mens places and engagements, will not be found ſo indifferent as now it is eſteemed by many. And diſputes of this kind, we ſuppoſe, will not be admitted, when the Lord will declare that he hath ratified in heaven, what according to his will has been pronounced in this ordinance of diſcipline upon earth: which by divines, is well accounted to be the ratification and confirmation of the threatenings contained in his word, and added to make them the more weighty, as the ſacraments are unto the promiſes of his grace.

2. *Concerning a* MINISTER'S RELATION *to a* PARTICULAR CONGREGATION.

THIS relation between the angels and the churches, is mentioned in all theſe epiſtles. The miniſter, or angel, is called the miniſter of ſuch a church peculiarly: here the church, or candleſtick, is called *his*, I will remove *thy* candleſtick. It will not therefore be impertinent to enquire a little concerning this mutual tie and relation in theſe three, 1. In the general. 2. In the grounds of this peculiar tie. 3. In the nature of it; particularly in theſe two. 1. If a miniſter, as ſuch, be only a miniſter to a particular congregation, in which he ſerves. And, 2. If that tie be ſuch, as upon no conſideration it may be broken or looſed, and he removed by tranſportation to ſome other charge. We are the rather to take notice of this: not only becauſe it ſerves to clear the truth in hand; but alſo becauſe it ſupplieth ſomewhat defective in reference to a miniſter's call, of which we have formerly ſpoken, viz. what may be thought of a call; that is, by tranſporting of a man that is already fixed in a particular congregation; or, if a miniſter ſettled in ſome particular charge, may upon occaſion act miniſterially in things peculiar to a miniſter without the ſame.

For clearing of the firſt, we would diſtinguiſh a threefold relation that a miniſter of the goſpel ſtands into. The firſt is, A relation that is between Chriſt the Maſter and Lord, and him as his ſervant and ambaſſador. This is the firſt relation, and fountain of all the reſt: in this reſpect, they are the miniſters of Chriſt, and ſtewards of the myſteries of God, 1 Cor. iv. 1. and ambaſſadors for Chriſt, 2 Cor. v. 20, &c. becauſe they have their authority and commiſſion from him, and he peculiarly is their maſter and owner. In this reſpect alſo we may conſider the church; and ſo ſhe is Chriſt's church, purchaſed with his own blood, Acts xx. 28. This is the principal relation, by which both angels and churches are Chriſt's, as he is the ſovereign Maſter and Owner of both: and ſo neither are the churches the miniſters, nor the miniſters the churches; but both are Chriſt's.

2. There is a leſs principal relation, which is delegatory, and flows from the former, he, to whom both miniſters and churches do belong, thinking good to beſtow miniſters as a gift unto his church: in this reſpect, miniſters relation is primarily to the catholic church; and ſo 1 Cor. xii. 28. it is ſaid, *God hath ſet ſome in the church, firſt apoſtles, ſecondarily prophets, thirdly teachers*, &c. And again, Eph. iv. 11, 12. *He gave ſome, apoſtles; ſome, paſtors; ſome, teachers; for the edifying of the body of Chriſt.* Here we may ſee that miniſters belong to the church univerſal, and have relation to it, they being miniſters of that ſame church, that the apoſtles were apoſtles of, and for that ſame end, viz. the building of Chriſt's body, which takes in both Jews and Gentiles, as from that, 1 Cor. xii. verſe 13. &c. doth appear. In this reſpect, the miniſter's principal relation and charge, is Chriſt's church univerſal, and his body: and they are given thereto, viz. to the houſe of God, which is the church of the living God, into the which they are to behave themſelves as ſtewards, &c. as Paul hath it, 1 Tim. iii. 15.

3. We may conſider this relation, as more particular, and leſs principal, and as ſubſervient to the former end: and ſo miniſters, are miniſters to particular churches, and not to others; and churches, are the churches of ſuch miniſters, and not of others, as we may ſee in theſe epiſtles. Theſe relations are neither inconſiſtent, nor yet to be confounded: and may, from the compariſons uſed in ſcripture, be thus illuſtrated. The church is compared to a city, or vineyard, or flock; the miniſters, are watchmen, dreſſers, or paſtors; the Lord Chriſt is the Sovereign, and Owner of all. Now, if the queſtion be moved concerning theſe watchmen, dreſſers, or paſtors, to whom they belong? *Firſt* of all, They are Chriſt's, as appointed by him for ſuch a work, and accountable to him in it, as watchmen are the watchmen of ſuch a ſtate, or king, whom they ſerve. *Secondly*, They are alſo watchmen of the city, in common, as that is the object of their watching, committed to them; or, they are dreſſers of the vineyard, &c. and ſo it may be ſaid, They are watchmen to the whole city. Yet, *Thirdly*, Becauſe there are ſeveral towers of that one city, and it requires ſeveral watchmen, and theſe require an orderly appointment of them to their ſeveral poſts; and ſo in this reſpect, a watchman that is a watchman of the whole city, may be called peculiarly the watchman of ſuch and ſuch a particular tower, and fort, for diſtinguiſhing him from other watchmen of the ſame city; who, in that reſpect, cannot be called watchmen of any particular tower, but ſuch as is allotted to them, although they be watchmen of the whole city principally; and ſo may be ſaid of the other ſimilitudes. Even ſo it is with miniſters, who are primarily Chriſt's, and by him are delegates principally to the overſight of his whole catholic church; yet ſo, as for the better attaining of that end, each hath his particular poſt aſſigned him; from which, for diſtinction's ſake, he is denominated, as eſpecially belonging to it. The former relation is eſſential to a miniſter of Chriſt, viz. that he belongs to Chriſt's church, and is commiſſionated for the edifying thereof. The laſt, viz. a miniſter's relation to this, or that particular church, is not eſſential to a miniſter of Chriſt; but is to be ſubſervient to ~~the~~ former: for, we ſee apoſtles and evangeliſts had no ſuch particular relation: and it is not impoſſible, but a miniſter may be ſeparated from ſuch a relation; yet is he ſtill to continue a miniſter of Chriſt: much leſs is the difference between one particular church and another, to be counted eſſential to a miniſterial relation. Thus, in a great houſe, there may be many ſtewards for diſtributing to the children or ſervants: and for order, each may have his number aſſigned to him, for whom he is to provide and on whom he is to wait. They are all, 1. Stewards, of that one Maſter. And, 2. In reference to his own houſe, they are all alſo ſtewards of it. Yet, 3. By peculiar delegation, they are only ſtewards according to their peculiar aſſignments. It is eſſential by their commiſſion to be ſtewards of that houſe; but not that they ſhould be ſtewards of ſuch and ſuch a number: for, this addeth no new power to them; but orders them in the exerciſe of the former.

In the ſecond place, This particular relation between the miniſter and a particular flock, doth ariſe from theſe grounds, 1. From the Lord's ſpecial aſſigning of one particular church, to one man rather than to another: in which he is to labour for the good of the whole. In which reſpect, as he is a miniſter of Chriſt, to the catholic church, and hath that common with all other miniſters; ſo hath he this peculiar to him, that he is a ſpeci-

ally deſigned in reference to that portion, as it were his particular poſt, as hath been ſaid 2. Upon this delegation by the maſter, ſuch a people became peculiarly his: and by the maſter's appointment, are ſubject to the ordinances adminiſtrated by him: becauſe that ſame Lord and Maſter of the miniſter, who warrands him peculiarly to treat with ſuch a people, being alſo maſter of that flock, calleth them peculiarly to ſubmit to him: from which, according to his appointment, there doth ariſe a mutual obligation between ſuch a miniſter and ſuch a people: he is obliged to miniſter unto them in the goſpel; and they are obliged to ſubmit to him, ſtrengthen him, acknowledge him, communicate to him in all good things, and to provide for him, &c. And this mutual relation, is not founded merely on voluntary conſent, nor is of a perſonal nature, ſo to ſpeak, that is, as if he, or they, were diſpoſing of themſelves as principal parties; but it is an obligation flowing from the former delegation, and cannot but follow from the nature thereof, and by virtue of the general commands given, Heb. xiii. 17. 1 Theſſ. v. 12. Gal. vi. 6. &c. although there were no explicit covenanting in reference to theſe ends amongſt theſe parties: and when any is, it is but a formal expreſſing of that which otherwiſe is implied: and is neceſſary, not for binding up that relation ſimply; but for the better furthering the ends thereof. Therefore in that tie, miniſters and people both, are to look upon that obligation as a mean ſubſervient to an end, and ſo to be regulated by it: And, as was hinted at, both would remember, that they do principally belong to Chriſt; and that therefore it is not free to them to article or not, or as they will in that obligation, or otherwiſe than may ſtand with the Maſter's end, and delegation foreſaid. 3. From this mutual obligation, there doth ariſe a more near mutual ſympathy between that miniſter and church, than between him and any other church, or them, and any other miniſter: they have common intereſts, common hazards, common joy and grief, &c. In which reſpect, a croſs to one of them, is a croſs to both, as this threatening here doth clear: and in this reſpect, there is a greater fibneſs between them than others not in this peculiar relation. 4. As there are peculiar duties called for on both ſides, from each to other, which are not ſo required between them and others; ſo there is a particular charge or reckoning and account, which will follow thereupon: in this reſpect, a miniſter is to account more peculiarly for that particular church, than others; and the people again, for the reverencing and encouraging of him in a ſpecial manner, as may be gathered from Heb. xiii. 17. And upon this account, Paul did particularly aggrege the Gentiles ſlighting and grieving of him, in his epiſtle to the Corinthians and Galatians, becauſe of his particular delegation in reference to them. In which reſpect, although he was an apoſtle of the univerſal church; yet peculiarly was he the apoſtle of the Gentiles: and upon that ground, did plead a peculiar claim to them; but ſtill as ſubordinate and ſubſervient to the former.

The third thing propoſed, is, That which mainly is to be enquired into, viz. The nature of this tie and relation betwixt the miniſter and a particular church; if it be ſuch as doth bound him in his authority, ſo as he may not perform any miniſterial act without the ſame? and ſo upon the other ſide, if he be ſo tied to that church, that for the greater good of the univerſal church he may not be looſed from it, and be made uſe of, as a miniſter, elſewhere?

For the firſt, We may take theſe general concluſions for helping us in the underſtanding thereof. The firſt is, That there is an union and communion in the catholic viſible church: which is one body, 1 Cor. xii. and that both of Jews and Gentiles, one city and houſe, one common-wealth, Eph. ii. 19, &c. one mother of us all, Gal. vii. one bride and ſpouſe, &c. Which expreſſions, do hold forth this union in reference to all viſible churches, and all the members thereof. There are not two bodies, cities, or common-wealths in this reſpect; yet muſt theſe places be underſtood of the viſible church, it being that body, into which we are entered by baptiſm, 1 Cor. xii. 13. and that city, in which watchmen are ſet, and external ordinances: and that common-wealth, which ſucceedeth to that which once was peculiar to Iſrael, and from which the Gentiles were once ſeparated by a partition-wall, which is now taken down by the goſpel.

Concluſion 2. Although this church be one in itſelf; yet it is ſubdivided in particular churches, which are as parts of that whole. This ariſeth from accidental conſiderations of the number of

profeſſors, diſtance of place, and ſuch like: in which reſpect, it is needful for her edification, and the going about of the ordinances, that this ſhould be; yet is this ſubdiviſion without prejudice of the union foreſaid, yea, it is ſubſervient thereto; even as ſuppoſing a numerous city or incorporation ſhould be ſubdivided in ſo many quarters, or leſſer ſocieties, for the good of the whole. Thus the church at firſt, being one, upon the former conſiderations, upon this occaſion did extend herſelf in this manner; and theſe who juſt now were of one church, and meeting together for the ordinances, were induced to divide into ſeveral ſocieties and meeting-places, as may be gathered from the hiſtory of the acts, yet continuing ſtill of the ſame body together, in the firſt reſpect. In which reſpect, ſometimes the viſible church is ſpoken of in the plural number; ſometimes again only in the ſingular, as pointing out an unity: ſuch are theſe phraſes, to edify the church, to add to the church, to caſt out of the church, &c. which reſpect the whole church, conſidered as an integral whole, exiſting in particular churches, as we ſay, *the whole world*, which doth yet but exiſt in ſo many particular nations, and hath no exiſtence diſtinct from them; and to ſay it conſidered as a *Genus* in this ſenſe, would not be intelligible.

Concluſion 3. Our Lord Jeſus, the Owner both of miniſters and church, hath given miniſters, principally for the edification of his catholic church, without reſpect to this or that particular congregation, but as that is ſubſervient to the former end, as it is, Eph. iv. 11, 12. 1 Cor. xii. 28. it being one church to which both, apoſtles, paſtors, prophets, and teachers are given; and they having all one ſcope, viz. the perfecting of the ſaints; and one commiſſion, viz. the preaching, of the goſpel, which principally is to engage ſouls to the Bridegroom. Hence in their preaching, we are to conceive this order, 1. Apoſtles and miniſters, &c. Treat with ſinners, to have them engaged by faith to Chriſt, as the maſter for whom they treat. 2. To enter them in the catholic viſible church by baptiſm, as the entering of them within Chriſt's houſe in general, without reſpect to this or that particular congregation: as when Philip, Acts viii. did firſt preach Chriſt to the eunuch, and afterward did baptize him, and then left him. And, 3. Being thus entered and brought in to the catholic church, thereupon followeth their entering into particular congregations, that ſo they may be the more conveniently and commodiouſly edified and provided for, as all that are in Chriſt's houſe ſhould be: who therefore are committed to ſome ſpecial overſeers and ſtewards for that end: as ſuppoſe the eunuch had been admitted to ſome particular church for partaking of the ordinances therein after his baptiſm, that he ſhould be a member of Chriſt's church in general, which is ſealed by baptiſm, 1 Cor. xii. 13. was not indifferent to him, but of what particular church he might be a member that by after conveniency was to be regulated. Whence it doth appear, 1. That there is a conſideration of the church as univerſal, beſides the conſidering of her in particular churches. 2. That the church ſo conſidered, as an integral whole, is before the particular churches, and they are derived from her. 3. That the work of the miniſtry doth relate principally to the whole, their commiſſion being, in common, to build the body, to watch the city, feed the flock, preach the goſpel, &c. and their delegation to particular churches, is in a ſubſerviency to this, that is, ſo as this may be the more orderly and conveniently followed: even as ſuppoſe ſo many aldermen or watchmen were by ſome ſuperior deſigned for the governing and watching of one city, and ſhould for the better accompliſhing thereof, have their ſeveral quarters and diviſions aſſigned them; yet ſtill they were to be accounted as governors and watchmen of the city principally, and not of theſe particular portions only.

Concluſion 4. Although they be deſigned principally for the catholic church, and their commiſſion will bear them to treat any where; yet are they not catholic officers of that church, nor at their arbitriment to treat where they will; but (according to the order which he hath ſettled) in particular churches as parts of that whole; that being the way which he hath laid down for edification. I ſay, 1. They are not catholic officers, there being great odds here betwixt *officers of the catholic church*, and *catholic officers of the catholic church*, ſuch the apoſtles and evangeliſts were; ſuch the pope claims to be, that is, to have an emmediate acceſs for exerciſing the truſt equally to all places. Officers of the catholic church are ſuch as are placed in it for the build-

ing up thereof, and have commiſſion in reference to that end; yet is it to be executed according to the rules laid down, that is, as Chriſt's call in an ordinary way ſhall give them acceſs. For although, as was ſaid, they have a power and commiſſion, *actu primo*, to be miniſters of the whole church, and watchmen of the city indefinitely; yet, *actu ſecundo*, they are eſpecially delegated for ſuch and ſuch congregations or poſts, as was hinted in the former ſimilitudes. In this reſpect, Peter and Paul were apoſtles of the catholic church equally; yet, for the good thereof, by ſpecial appointment Peter becometh the apoſtle of the circumciſion, and Paul of the Gentiles: and ſo Paul could not be called the apoſtle of the circumciſion, nor Peter of the Gentiles, in an equal manner. Hence that argument may be anſwered. If a miniſter be a miniſter to more congregations beſides his own, then he muſt either be a miniſter to them as his own equally, and ſo have common charge of all: which were indeed abſurd, and would conſtitute him a catholic officer; or, he behoved to be to them a miniſter or officer of ſome other kind than to his own, which were alſo abſurd, and would introduce a new kind of office and officer. It is anſwered, *actu primo*, he is a miniſter of the ſame kind to all the churches, viz. a miniſter or ambaſſador of Chriſt; but *actu ſecundo*, and in reſpect of a ſpecial delegation, he is peculiarly miniſter of that congregation, whereto particularly he is appointed: in which reſpect, Paul and Peter are equally, and yet not equally apoſtles of the ſame catholic church.

Concluſ. 5. Notwithſtanding of this particular delegation; yet is it profitable that a miniſter ſhould exerciſe miniſterial acts, upon occaſions warrantably calling for the ſame in other churches; and when called to it, he may do it not only by virtue of his gift; but alſo authoritatively and by virtue of his office and commiſſion, as a miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt: even by that ſame authority and warrant, whereby ordinarily he miniſters within his own congregation; and they are acts of miniſterial authority in the one as well as in the other: for miniſters in the church are not to be looked upon as majors of ſeveral towns, or ſheriffs of ſeveral counties, who cannot exerciſe authority out of their own bounds: but they are to be looked upon as heralds of one King, having authority to charge in his name, wherever it be, within his dominions, although for the better ſupply of the ſubjects, ſome of them be deſigned for one corner, ſome of them for another of the kingdom: or, they are like ambaſſadors, authorized to treat with rebellious ſubjects, who have each of them authority to treat and conclude with whoſoever ſhall come in their way: although for the better carrying on of that treaty ſome of them be deſigned for ſuch a corner, and to tryſte at ſuch a place, and others elſewhere: yet all of them being jointly ambaſſadors, and any of them warranted if it were poſſible to treat and conclude with all, by virtue of their power: ſo that the ending of the capitulation with one of them, is equally ſtrong and binding, as if it had been cloſed with another, although for eſchewing of confuſion they met in their treaty ſeverally. It is ſo here, every ambaſſador of Chriſt, upon God's occaſional call, hath warrant to propoſe the ſame terms, and conclude the treaty with a ſinner; yea, to ſeal it in any congregation, as well as in his own: which may be cleared and confirmed further in theſe following conſiderations.

1. The power and commiſſion, which a miniſter hath to perform miniſterial duties he hath it from Chriſt, the Maſter and Lord of the whole church: and in this reſpect is the miniſter of Chriſt, 1 Cor. iv. 1. and his ambaſſador, 2 Cor. v. 20. and therefore may his power extend itſelf to his viſible kingdom, he being a herald authorized to proclaim in the name of that King: as far therefore as his authority as Maſter doth reach; ſo far may his miniſterial delegation under him, upon juſt occaſion be extended. Indeed were his authority derived from a particular church, it could be extended no further than itſelf; (which is the ground of this miſtake;) but his authority being derived from Chriſt, the Maſter, though in a mediate way; and the miniſter being his ambaſſador treating and performing all his acts, in his name, there is no ground to deny this miniſterial authority of the ſervant, where the Maſter is acknowledged.

2. *Conſider*, That the Maſter's intent in ſending miniſters, is, by them not only to edify particular congregations, but the whole body, as is ſaid. A miniſter therefore in his acting as a miniſter upon ſuch occaſions, muſt be as a miniſter in them: otherwiſe he were only given as a miniſter to that particular church.

3. If his relation to the catholic church be principal, and his relation to a particular congregation ſubordinate to that. Then muſt his miniſterial authority in the caſe foreſaid, extend itſelf to others of the viſible church, beſides that particular congregation: becauſe, according to the rule, *propter quod unumquodque eſt tale, id ipſum eſt magis tale*, that is to ſay, if becauſe he is a miniſter of the catholic church, he is therefore capable to be a miniſter of a particular church; or if his authority reacheth to that particular church, becauſe it is a part of the whole, then much more muſt he have a relation to the whole: but the former is true, as hath been cleared. Miniſters are in a capacity of taking the overſight of ſuch and ſuch congregations, becauſe ſuch congregations are parts of the whole church; and miniſters are appointed to edify the ſame: and do undertake that particular charge as it is ſubſervient to the general end of edifying the whole: even as watchmen take the overſight of ſuch a poſt, becauſe they are watchmen of the city; and their overſeeing ſuch a place in particular, doth contribute to the good of the whole.

4. Their commiſſion which they have from Chriſt, will ſuit as well in one congregation as in another, it being indefinite to preach the goſpel without reſpect to this or that particular people; and it agreeth alſo with their office, and his end: ſeeing therefore their commiſſion, in the matter of it, is not bounded, what warrant is there to bound their authority, as if, as ambaſſadors they did treat with one people, and as private perſons with another; whereas their commiſſion in itſelf, is indefinite, and by accidental conſiderations but appropriated ſome way to one people more than another? For further clearing whereof, conſider.

1. That the apoſtles had their bounds in Chriſtian policy aſſigned to them; yet notwithſtanding might they authoritatively, as apoſtles, act any where in the church: therefore will not the particular allotting of congregations for miniſters in a ſpecial manner, confine their authority within the ſame. It is true, they were apoſtles of the catholic church, and ſo might uſe apoſtolic power in any part thereof, which a miniſter cannot do; yet proportionally, he is a miniſter of that ſame church, as is ſaid: and therefore as that peculiar delegation did not mar the apoſtles in uſe of their apoſtolic power when it was called for any other where; (for although they did it in an extraordinary way, yet Peter had ſtill apoſtolic power in reference to the Gentiles and Paul to the Jews, when they exerciſed it;) ſo may a miniſter have miniſterial power, in miniſterial acts, and may act by virtue thereof, when in an ordinary way he is called to it without the bounds of his own congregation.

If apoſtles might uſe apoſtolic power, and as apoſtles act without the bounds of the catholic church, then may miniſters act as miniſters, without the bounds of their particular churches: becauſe there is a proportionableneſs in reſpect of the extent of power betwixt miniſters in their particular congregations, and apoſtles in the catholic church? but it is certain that the apoſtles, as apoſtles, did preach to heathens, and engage them to Chriſt, and enter them in the church, and that by virtue of their apoſtolic commiſſion and authority: it will follow therefore, that a miniſter is not ſo bounded by his relation to a particular church, but that he may exerciſe miniſterial power without the bounds thereof.

3. If a miniſter by that ſame authority, may preach and adminiſtrate the ſacraments to others without the congregation, as to theſe within, then is not his miniſterial authority confined to one particular congregation; but the former is true. For the matter of preaching is not denied: only it is ſaid they preach not by miniſterial authority, but as gifted private men. Unto which we oppoſe, 1. If a miniſter's warning, reproof, invitation, &c. have equal weight with it in every part of the church, as it hath in his own congregation, then muſt he preach every where as a miniſter; becauſe, it cannot be denied, but he hath in his own church a miniſterial authority, beſides that which a gifted brother would have; but the former is true, the word by him hath the ſame weight as preached by commiſſion from, and in the name of Chriſt, ſo that he may ſay. *We pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled*, which another cannot do: and the guilt of refuſing the word from him, will be found upon the account of his authority, no leſs inexcuſable than if the refuſer were a member of his own congregation. And I ſuppoſe a conſcience will not get a defence tabled for excuſe upon this exception. Beſides, the miniſter hath miniſterial authority, as an ambaſſador, to conclude with them,

that receive his word; and by the power of the keys, to pronounce pardon upon the terms of the goſpel in one church, as well as in an other; and one may receive that word and reſt on it as ſpoken by an ambaſſador, and expect the ratifying thereof. And if it were not ſo, their conſolation were exceedingly leſſened, and the miniſter diſabled from concluding the treaty as an ambaſſador, which doth not agree with Chriſt's end of ſending miniſters, which is the perfection of the ſaints, and edifying the body indefinitely, Eph. iv. 12. And therefore may he, as an ambaſſador, act in theſe miniſterial duties.

The conſidering of the ſecond branch, will clear it more, viz. thus, If a miniſter may adminiſtrate the ſacraments without his own congregation, then muſt his miniſterial power go beyond that relation: becauſe there is a miniſterial power requiſite for theſe, which no gifted perſon whatſoever can aſſume; but the former is true. *Ergo*, &c.

This minor is denied by ſome, as being an unwarrantable practice; yet being generally uſed by all, it is thus anſwered, that a miniſter may give the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper to one not of his congregation, becauſe the body of the church thinks good to admit them: and therefore he may warrantably adminiſtrate it to them, it being ſtill lawful to him in itſelf to conſecrate the elements in his own congregation. But we reply, 1. That a miniſter may warrantably baptize one, who is no member of his congregation: and therefore neither of the former anſwers will weaken this argument; as ſuppoſe a miniſter did encounter ſome heathen, it cannot be denied, but he might preach the goſpel to him; and upon his profeſſed faith and converſion, baptize him: otherwiſe it were now impoſſible to baptize and bring in a heathen: which were abſurd. Yet could not that be done without authority, as is granted; nor could it be done to him as to a member of a particular church; becauſe even after his baptiſm, it were lawful for him to chuſe what particular church he would join unto; neither before that, were he in capacity thereof, nor could the miniſter act therein by the churches warrant: becauſe, 1. The church could not judge a perſon that is without: that were not within their reach. 2. Becauſe a miniſter might do this upon occaſion, where there could not be acceſs to have any church determination concerning the thing, as ſuppoſe it were abroad on a journey, as Philip's encounter was with the Eunuch, Acts viii. Yet can it not be ſaid upon the heathen's propoſing this queſtion, *what doth hinder me to be baptized?* That it might be anſwered warrantably by the miniſter, it hindreth, becauſe thou art no church-member; or, my church is not here to authorize me, &c. ſuch anſwers would be uncomfortable to the man, and diſproportionable to Chriſt's end. It followeth therefore, that the miniſter, as a miniſter might baptize him, and ſeal the treaty, and ſo authoritatively treat and preach as a miniſter, ſeeing authoritatively he may ſeal it. The former anſwer is therefore weak: And 1. Doth ſpeak nothing at all to the caſe of baptiſm; Nor, 2. To the adminiſtration of the Lord's ſupper out of his own congregation, ſeeing it alloweth him power only to conſecrate the elements, there: yet there can be no queſtion, but authority to adminiſtrate the Lord's ſupper, muſt be as broad in this reſpect, as to adminiſtrate baptiſm, ſeeing they are both ſeals of the ſame covenant. 3. If a miniſter's power were peremptorily commenſurable with his flock; even in that caſe of the plurality of the church, their admitting of ſuch a member, the miniſter could not be warranted to adminiſtrate to him; becauſe ſtill underſtanding that perſon continues to be no member of that particular church, nor ſubject to other ordinances of diſcipline: and therefore, according to the former grounds, no ſuch determination of a people could communicate authority to a miniſter by ſuch an act, as to make him uſe miniſterial power in reference to a perſon, not under his charge; if otherwiſe he were not furniſhed therewith.

4. Theſe principles ſeem to be repugnant, both to the commiſſion, and practice generally of all the miniſters of the goſpel: for, 1. They have one commiſſion for all places and perſons where they ſhall be called: this maketh them to act as miniſters in one place, and not in another. 2. Their commiſſion is to treat for Chriſt indefinitely, and for the carrying on of his deſign, without reſpect to this or that particular charge, except in a ſubordinate manner, ſo that by their commiſſion, they are conſtitute Chriſt's ambaſſadors, miniſters and ſtewards ſimply for the preaching of the goſpel and ediſying of his body. This faith, they are but ambaſſadors in reference to ſuch and ſuch a people: and ſo conſequently

could not by his warrant close a treaty in his name with any other. 3. A minister by his commission, is absolutely set a part for the work of the ministry, so long as Christ hath work for him, if he continue faithful; yea, by virtue of this his commission, he is to follow the same. Now by this, suppose a particular congregation to be dissolved or destroyed; or, suppose them to reject him that he hath no access to exercise his ministry amongst them, in such a case he ceaseth to be a minister, and his commission expireth, according to these principles, so that he stands afterward in no other relation to Christ than any private person so qualified.

It doth also thwart with their practices, it being acknowledged and practised by all ever since the days of the apostles, that ministers might and did administrate word and sacraments authoritatively beyond the bounds of any particular congregation. And although in the primitive times there was strict interdiction, that no bishop should exercise jurisdiction at his own hand, within the bounds of another: (which was necessary for preventing of confusion and keeping of order) yet was it never heard that a minister might not authoritatively preach, and administrate the sacrament by the key of order in any part, as he might be called; yea, it is not to be thought, that the ministers of particular churches in their voyages to the apostles, or scatterings and otherwise, whereby they were necessarily withdrawn from their own particular charges, that they did during that time, abstain all ministerial exercises, because so it should prejudge the church of their labours as ministers during that time; which is not likely, considering, that their help in the ministry of the gospel, is sometimes insinuated, and acknowledged by Paul; and they counted his fellow-labourers, such as Aristarchus, Ephapras and others, companions and fellows, both in Paul's sufferings and labours. It is like therefore that their ministerial acting, cannot be confined to any particular place or congregation.

Lastly, This opinion would infer many absurdities; as, 1. A minister could administer no ordinance as a minister, and some not at all, but in his own congregation. 2. Nor in it, but to such as were of his own flock. And, 3. If any were present, he should be the ambassador of Christ to one, and not to another; and that in the same message. 4. Suppose a congregation to want a minister; or, that he be, by sickness or otherwise, incapacitated from exercising of his office, by this, ground they could have no ministerial act administered amongst them, and so no baptism, or sacrament; nor yet have any benefit of a ministry more than if there were no such ordinance. 5. By this no particular church might have ministerial communion, to say so, in church-ordinances together, but such as private persons; yea, as heathens might have in the hearing of the word. 6. There could be no ministerial communion and help amongst ministers; for so, no minister could supply another, more than a private person, though ministers as joint workers in one work, be called in a special manner to have communion together. 7. No member, however gracious, being withdrawn from his own congregation, could be under any ministerial charge, or have access to the preaching of the word, as it is a treaty by an ambassador; or, to any sacrament for himself or his: which is hard, considering that it is the same master, and the same house; and seeing often occasions may draw men abroad where the ordinances are, this would make them in a great part to be strangers even within the church whereof they are children. 8. No minister might authoritatively reprove any offending brother not of his own congregation, nor censure such as do not willingly join, howsoever scandalous: which is contrary to the practice of Ephesus, as already hath been said. Neither would this bring in confusion, or the making of the particular privileges of a congregation common, more than is allowable: because this pleadeth not for an arbitrariness in the exercise of this power; but that there may be a power to be exercised for edification, when it shall be called for.

Neither will it hence follow, that a minister, elder, or deacon, may thrust himself into the exercise of jurisdiction in every place, because they are officers of the catholic church: because, 1. This only saith, that he being called orderly by an opened door may exercise his power in one place and congregation, as well as in another. 2. Because ruling belongeth to the power of jurisdiction; which, besides instalment in an office, doth require other things to concur with it, before it can be exercised: preaching and administration of the sacraments, are done by the power of or-

der, and by virtue of the office as ſuch. Hence a miniſter might preach to heathens without the church, and baptize in due order; becauſe he doth that as a miniſter: yet could he not cenſure one ſuch, till he were a church-member, and until there were ſome orderly way of trying, judging, cenſuring, &c. by a church judicatory ſettled: becauſe the exerciſe of this power doth require more than the being of an office. And therefore even the apoſtles who did thus preach and adminiſter the ſacraments; yet neither judged theſe that were without at all; nor theſe that were within (when they acted by ordinary rules) except in the way of orderly proceeding. Therefore, Acts xv. Paul found it meet to go to Jeruſalem to a ſynod for deciding of ſome things by this power of jurisdiction, although ſtill by this doctrine he was authoritatively condemning the error: which ſheweth, that there is more required in the one than in the other. And in that practice, the apoſtles gave a precedent to miniſters whereby to be directed in ordinary caſes, becauſe in it they did follow ordinary rules common with them to all miniſters, and did not act as extraordinary apoſtles, for ſo one was equally ſufficient for deciding of the matter as all were, but in this a copy is given how the church is to walk in ſuch caſes ordinarily.

The laſt thing which we are to enquire into, is, *If this relation betwixt a miniſter and a particular congregation be ſuch, as the church for a greater good to the whole body may not looſe it, and call one, ſerving at one particular church, to fix and ſerve elſewhere, upon ſuppoſition that it may more further the good of the whole church.*

Anſw. What is already ſaid, doth make way for the anſwering of this, which we ſhall comprehend in theſe three aſſertions.

Aſſer. 1. No miniſter ought to diſpoſe of himſelf at his own private arbitriment, to the prejudice or diſſolution of a tie betwixt him and a particular congregation that is orderly and legally ſettled. For, firſt, no miniſter being free of ſuch a relation, ought to diſpoſe of himſelf arbitrarily as was ſaid in the cloſe of the firſt chapter, much more being under a tie and particular relation. 2. It is a general to all, 1 Cor. vii. *Let every man abide in that calling wherein he is called;* but eſpecially miniſters are to walk by a ſingular call, even in reference to a particular charge: ſo as it may be the flock over which the Holy Ghoſt hath ſet them: which muſt, at leaſt, include his being ſet there in the mediate way of church order; which is that which the Holy Ghoſt owns, as by comparing Acts xiii. 3, 4. and Acts xiv. 23. with Acts xx. 28. is clear. This therefore cannot be left to any private way of tranſacting betwixt a miniſter and a people. 3. If it were ſo, then this particular relation were of no value, neither could properly a miniſter be called the miniſter of ſuch a church; or ſuch a church be his in a more peculiar manner than other churches, if he might at his pleaſure and of himſelf diſſolve that union. 4. Miniſters being ſervants of Chriſt's houſe, and watchmen put to their poſts by him, as being ſpecially to account for that people, committed to them, they ought not and cannot without his warrant remove: this would be found to be treachery and unfaithfulneſs in any other ſervant or watchman, much more muſt it be here. 5. Whereas Chriſt hath appointed theſe particular relations for the entertaining of order, the preventing of confuſion and promoting of edification. This would deſtroy theſe ends, and bring confuſion into the church: which is contrary to the order that he hath eſtabliſhed in it. *Laſtly*, It would beget deſpiſing of the miniſtry in the hearts of the people, and lay them open to ſnares, if a miniſter's ſettling in a place ſtood upon his own election, eſpecially after a former tie, as is uſual in men who are of other profeſſions. And there are many ſtrict acts of councils in all times againſt this, as a moſt wretched abuſe, if it ſhould be admitted in the church.

Aſſert. 2. Although this tye cannot be looſed by any private conſent, ſo that no miniſter can tranſport himſelf upon that account; yet may the church, for her own greater good, tranſport a man from one particular place to another, and that warrantably, notwithſtanding of the former particular tye and relation: yea, ſometimes it will be expedient for the good of the church ſo to do. The application of the former grounds and the laying down of ſome others, will make way for clearing and confirming of this. The firſt is, if there be an union and communion in the catholic viſible church, and if miniſters be eſpecially given to the edifying of it, and in a ſubordination thereto, to the edification of particular churches, then ſuppoſing that a miniſter's tranſportation

from one place to another may further more the good of the whole than where he is, in that caſe, it ought to be done. Becauſe the whole is to be preferred to the part, the good of the body, to any particular member: and in that caſe, it is not the prejudice of that particular church, that their miniſter be ſet where he may more profit the body, but (as the learned Bowles in his treatiſe of a goſpel miniſtry, lib. 3. cap. 7. ſaith) It is rather their preſervation and ſafety, even as it is the good of any particular fort of a city, when a watchman is removed from it, to ſome other poſt, where he may be more uſeful to the whole city: becauſe the benefit of the city is the advantage of every perſon therein. But both the former are true, as hath been ſaid, viz. that there is an union and communion in the catholic viſible church: and that a miniſter's relation ſtandeth principally to ſerve Chriſt in reference to the edification of the whole: therefore, &c. 2. The examples uſed already hold this forth, the church being one city, and miniſters appointed to be watchmen thereof, there can be no reaſon why one may not be removed from one corner to another, if ſo it may conduce for the good of the whole. This is allowed in all commonwealths, cities, and incorporations, &c. and is engraven by nature on the hearts of all men to preſerve themſelves into ſocieties by ſuch means: and can that be denied to the church of Chriſt, which nature maketh common to all incorporations? 3. If a miniſter's relation to a particular charge be leſs principal and ſubordinate to his relation to the whole body, then ought it not to ſtand in the way of his being uſeful to the whole, but rather it is in ſuch a caſe to ceaſe and give place to the other: otherwiſe that particular relation would be principal. and would not be ſubſervient to the other, as a higher end: becauſe ſo, the church in general would be more fruſtrated and prejudged of the benefit of ſuch a man's miniſtry. than if there had been no ſuch relation at all. But the former is true. This particular relation is ſubordinate to the other, as is ſaid, Therefore, &c. Theſe conſequences do follow upon the grounds formerly laid down. Moreover, we may add theſe uncontrovertable concluſions.

Concluſ. 1. There is a diverſity in the caſes of particular congregations; and there is diverſity alſo in the gifts of miniſters. Some congregations are more weighty, and much more of the good or hurt of the church dependeth upon their plantation than others. Again, ſome are more intelligent, ſome are more uneaſy, and dangerous to deal withal, &c. as experience cleareth, whereby it is apparent that the planting of ſome places is of great conſequence for the goſpel's advancement, above the planting of others; and alſo that comparatively, one place will require miniſters otherwiſe qualified than another. Again, there are diverſities of gifts among miniſters, ſome are fit for one people, and not for another, as is clear from 1 Cor. xii. 14, 15. &c. *There is diverſity of gifts but the ſame ſpirit, difference of adminiſtrations*, &c.

Concluſ. 2. Miniſters ought ſo to be diſtributed and placed in particular charges, as that there may be ſome proportionableneſs and ſuitableneſs betwixt the miniſter and his charge, that is, the ableſt miniſter ſhould have the weightieſt charge; the weakeſt, the eaſieſt burden, and as their gift is more eminent in learning, teaching, prudence in government, &c. there likewiſe ought a proportion to be kept in laying on their charge, ſo as there may be a fit object for ſuch qualifications, and as the good of the body may be moſt advanced. This alſo we take for granted: for, that is the end of all gifts which are given to every man *that he may profit withal*, 1 Cor. xii. 7. Whether it be *the word of knowledge*, or, *the word of wiſdom*, &c. they are *all members of one body*, verſe 12. and therefore are to concur for the good of the body, according to their ſeveral qualifications, as different members of that one body: and in this reſpect, a diſproportionating of a miniſter's charge to his gift, it is as if we would put the foot to do the hand's work, or the ear to ſupply the the room of the eye: which were abſurd; and would argue either ſuch and ſuch diſtinction and difference not to be neceſſary, and ſo all the members might be eye or head, or any one member; or, it will ſay, that we are not to walk according to that which the Lord hath diſtributed to every one: both which are abſurd, and expreſly contrary to that which is ſaid. 1 Cor. xii. where expreſly theſe three are held forth, 1. That the church is one body. 2. That there are different gifts, which are as different members of one body, ſome more eminently for one uſe, and ſome more eminently for another. 3. That the Lord's intent by that difference, is, to have all theſe members

concurring in their ſeveral places for the good of the whole body: that ſo, as it is verſe 25. by each member's concurring in its own place, there may be no ſchiſm in the body; which cannot be eſchewed if this proportionating of public charges and gifts be not obſerved.

Concluſ. 3. There cannot be ordinarily ſuch a diſcerning of the proportionableneſs of mens gifts to a particular ſtation at the firſt entry, as to fit every one ſufficiently, and to place them in their right room. This we ſuppoſe, is alſo clear from experience, wherein it is ſeen that many, at firſt are fixt in congregations wherein afterwards there proveth to be a diſproportionableneſs. And it cannot be otherwiſe, upon theſe conſiderations, 1. Becauſe it cannot then be known fully what will prove to be the peculiar gift of every man, till trial and experience evidence the ſame. 2. Becauſe this proportionableneſs is not only to be tried by comparing a man and a particular congregation ſimply; but it is to be taken by trying him comparatively, and that both in reference to other gifts and other congregations: for, a man abſolutely conſidered, may be fit for ſuch a congregation; yet, when other congregations and gifts are conſidered, it may poſſibly be ſeen that he is more fit for an other congregation than many other miniſters; and yet poſſibly ſome of theſe may be as fit for his congregation. In that caſe, it cannot be denied, but it looketh liker the right proportionating of every member, that men be put to ſerve in theſe congregations, for which, according to their gifts, they are beſt fitted. 3. Becauſe at a miniſter's firſt entry there is not occaſion to try a man's proportionableneſs to any other charge but one, or at moſt in reference to ſo many as ſhall at that preſent be vacant and give him a call. Now, ſuppoſe ſome other charge ſhould thereafter be vacant, it is hard to ſay that they ſhould be ſimply excluded from having any acceſs to that perſon, if his gifts were more proportionable to them: becauſe, as we ſaid, this proportionableneſs is to be looked to in reference to what is moſt fit for the whole body: for although (if we may ſo compare it) it is not unfit that the foot ſhould be guided by ſight; yet with reſpect to the whole body, it is more fit for the whole body, that the eye ſhould be placed in the head, than in the foot: becauſe it is not to give light to one member only, but to the whole body; ſo is it here, a miniſter may ſuit a particular congregation, giving light as it were to the foot, whereas if we conſider his office, which is to be an eye to the whole body, he is diſproportionably placed: for ſo the body is darker, when the foot hath more light, which is abſurd.

Concluſ. 4. Chriſt hath furniſhed his church with power in her judicatories and officers, to proportion miniſters gifts ſuitably to the good of the body. Hence is the trial of ſpirits and gifts pointed; and, in that reſpect, *the ſpirits of the prophets are to be ſubject to the prophets*, 1 Cor. xiv. otherwiſe the church in her government were defective in that order which is in other ſocieties; and it would not be adequate and proportionate to its end, if that were not: for ſo there might be an inconveniency and diſproportionableneſs in the church, and no remedy to cure the ſame. From which grounds put together, we may thus argue, 1. If God hath given diverſity of gifts to miniſters, and they be to be improven for the good of the whole body, then ſuppoſing that a miniſter ſettled in ſome more private or leſſer congregation be more proportionably qualified to fill ſuch a place as is more large and eminent than any who can be had without a charge. Then in this caſe he is to be tranſported: becauſe otherwiſe, that being denied, and the charge put upon a man of no competent ability, there would be a diſproportionableneſs between the gift and the charge. For that would join the able man and the light burden, and the weak man and the heavy burden: which were abſurd; but the firſt is clear from the former concluſions. Therefore, &c. 2. If by a miniſter's firſt plantation in a particular charge there be a diſproportionableneſs in the body, which tranſporting of him to another charge would remedy, then is he to be tranſported: and tranſportation in that caſe muſt be allowable and expedient; becauſe by it that due proportionableneſs is preſerved among miniſters, and members of the body, which otherwiſe would be defective and ſo a ſchiſm is prevented; for if the end, viz. that proportionableneſs be neceſſary, then tranſportation, which is a neceſſary mean whereby it is attained, cannot but be neceſſary alſo; but the firſt is true from the former grounds, *Ergo*, &c. 3. If tranſportation were unlawful, then we behoved to ſay, that either no miniſter could be at firſt miſplaced to the prejudice of the body: or,

that there were no remedy for ſuch a caſe, for the recovering thereof; but both theſe are abſurd, as the former grounds do clear. 4. If miniſters were peremptorily fixed by their firſt tie to particular congregations, then could not their gift come under cognition in reference to any other charge; which would infer theſe abſurdities, 1. That the church were bounded and limited in the uſe-making of her own members for her own good: which is contrary to the nature of a body; for ſo ſhe might have members fit for ſuch and ſuch ſtations; and yet could not make uſe of them. 2. In proportionating gifts for places, there would be little place for Chriſtian prudence and deliberation; becauſe ſo the caſe would be determined neceſſarily by providence, that ſuch vacant places behoved to call ſuch men as were not under any former tie, and they behoved to accept theſe particular charges; or, muſt both neceſſarily forbear; and ſo ſuch churches be without miniſters, it may be for a long time, before any did occur whom with confidence they might call: and it will be hard to faſten any of theſe neceſſities upon the way of Chriſt. 3. By this, the church ſhould have little or no acceſs at all to cognoſce of mens gifts, ſo as to proportion them for her good, if ſhe had no place for it after their firſt entry to the miniſtry: becauſe, then often there doth ly much of it upon the man's determining of himſelf; or, at moſt a preſbytery's determining of him, and a particular congregation preſſing, who often are more ſwayed with reſpect to themſelves, than to the church in common. Beſides, that there is no acceſs to cognoſce thereof, upon other grounds given; if then the church be any ways allowed to cognoſce or diſpoſe of members according to their gifts, and that be not left to particular inclinations, tranſportation muſt be allowed. And if it be ſingly done, we ſuppoſe, there is no ſuch acceſs to cognoſce of a man's gift, and to proportionate it for the good of the body, as may be done in tranſportation. 5. We may argue thus, If miniſters be lights planted in the church, for the good of the whole, then ought they ſo to be placed, as they may moſt extenſively give light to the whole. Now, theſe are certain, 1. That there are ſome congregations where a miniſter may more conſpicuouſly hold forth the light of the goſpel, than in others, ſome places being as tables or candleſticks from which light doth ſhine: other places again, being as corners. 2. Sometimes a light may be ſet in a corner, or under a buſhel comparatively, and not be ſet on a place where the greateſt light is called for. 3. When it is miſplaced, it ought to be removed from the corner to be ſet on the candleſtick: And although it may be, that that corner become more dark; yet the houſe in general becometh more lightſome. And if theſe former grounds be true, then tranſportation, when it proves the removing of a light from under a bed, to the candleſtick, for the greater good of the whole houſe, muſt be allowed and admitted: but theſe two conſiderations will make this appear, 1. Chriſt's expreſs words, Matt. v. 14, 15. *Ye are the light of the world*, &c. *Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a buſhel, but on a candleſtick, that all in the houſe may ſee light*, compared with Luke viii. 16. which demonſtrates there, that miniſters are ſo to be placed as they may moſt lighten the whole houſe: and if any place conduce more for that than another, they are accordingly to be placed. 2. The apoſtles practice clears this: we will find them in their preaching eſpecially, to frequent moſt populous places, becauſe there was moſt occaſion of ſpreading the goſpel in thoſe: Paul is marked Acts xix. x. to have ſtayed two full years in Epheſus, and that all Aſia upon that occaſion, heard the word: which doth hold forth. 1. That there are ſome places, particularly populous and public places of more concernment for the ſpreading of the goſpel, when they are well planted, than other places. And, 2. That the apoſtles were in their abode and preaching exceedingly ſwayed by that conſideration: ſo that although in ſome reſpect they had equal intereſt in all perſons and churches; yet did the conſideration of the good of the whole engage them to have particular reſpect to ſome places beyond others; and ſo, as it were, to tranſport themſelves from private places to more public, that they might give light to the more. 6. If the good of a particular congregation, and neceſſity of a particular miniſter, may warrant a tranſportation, much more may the public good of the church do the ſame: this cannot be denied; but both the firſt are true, 1. The good of a particular congregation may warrant it, as ſuppoſe they be utterly prejudged againſt a preſent miniſter, who yet elſewhere may have acceſs to be profitable; either

tranſportation muſt be allowed, or he muſt be rendered unprofitable, contrary to the end for which Chriſt hath given gifts, 1 Cor. xii. and they put in a worſe condition by having, than by wanting: for the ſecond, that a miniſter's particular neceſſity may conſtrain this, as ſuppoſe there be no poſſibility to live and follow the miniſtry in ſuch a place, becauſe of outward ſtraits: thus Neh. xiii. 10. the Levites, by the withdrawing of their maintainance, are made to flie every one to his field; and Nehemiah contends with the rulers, and removes that obſtruction, and doth not challenge the Levites, as Mr. Bowles doth obſerve. We find alſo in church-ſtory, Socrates, lib. 7. chap. 36. of one Sylvanus, who not being able to live in one place, becauſe of his infirm health, which did diſagree therewith, he was tranſported to another more wholeſome and agreeable to his conſtitution. 7. If notwithſtanding of that relation between a miniſter and a people, any particular member, or any other officer, upon weighty conſideration, may remove themſelves, or be removed from that congregation. Then may the miniſter be removed alſo, upon ſuppoſition of the public good: becauſe, there is that ſame tie between the people and the miniſter, and other officers and the people, that is between the miniſter and them: for the relation is mutual; but that private members, and elders or deacons may remove, or be removed orderly, hath never been queſtioned, *Ergo*, &c. 8. If a miniſter, upon particular occaſion, for public good, may perform miniſterial acts without his own congregation, for a time. Then ſuppoſing theſe grounds to be urgent, and authority to interveen, why may he not be fully removed? for, the ſame ground that calleth to act for a time, viz. the good of the body whereof he is a miniſter, may call for it to be perpetual, and ought not to be rejected; but the firſt is true. *Ergo*, &c. 9. If we will conſider the word of God more nearly, we will find this to be conform thereto.

And, 1. If we conſider the Old Teſtament, it is certain that the Levites had their own fixedneſs in the ſeveral cities beſide Jeruſalem, ſeeing that was their office to teach the people: and no queſtion, it was done orderly: hence, *Thou and the Levite within thy gates*, is ſo frequently mentioned: and Acts xv. 21. it is ſaid, that *of old time Moſes had them in every city that did preach him.* It is certain alſo, that notwithſtanding of that fixedneſs, Levites might be removed to more public ſervice at Jeruſalem, as is gathered from Deut. xviii. 6, and 7. *If a Levite come from any of thy gates, out of all Iſrael, where he ſojourned, and ſhall come with all his deſire to the place which the Lord ſhall chuſe, then ſhall he miniſter*, &c. where a Levite's removing from miniſtring in one place to another, is clearly approven. Neither is it to be thought, that this removal was left arbitrary to the Levite himſelf: becauſe ſo, confuſion could not have been eſchewed; but when it is ſo qualified, that he cometh *with all his deſire*, it doth ſuppoſe a trial thereof, and an orderly way of diſpoſing of him, for the attaining of that end, to have proceeded as the learned Junius doth obſerve on the place.

2. If we come to the New Teſtament, there we will find our Lord Jeſus himſelf going from city to city; he ſendeth his diſciples to go through the cities, preaching the goſpel: the apoſtles follow the ſame way in their practice: and we will find them ſending miniſters ſometimes to one place, ſometimes to another; ſometimes keeping particular miniſters with themſelves, as from the hiſtory of the acts, and from the beginning and cloſe of ſeveral epiſtles, may be gathered. And although theſe practices may ſeem, at firſt, to be extraordinary, yet conſidering the end thereof, which is the ſpreading of the goſpel, and the ground upon which it is built, viz. the unity of the church, the good whereof is to be ſought by all the miniſters who are Chriſt's ſervants, in reference thereunto; conſidering the church alſo, to the end of the world, is furniſhed with power for proſecuting of moral ends in an ordinary way; and that the church's propagation, is the end now as then; ſeeing alſo the removing of miniſters ſometimes from one place to another, may conduce to that end now as then; and the ground viz. the good of the church univerſal, is the ſame now as it was then, we conceive the practice itſelf muſt be moral, as the ground was, although then the manner and power was extraordinary, which is now to be performed in an ordinary way.

3. If we will particularly conſider, Acts xiii. 1, 2, 3. we will find this, near almoſt in an example. For, 1. There are there ſeveral prophets and teachers in the church of Antioch, as Barnabas, Lucius, Simeon, &c. 2. They are miniſtring there in a collegiate way, and that for a long time. 3.

Two of them are pitched on, to be ſent elſewhere, for the ſpreading of the goſpel; it being in the wiſdom of God thought fit, to call ſome from Antioch, where were many, that others might be helped, who had nothing: although no queſtion, there was work for all of them in Antioch itſelf: and he might have thruſt out more immediately himſelf, if this way had not been pleaſing to him: yet their ſeparating was thought fitter for the church's univerſal good. 4. This is execute in a mediate way by the laying on of the hands of the preſbytery, and with faſting and prayer: whence we may argue, if for the greater good of the church, ſome teachers were taken from Antioch and ſent elſewhere, then may a miniſter, by church-authority for the end aforeſaid, be removed from one place to another; but the former is true. *Ergo*, &c. There is nothing can be objected againſt this, ſave to ſay that this was extraordinary, in that it was particularly commanded of God: and, 2. That they were extraordinary officers that were ſent; but this will not enervate the argument; for in theſe practices of extraordinary officers in the primitive times, we muſt obſerve ſome rules to difference what is ordinary, from what is extraordinary in them, and ſo know what is to be imitated, and what not: otherwiſe we may reject all the practices of Chriſt, and the apoſtles upon that account, and ſo prejudge ourſelves exceedingly of a great part of the word that is written for our direction. Let us therefore obſerve theſe rules;

1. Where the ground and reaſon of a practice, is moral, although the call thereto, and manner of diſcharging thereof be extraordinary; yet muſt the practice itſelf be moral, although the manner in ſo far as is extraordinary be temporary: thus that the kirk have teachers (ſuppoſing that there muſt be a church) it is moral; as alſo that her teachers have a call, this will follow from Chriſt's ſending of apoſtles, diſciples, and others: becauſe the ſame reaſon ſaith, that a miniſter who is Chriſt's ambaſſador, according to his ſtation (as an apoſtle was in his) ſhould have his commiſſion as an apoſtle had; but that the church ſhould always have apoſtles, or that her teachers ſhould be immediately called of God, that will not follow: becauſe the reaſons thereof are not moral. Now, if we may ſafely reaſon in the general, that a church muſt have officers with a lawful call, becauſe Chriſt's apoſtles had ſuch, though it was immediate, and alſo he that was called ought to obey: by proportion we may gather, that a church-officer may be called from one place to another upon a moral ground, altho' there be no immediate call at his removal, more than at his firſt entry: becauſe the ground whereupon this practice is founded, and which is the reaſon thereof, viz. the greater good of the church, is ſtill binding now as then.

Rule 2. In theſe primitive practices, there is a proportionableneſs to be obſerved between the officers who act, and their call and manner of proceeding, viz. an extraordinary officer, muſt have an extraordinary call, as ſuch; and he may act extraordinarily in the proſecution thereof, by extraordinary power, whereas an ordinary officer muſt act, by an ordinary call and power, the ſame things, ſuppoſe in preaching, diſcipline, ordaining of miniſters, &c. and in ſo far, that laying on of hands was extraordinary, as being done upon an immediate call. But miniſters may follow it in an ordinary way, that is by a mediate call, they may ordain miniſters to a particular congregation, or tranſport from one to another by proportion: becauſe the apoſtles by an immediate call did ſend out extraordinary officers to any particular place.

Rule 3. We would in ſuch practices difference ſuch things as are temporary, that is, ſuch as have ſpecial relation to that time and ſtate of the church (as extraordinary officers and gifts were) from ſuch things as agree to the church as a church, and ſerve to the edification thereof at all times. And thus alſo tranſporting of a miniſter, muſt be allowable in ſuch caſe: becauſe there can be no reaſon given why that practice ſhould be peculiar or only agreeing to that time and caſe of the church, or during the apoſtles lifetime; but the grounds that infer the conveniency of it, are in a good meaſure common to us with them, viz. the furtherance of the church's good, which cannot otherwiſe be ſo well done. And if it may be as well done without this, we acknowledge that this practice will not be binding. And certainly the Lord's putting of the church to this, to ſend out ſome already called, when immediately he might have thruſt out others, doth ſay, that he minded to teach what ordinarily ſhould be done by the church in the like caſe: for, his ſending of them mediately by the church, and not immediately by himſelf, as at other times, doth inſinuate this,

Rule 4. We are to diſtinguiſh things wherein the apoſtles acted extraordinarily, by reaſon of their infallible gifts, extraordinary power, &c. from ſuch things as were common to them with other miniſters, and wherein they acted in an ordinary way common to them with all miniſters: of the firſt ſort where their immediate deciding of controverſies, appointing of cenſures, ſending of miniſters, &c. by virtue of their own alone power: this is not to be imitated: of the other ſort are their admitting of miniſters upon a mediate call to congregations, as Acts xiv. their debating and deciding of controverſies, and making of laws in a ſynodical way, by reaſoning from ſcripture in an ordinary way, as Acts xv. theſe are imitable; and what they did in that manner may be followed: and their laying on of hands (when the call was intimate) their praying and faſting, which are mentioned in this place, were of the laſt kind: and ſo upon ſuppoſition of the intimation of a call, this their practice for the ſubſtance is to be followed.

Now, to reſume a little further the application, that we may know what is ordinary, and what is extraordinary in this caſe; or, what is moral, and what perpetual, or what is temporary. 1. That there be a call of God, that is moral and perpetual; and it may be concluded from this, that no miniſter without God's call, is to be tranſported; but that that call is immediately revealed by God himſelf, is temporary, and not to be pleaded for in ordinary caſes. 2. This is moral, that he who is called of God to edify his church, by leaving one place to ſerve him in another, ſhould obey the ſame. 3. It is moral, that this removal ſhould not be at the man's own determination; but that it be done by church guides, and church judicatories. 4. It is a moral ground upon which this proceeds, viz. the greater edification of the church, whether by engaging and grafting in of ſtrangers, or building up of theſe that are brought in; this ground can no way be thought more peculiar to theſe times than to after times: and therefore it is laid down as the great end of paſtors and teachers, as well as apoſtles, as may be gathered from Eph. iv. 11, 12, 13, 14. 1. This reaſon then muſt have weight to the end of the world. 5. It is an ordinary way by which they proceed, viz. faſting and prayer, ſhewing the neceſſity of a concurrence of God's orderly and external call with his inward, for warranting of this practice; and alſo ſhewing, that when the removing of a miniſter from one place to another, may contribute to the good of the body, they are in that heartily to concur, who have moſt ſpecial intereſt. Now, theſe things being moral, and of perpetual weight in the church, although it will not plead, that the church may ſend out apoſtles by an immediate call, or that they may ſend out indefinitely without reſpect to any place, or not knowing where; yet this will follow, upon the grounds laid down, that when God calleth a man for the edifying of the body of his church, from one place to another, there it ought to be obeyed; and that ſometimes God may call, for the greater good of his church, to have men removed from one place to another. He is maſter of the harveſt: and therefore may either thruſt out labourers of new to his field, or may take from one part of the field to ſet up another. Only theſe things would be adverted here, according to the former rules, 1. That by God's call, is not to be underſtood any extraordinary thing, but his ſignifying of his mind in an ordinary way, that ſuch a man's removal from ſuch a place, to another, is upon conſideration of his gifts, upon comparing of the places, and the reſpecting of the ſtate of the church, a hopeful mean through God's bleſſing, for the further promoting of edification. 2. As an immediate and extraordinary call was neceſſary for ſuch officers in ſuch a caſe; ſo proportionally is an ordinary call by ordinary officers, acting by ordinary power, only neceſſary for ordinary caſes, ſeeing in moral things ordinary officers, are to do by their ordinary power what extraordinary officers did by their extraordinary power. And if we will conſider this practice, will find it this far to be intended for imitation: for, 1. Although the Lord immediately reveal the call, yet doth he follow his deſign in an ordinary way: Not by thruſting out new officers, which he might have done, if he had walked altogether abſolutely and extraordinarily in this; but he doth it in a mediate way of providence, in the making uſe of ſome already called. 2. The circumſtances ſeem ſo to be recorded, as if the Lord were giving the reaſon of calling ſome from Antioch, rather than from any other church, viz. becauſe there was a conſiderable number in that place of fit qualified men; and that ſo, in reaſon, it were more agreeable for

the good of the body, that ſome ſhould be taken from them to ſupply the want of the other, rather than that others ſhould be altogether deſtitute, or ſome removed from ſuch places, as might not ſo well ſpare: and there can be no reaſon of the mentioning of this, but to ſhow the moral equity of this practice, that miniſters would be proportionated in the church, ſo as may be extenſively for the good of the whole: and that where ſome places abound, and others have ſcarcity; the abundance of the one, ſhould condeſcend to ſupply the other, and that not of the weakeſt or leaſt able. 3. The Lord uſeth a mediate way of ſending them by the church's interpoſing of her authority and prayers, which he did not uſe in the ſending of apoſtles, nay, Matthias had no impoſition of hands; and this was, becauſe the election of apoſtles was no way to fall within the compaſs of ordinary church power, nor to be followed. It would ſeem therefore, that it is made uſe of in this practice, to ſignify that it is a thing to be continued in the church, and to be performed by ordinary church-judicatories, and imitated by them.

If we conſider the times following, it hath ever been practiſed in the church. It is marked to have been the practice of the firſt two famous general councils, as a mean uſeful exceedingly for the good of the church. The Nicene council did transfer Euſtachius from Berrhe to Antioch, Sozom, lib. 7. cap. 2. And it is obſerved particularly of Gregorius Nazianzenus, that he was thrice tranſported: Firſt he was biſhop of Cappadocia, thereafter brought to Nazianze; and thereafter to Conſtantinople by the ſecond famous general council, as it is marked to have been of great uſe to the church, Cent. 4. 15. 300. and to have been their common practice in this time. Socrates, lib. 7. cap. 35. doth for this very end, give many inſtances of this in ſeveral perſons. At the beginning of the reformation, it was one of the great means that was made uſe of by God, for propogating the goſpel in ſeveral places: the tranſporting or removing of miniſters from one place to another, was exceeding uſeful: and what cruelty had it been to have refuſed the deſire of the people, ſeeking miniſters from thoſe that had them? And how elſe could they have been ſupplied? And proportionably the ſame weight lieth here in all times.

Aſſert. 3. Although in ſome caſes this be for the good of the church, and is to be practiſed by church-judicatories; yet it is to be done with great ſingleneſs, tenderneſs, prudence and caution, leſt that which of itſelf, being rightly managed, is a benefit to the church, be turned to an abuſe, and prove hurtful to her.

Theſe cautions and rules muſt be regulated according to particular circumſtantiate caſes, which cannot be numbered. Yet theſe things may be ſaid, 1. That no ſelf-reſpect ought to have place here, but the greater good of the church, and advantage of the goſpel, is the great CRITERION whereby this is to be decided.

2. This general is to be found out, by comparing of places and qualifications with reſpect to the number of the hearers, their qualifications, as they are ſtrong or infirm, tractable or ſtubborn, pure or corrupt: in reſpect of their ſtations, as they have influence on public things or not, as they might have influence in communicating their light to other places; as the word in his mouth may be more readily and freely received without prejudice, and ſuch other conſiderations of this kind: ſome whereof are hinted in the cloſe of the former chapter, concerning a miniſter's call at his firſt entry.

3. This compariſon would not be conſidered between places, as if there were no tie ſtanding between him and either of them: certainly there is more diſproportionableneſs required to looſe one from a charge, than would have caſt the balance between places at his entry. Alſo other means of a proportionable ſettling and providing of ſuch a place, would be firſt ſeriouſly eſſayed and followed if they occur.

4. This would be endeavoured to be done by convincing reaſons, ſo as, if poſſible, they who have intereſt may be ſatisfied, if not in reſpect of their affection, yet in reſpect of the reaſon, viz. that it is the more public good of the church.

3. No people ought to oppoſe the removal of their moſt faithful and beloved miniſters, when it is done upon convincing reaſons. Theſe people are content to yield to the removing even of Paul and Barnabas, who, no queſtion, were moſt dear unto them. And certainly were their endeavours to convince on the one ſide, and in acquieſcing to conviction on the other, it would look much more Chriſtian-like, and prove much more uſeful.

And if this be a called-for duty, viz. that a

church judicatory remove one from a ſettled congregation, upon ſuch grounds, it muſt be a ſin and an oppoſing of duty, wilfully to obſtruct the ſame; and if it may be a call of God, there is more need of conſcience and ſubmiſſion here, to try if it be ſo or not, than abſolutely to reſolve a peremptory and pertinacious oppoſition to the ſame without any reſpect to the grounds thereof.

And we conceive that the keeping of a right mean in this practice, and eſchewing of extremes, might conduce exceedingly to the advantage of the church: and it would be exceeding ſuitable to the unity of the catholic church, and that communion that ought to be in her, and well becoming that authority and care that is committed to church judicatories, that the ſeveral particular miniſters were upon juſt grounds proportioned with reſpect to the edification of the whole. And ſo we have done with this particular relation.

3. *Concerning the* NATURE *and* DIFFERENCE *of* SAVING *and* COMMON GRACE.

IN this epiſtle, there is a large commendation of this angel's practice: which is not only given to him in reſpect of the matter of his actions; but in reſpect of the qualifications of them: as, firſt, that he did not only ſuffer for, and have patience in, that which was materially right; but that he ſuffered *for Chriſt's name's ſake*: and that he did not only hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans; but did it with a reſpect to Chriſt: which is here added, to difference the ſincerity of theſe actions from others that are materially good alſo: for, no queſtion, there may be much ſuffering, which is not commendable before Chriſt. And certainly many others, even among heathens, did hate theſe Nicolaitans, who yet cannot be thought to be alike comprehended under this commendation. This therefore that is added, *for my name's ſake*, muſt be to ſhow the ſincerity and graciouſneſs thereof, as that which did put a difference between their ſufferings and patience, and the ſufferings of others. And it doth imply, that this qualification was that mainly, which made the Lord take notice thereof. It is therefore the ſame on the matter with that, Matth. v. 11. of being perſecuted for *Chriſt's ſake*, to which the promiſe is made ver. 12. and the ſame with that, 1 Pet iv. 13. of being made partakers of *Chriſt's ſufferings*, and of being *reproached for his name*; which being an evidence, and part of bleſſedneſs in theſe places, cannot be conceived but to imply ſincerity; without which, ſuffering itſelf, even where the cauſe is good, would be of no weight as to that end. We do therefore conceive theſe words undoubtedly to be added, to point out that wherein their ſincerity conſiſted, and wherewith the Lord was eſpecially well pleaſed: from which we may gather theſe doctrines.

Firſt, That there is a great difference between an action morally or materially good, and that which is gracious, and as ſuch acceptable to God. It is not ſimply ſuffering and hatred, which the Lord commends here; but ſuffering and hatred ſo and ſo qualified. Hence we will find frequently in the ſcripture difference made between theſe, to do that which is good upon the matter, and to do it with a perfect heart. In actions therefore, there are theſe three to be diſtinctly conſidered, 1. The act itſelf, as it is natural, ſuppoſe an act of hatred, love, grief, &c. 2. As the act is moral, and is directed toward an object that is agreeable to the law, that is, to love that which is good, and to hate that which is evil, &c. both which, in many reſpects, may be in hypocrites, who may do that which is materially good. 3. We are to conſider an act as gracious, that is, when not only the thing for the matter is agreeable to the will of God, as ſuppoſe one were acting, or ſuffering for a truth; but alſo when that is done in the manner that the law requireth, and with a ſuitableneſs thereunto; and ſo one ſuffers not only for a truth, but as a Chriſtian he carrieth himſelf in his ſuffering for the ſame: it is this laſt which makes the difference, and which the Lord doth eſpecially take notice of, and commends by this qualification, that it is done *for his name's ſake*.

Secondly, We gather, that this difference, wherein the graciouſneſs of the act doth conſiſt, is not to be enquired for in any intenſe degree of the act itſelf, whether poſitive or comparative, at leaſt only, but it is to be enquired for in the nature and kind thereof, viz. in reſpect of poſitive qualifications concurring therewith, and having influence thereon: for, this commendation, is not given upon the degree; but from the nature of theſe acts: it is not commendable hatred, becauſe it is in ſuch an intenſe degree poſitively: nor compa-

tively, becauſe it hateth theſe errors more than it doth hate truth; but becauſe in their hatred of theſe errors, they conform themſelves to Chriſt's hatred of them, and likewiſe by that commendation *for Chriſt's name's ſake*, is not holden forth any degree either of their labour, or patience ſimply, nor yet comparatively, that they laboured more, or did ſuffer more for that which is materially good, than they did for any other thing; or, becauſe their patience was a degree more than their impatience; but that there was a peculiar reſpect to the Lord's name both in their labour and patience.

If it be aſked, *What this is, which beſides the moral rectitude of the act, muſt concur for the making of it to be accounted gracious?*

It may be anſwered in theſe four. *Firſt*, There is a different ſpiritual principle in the perſon acting, which muſt actually have influence upon the act; and from which the act, as gracious, proceedeth. This in ſcripture is called the *Spirit*, *Inner-man*, *New-creature*, &c. and is different in its acting from the *Old man* and *Fleſh*; yea, and from the faculties of the ſoul, conſidered merely as natural: for, if we conſider an act, ſuppoſe of *Love*, *Submiſſion* under ſufferings, or ſuch like; it is the natural act of the ſoul as formally elicited by it: but if we conſider them as gracious acts, they do proceed from the Spirit's influencing them, to ſay ſo, with a ſuitableneſs to itſelf, by the co-operation of the grace of God. *2dly*, There is a difference in reſpect of the end; there is a gracious and ſpiritual end propoſed in performing of ſuch a lawful thing: this is implied here in this, that they had the glory of the name of Jeſus before them in their ſuffering and patience, as ſeeking to purſue that, and not to gain credit to themſelves. *3dly*, There concurreth to qualify a gracious action, a ſpiritual motive inclining the ſpiritual principle to follow this end, which can never be ſeparated from the former, and here is clear in the two inſtances that are in the text; where, as reſpect to *Chriſt's name* is the end, ſo, love to Chriſt, and zeal to his glory moveth them, and ſwayeth them to purſue this end, by ſuch means, as *Labouring*, *Patience*, *hating of the Nicolaitans*, &c. and thus to have patience for Chriſt's name's ſake, is out of reſpect to Chriſt's glory, to be ſwayed thereunto. *4thly*, There is a difference in reſpect of the formality of the act, when that not only the thing that is good is yielded unto, upon a good motive; but as ſuch, it is yielded unto or acted, that is, when the object, as ſo conſidered, is acted upon: and ſo not only is one ſwayed to patience in ſuffering from reſpect to Chriſt's name; but upon this formal conſideration, they yield themſelves to it, and do it as ſuch, ſo that ſtill there is a reduplication in the act, ſuitable to the end and motive propoſed: and as the perſon in the act hath another principle to act by, another end propoſed to himſelf, and another motive perſuading him to it; ſo hath he a different uptaking of the act or object in the act, not only as conſidered in itſelf as good, but as conſidered in reference to ſuch an end, and as ſuch he acts on it. As for inſtance, it is laudable and commendable to give to one that is in miſery, and more laudable to love one that is gracious, and to ſupply his wants; yet both theſe are not ſufficient to make the act to be accounted gracious, even though the love to them ſhould be moſt intenſe, and the beneficence large; but there muſt be a concurrence of theſe four formerly mentioned, viz. 1. An inward gracious principle acting: otherwiſe, one may be renewed, and carry love to another that is gracious; and yet if it proceed not from this principle it is not to be accounted ſincere gracious love. 2. There muſt be a ſpiritual ſingle end in their loving of them, and giving to them, viz. the honouring of Chriſt in them, and their good. 3. A ſpiritual motive, viz. the conſidering of them not only as in a ſtrait, or as lovely in themſelves; but as gracious and beloved of Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe command calls for love to them. And, *laſtly*, this is done to them, *as ſuch* when the heart in its affections cloſeth with them, upon this account, that they are beloved of Chriſt, and, as being themſelves called of God to that duty. Thus, Matth. x. *To give to a diſciple*, is one thing; but to give to him, *in the name of a diſciple*, is another, that is, to give him upon that account that he is ſuch: or, as it is, Mark ix. 41. *Becauſe they belong to Chriſt*: the former may be often in many natural men, and hath no ſuch promiſe; this cannot be in any but a believer, who only may expect the promiſed reward. This is to be underſtood, as 1 Cor. vii. 7. where ſome men not only did eat that which was ſacrificed; but as ſuch a thing, and under that formal conſideration, that is, with ſome conſcience of the idol,

as the words before carry it; and this *as*, maketh it quite another thing. So is it to be underſtood here, when we ſay the object is to be conſidered as ſuch. And in this reduplication, we conceive, that a main piece of ſingleneſs and ſincerity doth ly, when not only we do what is commanded, or ſuffer for what is truth; but when we do it as a thing commanded, and ſuffer for it as for his name's ſake: and, in ſome reſpect, it may take in the two former laſt differences: and ſo if any ſhall make the number fewer, we ſhall not debate, providing that under any name theſe be taken in.

Hence, *Thirdly*, We gather alſo, that whatever act is ſo qualified, as in the former is expreſſed, it is a ſincere gracious act in whatſoever degree it be, ſo that it be an act of *Patience*, *Love*, *Hatred*, &c. proceeding from an inward renewed principle tending to a ſpiritual end, ſwayed by a ſupernatural motive; and upon that account acting, it cannot be but accounted an act of ſincere *Patience*, *Love*, *Hatred*, &c. although as to the degree of it, it be but like the grain of muſtard-ſeed. For although the acts themſelves, even towards ſuch objects, may be diſtinguiſhed from gracious acts; yet they cannot be conceived to be ſo and ſo qualified in any degree, but *hoc ipſo*, they muſt be conceived to be gracious, becauſe in ſo far they are agreeable to the law, and that not only in the matter, but in the manner of them. And this agreeableneſs to the law, being a proof that one is ſanctified, without which no ſuch act could be performed, it may be alſo an evidence of juſtification, although it be not conſidered as a condition thereof, which is accepted by the covenant of grace. And although theſe acts be imperfect in reſpect of degree; yet they cannot be denied to be ſincere, or perfect in reſpect of their kind. Every act of the new nature in whatſoever degree being like itſelf, and conform to the principle from which it proceedeth; even, as on the contrary, the leaſt motion of the old man is ſinful according to the root from which it flows: for, theſe two cannot be ſeparated which the Lord hath put together; a good tree muſt have good fruit, and cannot bring forth evil fruit, Matth. vii. 17, 18. &c. Now, acts in the leaſt degree ſo qualified, as before is ſaid, are in ſo far, at leaſt, fruits of a good tree; yea, of a gracious principle within: and therefore they cannot but be ſuch alſo. And if it were not thus, that this angel had patience for *Chriſt's name's ſake*, it could be no ground of commendation for differencing his patience from the patience of hypocrites, if it did not ſufficiently prove his carriage to be ſincere. And hence,

Fourthly, Ariſeth alſo this, that no natural man or hypocrite, though coming the greateſt length in the ſtate of hypocriſy, can in the leaſt degree perform an act ſo and ſo qualified, as is before ſaid, more than they can act from a principle which they have not: for, if they might in any meaſure, have patience *for Chriſt's name's ſake*, in reſpect of the end, motive, and account upon which the heart yieldeth to ſuffering, it could be no ground of a peculiar commendation to this angel, which is yet contrary to the ſcope. And if the former be true, that every act, ſo and ſo qualified, is a ſincere act, this muſt neceſſarily then follow thereupon. And ſo more particularly we ſay, that no hypocrite can thus formally do any thing that is good, as, to give inſtances, 1. In the duty of love to God; an hypocrite cannot love God as God, and to ſuffer for Chriſt's name's ſake, as is formerly expreſſed. Becauſe, 1. That is given here as the evidence of this angel's gracious practiſe, that it was ſo qualified; and the promiſes that are annexed to this of ſuffering *for his name's ſake*, whereat formerly we hinted, do confirm it. 2. This being true of all natural men, that they are real haters of God; and it being true alſo, that natural men and hypocrites may go a great length in loving God, and in expreſſing the evidences thereof in ſome reſpect; it muſt either be ſaid then, that they hate God in reſpect of the materiality of their actions, or in reſpect of the want of the qualifications formerly mentioned, that is, becauſe they love not him, and what he loves as ſuch, and upon ſuch an account, now it cannot be ſaid that they love not God in the former reſpect; nay, not only in reſpect of their being defective allenarly in the degree or intenſeneſs of the act, as may be ſhewed afterwards. It muſt be true therefore in the laſt reſpect. And ſo it will follow, that no man in nature can be ſaid to love God, or perform any act in things materially good, according as it is formerly qualified. 3. This may be added, that if reſpect to good, could ſway the natural man, ſo as to make him act according to the former qualifications in any one act, then might he perform all other acts upon that ſame account al-

ſo: for, *a quatenus ad omne, valet conſequentia.* Now, if it be abſurd to ſay, that one can be a hypocrite, and yet in all his performances and actions be ſo ſwayed (which is the clear evidence of a ſincere profeſſor who needeth not to be aſhamed, Pſal. cxix. 6.) Then it muſt alſo be abſurd to ſay, that a hypocrite may perform any commanded thing upon that account as ſuch, and is formerly qualified. 4. The doing of acts ſo qualified, doth neceſſarily preſuppoſe a gracious principle, or habitual change in the perſon that acts it: for, it being a fruit in ſo far as it is ſo qualified, that is good, and agreeable to the law of God in the ſpiritual meaning thereof, it muſt be ſuppoſed to proceed from a tree that is good, ſeeing grapes are not gathered from brambles, &c. It cannot therefore be conſiſtent with the ſtate of hypocriſy for one to perform acts ſo qualified, who in practice is ſtill a ſtranger to the ſpiritual meaning of the law in the kind of the act. 2. It may be inſtanced in hatred: for, though one in nature or an hypocrite may hate that which is ſin; yet from this we may gather, that he cannot hate it as ſin, as it is hateful to God: becauſe, 1. This hating of the Nicolaitans deeds, is given here as a proof of this angel's ſincerity: and if it were a thing common there could be no ſuch peculiarneſs in it; and there can be no peculiarneſs here, but that they hated them upon that account as hateful to God, and out of zeal to him they did it: otherwiſe no queſtion, heathens and natural men might have hatred at them in greater vehemency for the degree thereof, than theſe who are commended. The difference then muſt be in the qualifications, as is ſaid. 2. The reaſons for the former inſtance will confirm this alſo: for, if one might hate ſin as ſin, and as hateful to God, then might he hate all ſin, and what is hateful to God, according to the axiom formerly laid down, *a quatenus ad omne*, &c. and ſo he might hate his loving of any thing more than God, and his being defective in the degree and manner of any duty: and conſequently, he could not be ſaid to love any thing more than God, ſeeing no man can actually love a thing, and, upon that ſame account and conſideration, hate that act of their love, at the ſame very time, in the ſame very degree: it muſt then follow, that what hatred they bear to ſin, is for ſome other ends, and not upon this account. Again, if one might hate ſin as ſin, one might love grace as grace, it being equally approveable by God to hate ſin as ſin, and love to good as good. Now, this being diſproved in the former inſtance, muſt alſo fall in this. *Laſtly*, The hating of ſin as ſin, muſt ſuppoſe a different principle, whence that act doth proceed, beſides what is in itſelf ſinful: for, it cannot be conceived that a ſinful principle, as ſuch, can hate itſelf: and in ſcripture, luſting againſt the fleſh, or fighting againſt the law in our members, which muſt be a warring againſt ſin as ſin, and as proceeding from ſuch a root as the *fleſh*, or *the old man*, is ever attributed to the *Spirit*, Gal. v. 17. or the *inner man, and law of the mind*, Rom. vii. which doth neceſſarily infer a change of the root in theſe who do hate ſin as ſin: and therefore this can be within the compaſs of no hypocrite. Neither will it infringe this, that by experience we find drunkards, ſwearers, and other unrenewed perſons, hating not only theſe acts in themſelves; but even in their children; or, that we may find it to have been in ourſelves before regeneration: this indeed will prove that a natural man, may hate that which is ſin; but will not prove that he hates it as ſin, but as that which is hurtful or ſhameful to him, or proves diſquieting to the peace of his natural conſcience, as from the ſame experience may be gathered; for, theſe ſins in others will never affect them; and there will ſtill be many delightſome ſins continued in, which it may be, they will know to be ſin, and yet carry no ſuch hatred to them. And though natural men in their judgment may be convinced that ſin as ſin is hateful, and evil in itſelf; yet it will not follow that they will actually hate it as ſuch upon that conſideration; becauſe there is no particular ſin, that from the word may be gathered to be ſin, but a natural man's judgment may be convinced, that as ſuch it is evil; and yet oftentimes do they continue drunk with the love of many of them: becauſe men do not conſider and hate ill ſimply as ill, but as evil to them; even as they deſire not that which is good ſimply, but that which they conceive good to them: and experience daily will make this appear, that the heart loveth not, or hateth not things as they appear ſimply, in themſelves, but as it conceives them to be in reference to its preſent condition. Now, conſidering ſin as ſin ſimply, without reference to any other thing, there is nothing upon that account can be conceived in it that can be hateful to a natu-

ral man, who is dead in his ſinful condition. It muſt be therefore for ſome other reſpect that he hates any particular ill, as theſe whom God afterwards renews will find in their own experience.

Fifthly, This alſo will follow, that then there is a difference between the acts of ſaving grace, and the acts of common grace, beſides any conſideration of the degree thereof: ſo that this difference may well be ſaid to be in kind, or, *ipſo genere*. We need not be curious in the terms of phyſical, or moral differences, this muſt be a phyſical and real difference, as grace is a phyſical and real thing, and doth not only differ from common gifts in reſpect of the covenants accepting of ſuch a degree, and not of another; but alſo in reſpect of concurring qualifications formerly mentioned: for, an act performed with theſe qualifications, muſt either be of the ſame kind that an act is without them, or it muſt differ from it becauſe of theſe qualifications. And if it differ becauſe of theſe, then is that difference real, flowing from the kind of the act, and not from the conſideration of the degree alone; and ſo not gradual only.

Laſtly, It will follow, that one in the ſearch and trial of the ſincerity and ſavingneſs of his grace, is not only to conſider it in the degree thereof, either poſitive or comparative; but may alſo look to the nature and kind thereof, and cannot conclude the ſincerity of it, except they conſider the qualifications formerly mentioned: for, that muſt be the only ſure way to find out the ſincerity of an act, which our Lord Jeſus propoſeth as the ground of the commendation thereof: but here we ſee that the grounds upon which he commends both their patience for him, their reſpect to him, and their hating of what was evil, is, not (only at leaſt) becauſe of any degree, that is conſidered in theſe acts; but becauſe of their kind, or qualifications wherewith they are qualified, as it is not patience (that is, patience as it is a grace) becauſe it ſuffers ſo much, or ſuffers more for truth, than for any other cauſe, conſidered upon the matter; but becauſe their ſuffering in a good cauſe was ſo qualified, as is ſaid: we will ſee this ſame to be clear in all other inſtances, as, it is true ſaving repentance, not that which hath the deepeſt ſorrow poſitively, nor that which hath more ſorrow for ſin comparatively than pleaſure in it, but it is according as the principle and motive are, from which the ſorrow proceeds, and by, and according to which it acts: otherwiſe, no queſtion, Judas his ſorrow might have been ſaid to have been true repentance: which was certainly not only an intenſe grief; but alſo comparatively, it affected him more than any worldly loſs could affect him, or any pleaſure or advantage, which by his ſin accreaſed to him, as the ſtory of the goſpel doth clear. The like may be ſaid of fear, there is no poſitive or comparative degree can prove it to be ſaving, this being certain, that for degree ſome natural men may fear and tremble, and that with anxiety, ſo as the Lord may be more feared in this manner by them than any other thing elſe: trial then muſt eſpecially be, by conſidering the principle whereby the perſon is acted in this fear, the motive that ſways him to it, and the account upon which he acted on God in it; whereby filial fear is differenced from ſervile: and this can be by no conſideration of the degree, however conſidered: but muſt be in reſpect of the qualifications of the act.

If it ſhould be ſaid, *That it is ſingle reſpect to God ſwaying one to ſorrow for ſin, or fear more than any other motive doth; and ſo in that reſpect, it may be ſaid to conſiſt in the degree.*

Anſw. 1. This ſuppoſeth the concurring of poſitive qualifications. 2. It ſuppoſeth the concurring of the ſame qualifications mentioned. 3. This placeth not the difference in the intenſeneſs of the act only, but in the qualifications that have influence on it; and ſo it doth confirm what we ſaid, viz. that more reſpect is to be had to the nature of the act, and the qualifications thereof in our trial, than to the degree thereof.

Here it is to be adverted, 1. That in all this diſcourſe of the poſitive qualifications of ſincerity, they are ſtill to be conſidered with reſpect to Chriſt and the covenant of grace, ſo that ſingleneſs in the end, taketh in the glorifying and worſhipping of God in Chriſt, and in the motive, the conſideration of God's worth and love, as conſidered in him, comes in (as the words, out of the *apprehenſion of the mercy of God in Chriſt*, put in the definition of repentance, do import) and in the reduplication, it acts on him conſidered as ſuch, that is, loves God, fears him, and believes in him as conſidered in Chriſt: and this hath an univerſal approbation of the way of the diſpenſation of grace, and that as proceeding from a principle of life communicate to them by Chriſt Jeſus: whereby they become not only obliged to God for it: but obli-

ged to him in Chriſt Jeſus. And thus we may ſee, that this ſingle reſpect to God and his own goodneſs for himſelf, doth not ſhut out ſimply all reſpect to our own good: for, the conſidering him in Chriſt, cannot but include that; but it derives all our good from that fountain, and by that channel Chriſt; and ſubordinateth all the thoughts thereof to the praiſe of God's grace in him. And this is to be remembered throughout: becauſe this doth fully difference true goſpel ſincerity from the moral flaſhes of love, fear, faith, &c. which by ſome legal work may proceed from natural men, who yet can never act any thing for kind, the ſame with theſe qualifications: becauſe the conſidering of God, and acting on him ſo by love, fear, faith, &c. is really to call him and count him father in whatſoever degree they be, which hath the promiſe of acceptation, and is a fruit of the Spirit of adoption: for, God's covenant runs not to him who believes at ſuch a degree; but ſimply, to him that doth believe, thus qualified, whether his faith or unbelief be more or leſs: and ſo the marks run not, theſe that have grace or fruits at ſuch a bigneſs only; but theſe that have good fruits in any meaſure, have them from Chriſt: and may conclude that the tree is good: and therefore cannot but be accounted like living branches, that will never be broken off: which of no hypocrite can be ſaid, who do never bring forth their fruits in him. And it is hard to ſay, that fruit brought forth by virtue and communication of life from Chriſt, doth not differ but in degree from fruit brought forth from, and to ourſelves. Eſpecially conſidering that the ſcripture doth contradiſtinguiſh them on that account, without this reſpect to their degree, as we may gather from Hoſ. xiv. 8. being compared with John 15. verſe 2, 4, 5.

2. We would advert, that this reduplication conſiſteth not only in the propoſing of ſuch an end, or being acted by ſuch a motive, viz. a command, &c. but it takes in a ſingleneſs in both, and gives ſuch an end and motive the chief conſideration in the act, whereby in the practice of duty the heart not only purpoſeth the pleaſing of God in the giving of obedience to a command, but goes about it as a thing pleaſing to God and honourable to him, and as ſuch doth approve of it: for, a ſervant may deſire to pleaſe his maſter, and do what he hath commanded, and yet poſſible not be ſingle in it, as it is pleaſing to him: which, as we ſaid, is the thing wherein the great pinch of diſcerning theſe differencing qualifications will ly.

Learned Baxter, in his excellent treatiſe of the ſaints everlaſting reſt, part 2. doth otherwiſe expreſs the doctrine of the difference and trial of ſaving and common grace, than what hath been uſually reſted in among practical divines, which doth neceſſitate us ſomeway to inſiſt a little further in clearing thereof. He hath theſe aſſertions, 1. That it is not the law but the covenant, that can clear the ſincerity of grace as ſaving, viz. as it is accepted by the covenant as fulfilling of the condition thereof, page 205. and 206. 2. He ſaith, that God hath not in the covenant promiſed juſtification upon any meer act, or acts conſidered without their degree and ſuitableneſs to their object, &c. page 210. 3. There is no act, conſidered in its meer nature and kind, which a true Chriſtian may perform, but one that is unſound may perform it alſo, page 211. From which he draweth, that wicked men may really rely on Chriſt, have recumbency on him, love God, &c. page 211. and 231. and that they may hate ſin as ſin, and as diſpleaſing to God, *ibid.* 4. He aſſerts, that the ſincerity of ſaving grace as ſaving, lieth materially, not in the bare nature thereof, but in the degree; not in the degree conſidered abſolutely in itſelf, but comparatively, as it is prevalent againſt its contrary; that is, when love adhereth more to God, than any other thing, and ſuch like, page 222. which he endeavoureth to ſhow, both in the infuſed habits, and in the acts of ſaving grace: and page 235. doth aſſert that in loving God and Chriſt as mediator, there is no more than a gradual difference between the regenerate and unregenerate; and in the end, he doth load the common opinion with many dangerous conſequents.

Theſe aſſertions do ſeem, at the firſt, to be expreſly contradictory to what hath been ſaid; yet if we will conſider the explication thereof, we will not find ſo great difference in the matter itſelf, as to be the riſe of a new debate and controverſy in the church, wherein there are, alas! too many already; nor any juſt cauſe to reject the former received opinion, for any prejudice that follows upon it: to which two we ſhall ſpeak a little.

1. We conceive that the difference will not be found ſo great, as the expreſſions at firſt ſeem to

carry, and were it not that this opinion of his, is expreſly laid down in oppoſition to what is commonly received, there might be not ſo great ground to ſuſpect it: for, 1. The infuſing of habits, as neceſſary and antecedent to gracious acts, is acknowledged by both: and expreſly, part 1. page 158. and 159. he doth condemn the contrary in Grevinchovius, at leaſt as an error. And part 3, page 224. he hath ſomewhat to the ſame purpoſe. 2. It is not queſtioned whether true acts of ſaving grace have a rational and deliberate prevalency over the oppoſite luſts, as he aſſerts, part 3. page 212, 213. that will be alſo granted by all divines, that though where true grace is, it may be captivated, and not always actually prevail againſt the oppoſite ſuggeſtions of the fleſh; yet in a ſober and deliberate frame, the intereſt of God and ſpiritual things will have more room in the heart of one that is renewed, as he is ſuch at leaſt, than ſinful luſts unto which the fleſh doth intice.

3. It is granted alſo, that beſides the act, there is neceſſary for the conſtituting of it to be ſaving, a ſuitableneſs and adequateneſs to the object, which we will find in the explication thereof, to be almoſt the ſame with the poſitive qualifications, which formerly we did lay down, as page 211. and 212. he doth thus expreſs it, *The ſincerity of the act, as ſaving, conſiſteth in its being ſuited to its adequate object, (conſidered in its reſpects, which are eſſential to it as ſuch an object) and ſo to believe in, and love God as God, and Chriſt as Chriſt, is the ſincerity of theſe acts; but this lieth in believing, accepting and loving God, as the ſupreme God, &c.* Where expreſly the act is considered, as acting upon its object, under the reduplication formerly mentioned; and ſeems to be by him accounted the ſame, with accepting and loving God above all. And again, page 229. *to will God and Chriſt above all*, ſaith he, *this is to will ſavingly*; which he explains thus, *To will God as God, the chief good*, and *Chriſt as Chriſt, the only Saviour*: and page 230. he ſaith, That *a man may will God and Chriſt*, who *by the underſtanding are apprehended as the chief good*, as the devils do, and yet by not willing him *as ſo* conſidered, that *willing* is not ſaving, and wherefore? It muſt be, becauſe it wants that reduplication: which reduplication in the term *as*, muſt be indeed extended to the will, as well as to the underſtanding, as he there aſſerts; but it is not to be reſtricted to the degree of its act, to ſpeak ſo, but is to be extended alſo to the nature of it. Further, we will find the ſame learned author elſewhere, (viz. in the appendix to his Aphoriſms, m. lib. page 242, in anſwer to the 4th objection) giving the difference between ſincere covenanting with God, and that which is not ſincere, where he doth lay down ſix concurring qualifications, and ſo concludes thus, *Ye ſee that there is a great difference between covenanting ſincerely, and covenanting in hypocriſy, and ſo between faith and faith*, and yet the difference will be found no other thing, but what almoſt is uſually aſſerted by divines in the like caſe.

4. We will find him alſo come near in expreſſions, as page 226. a *ſpecific difference* is acknowledged and altho' he call it *a moral ſpecific difference*; yet doth he expreſs the ſame thus, *That it proceedeth from the agreement and conformity of our actions and diſpoſitions to the law, which determineth of their dueneſs, or their diſconformity thereunto.* Again, page 229. he inſtances *love* and *delight*, &c. as theſe things wherein ſincerity may be tried (for certainly delighting in God, is a grace, and a commanded duty, as loving of him is) compare it with page 213. and 214. he doth aſſert, That hypocrites may have delight in the ſame objects, viz. the knowledge of God and his works) which are objects alſo of the delight of the regenerate; but, ſaith he, *In the ſinner, theſe delights are* neareſt of the ſame nature with the former ſenſual delights: *For it is not the excellency or goodneſs of God himſelf that delighteth them; but the novelty* of the thing, &c. *as receiving thereby ſome addition to its own perfection, and not as from God*, &c. *and though they delight in ſtudying and knowing, and heaven, and ſcripture*: yet not in God *as* God, or *the chief good*, not out of any ſaving *love* to God, (this contradiſtinguiſhing of *ſaving love*, from knowing of God, and from hypocritical love, doth ſeem to place the difference in ſome other thing than the degree alone) but either becauſe, as ſome preachers, *they make a gainful trade of it by teaching others: or, becauſe it is an honour to know theſe things, or be able to diſcourſe of them, or at beſt*, (*Nota*, if theſe be their beſt motives, or the higheſt account upon which they delight. Then they cannot delight in God *as* God, which ſincere believers do; nor can they do an act of the ſame kind: and ſith

there must be a difference between their delight, and the delight that is gracious in respect of the kind, because they go on different accounts, so must it be in other graces) as I said before, *they delight to know God out of a delight in the novelty*, &c. *and natural elevation of the understanding thereby; it is one thing to delight in knowing, another in the thing known.* And afterward, near the foot of that page, saith, so *it is the same kind of delight* that such a man, viz. a hypocrite, hath *in knowing God, and knowing other things:* whereby it is clearly insinuated, that it is another kind of delight, which the believer hath in delighting in God, than any unrenewed man can have, seeing it is an other kind of delight than he hath in any other thing. And wherein this kind of difference consisteth, we may gather from what is said, 1. There is supposed to be a different principle, viz. an infused gracious habit, which must precede this act. 2. There is a different end, the one seeketh to please his own curiosity, the other respecteth God, and his own spiritual good. There is, 3. A different motive; the one delighting in it, because it is profitable, or honourable, or pleasing to himself to know such things; the other delighteth in God himself, as acted therein from the excellency that is in himself, and the love that he hath to himself, and the spiritual satisfaction that he hath in it. 4. There is a reduplication in the act, they not only delight in God, but in him *as* God, moved thereto out of true love to God, which, saith he, the natural man doth not. Now, these four being granted by the reverend author, and being the very same thing upon the matter with that which formerly we asserted, we may see, that besides any consideration of the degrees, there must be a concurrence of these qualifications, wherein ordinarily the difference in kind, betwixt saving grace and common, is placed; and the thing that they call the physical and real difference, being acknowledged by him, as by others; it is not of great moment to debate for the terms of *physical* or *moral*. Seeing then, upon the one side, the supremacy of God's interest in the act is not denied, and that in respect to its eminent degree, if it be well understood: and, upon the other, the concurrence of these qualifications is acknowledged, the difference cannot be great: for understanding of this difference, which must be less than appeared at first, we would consider these two. 1. That when the degree of grace is spoken of, it may be considered either more *strictly*, as contradistinguished from the former qualifications, which in this respect, are said to be the *kind* of the act; or, it may be considered more *largely*, as it comprehendeth the principle, motive, end, &c. and so it taketh in the former qualifications. It seemeth that this learned author, when he speaketh of the degree, doth take it in this large sense; whereas usually it is taken in the first and strict sense, and this maketh the difference appear greater than it is: and if this distinction might reconcile these mistakes, it were desirable. 2. The supremacy, or precedency and prevalency of the interest of God in us above the interest of flesh, (in which alone that reverend author doth place the sincerity of saving grace, page 211. Prop. 10.) may be considered in respect of the degree of the act itself, being compared with the objects whereupon it acts: and so comparatively, that act may be said to be prevalent, suppose of love, fear, sorrow, &c. that loves and fears God more than any other thing, and hath more sorrow for sin than delight in it, &c. or we may consider this supremacy and prevalency of God's interest in respect of the qualifications of the act; that is, of the end, motive, &c. and thus the interest of God may be said to be prevalent, when it is respect to God himself, and the soul's esteeming of him as he is God, that maketh it love him and fear him, and sorrow for dishonouring of him; so that it is his interest, more than any other end or motive that hath influence on these acts: in this latter sense, there is also no difference from what was formerly said; and if that proposition could be so understood, there might be an accommodation: but the instances and explications added by the forenamed author, seem to limit this prevalency of God's interest to the act itself, as being only compared with other objects, or as acting on God, or what is approven by him prevalently, beyond what it doth on other opposite objects. In a word, when the good that is in God is considered on the one hand, and the good that is in creatures on the other hand, if the soul chuse God, and love him beyond any created good, that is accounted by him to be saving sincere love, and the sincerity thereof to consist in this degree alone. From this the ordinary doctrine differeth especially in these, 1. That usually divines consider the prevalency

of God's intereſt to be eſpecially in the motive ſwaying to the act, and other qualifications, and the act to be ſincere, ſuppoſe of love, fear, ſorrow, &c. not only becauſe it loves or fears God more than any other object; but becauſe ſingle reſpect to God and ſpiritual good, maketh it love him, fear him, ſorrow for the offending of him, in whatever degree the act itſelf be. In the former reſpect, ſuppoſing that an act could be prevalent, viz. in loving or fearing God more than any other thing, ſuch act behoved to be accounted ſincere and ſaving without any reſpect to the motive or other qualifications of them; and it ſuppoſeth that an act may have theſe qualifications, and not be gracious: in the laſt reſpect, acts ſo qualified (ſuppoſing there may be ſuch prevailed over by the violence of other ſubjects) yet are to be accounted gracious, becauſe ſo and ſo qualified, without reſpect to the degree of the preſent act: and ſo, that no act of an hypocrite can be ſo qualified. 2. The difference is in this, that this reverend author doth only conſtitute the difference in that comparative prevalent degree alone: and therefore expreſly aſſerteth, page 235. that there is no more but a *gradual difference betwixt the grace that is in a regenerate man, and the love that he hath to God, and the common grace and love that may be in one unregenerate:* which would ſeem to ſay, that the one may love God on the ſame conſideration and account, and from the ſame motives that the other may, eſpecially conſidering that he doth extend this mere gradual difference, both to the habits and acts: and ſo the queſtion here cometh to this, if there be any other difference than a gradual difference to be enquired for? and this is that which we aſſert, that there is beſide any gradual difference, a difference in kind, that is, in reſpect of the former qualifications, betwixt ſaving and common grace, and that in our ſearch the one is to be enquired for with the other; ſo that degree ſimply can quiet the mind, except it be ſo qualified as aforeſaid. And we conceive that the inſtances, reaſons, ſimilitudes and ſcriptures that are adduced by that reverend author to illuſtrate and confirm his opinion, will do no more, but this, viz. ſhew that when a gracious perſon is acting rationally, God's intereſt will be prevalent with him in degree; and that ever it ſhould be ſo, and that it is moſt uſeful for a believer's clearneſs that it be ſo in an high degree, All which are without queſtion: but they will nowiſe exclude the qualifications mentioned; but rather do preſuppoſe them, as for example, page 231, 232. he ſaith, *That ſincere ſorrow muſt be in ſuch a degree that it prevail over our delight in ſin and love to it, elſe it cannot be ſaving:* although this be true; yet, can any ſay that this is enough, except the principle motive, &c. from which it proceedeth, and by which it is qualified be conſidered, as was formerly hinted? Again, page 234. he ſaith, *True love to the brethren conſiſteth in this degree, that it loves them above our honour, wealth, &c.* And, ſaith he, *What did the love of ſome in Queen Mary's day want, but a more intenſe degree to make it prevail over love to their houſes, honour, ſafety, &c. that it might be ſincere?* Beſides this intenſe degree, there might be wanting a right principle, for bringing forth of love, and a right account upon which to love them, without which the hazarding of lives and eſtates both for them, had never been accounted ſincere love before God; and with which the giving unto them a cup of cold water as in the name of a *diſciple*, Matth. x. would have been acceptable. And no queſtion many who through fear and ſelf-love, did keep down the ſtirrings of ſincere love within them, ſo that it prevailed not to make them publicly own theſe ſufferers as they ſhould have done; yet might ſtill carry ſincere love in their hearts to them, although ſinfully they obſcured it: which will indeed prove them to be guilty, and their love to be imperfect; but will not prove it altogether to be hypocritical and unſound in the kind thereof: and therefore ſeeing without theſe qualifications, no degree can be ſufficient to prove the ſincerity of an act: and where theſe are, the act in whatſoever degree cannot but be accounted ſincere; it muſt rather be theſe that conſtitute the ſincerity of the act, than any degree conſidered as diſtinct from them. That aſſertion therefore, which is, page 238. *That a hypocrite may love a godly man for his godlineſs, or a Chriſtian for Chriſt's ſake,* ſeemeth to be unwarrantable, and utterly to make void that mark of the grace of God, which conſiſteth in *true love to the brethren:* for nothing can be conceived in the comparative degree without the kind, but may be in hypocrites: and often theſe that are ſincere will be for a time ſo captivated with ſelf-love, that they will not evidence their love to others;

but ſee for themſelves, as the diſciples did, when Chriſt was betrayed; yet it cannot be denied but that they loved him ſincerely, and that not in word only, but in deed alſo. And although it was exceedingly defective; yet unſound it cannot be called: and ſo may be ſaid of love to others. And conſidering, that where nature hath dominion, there is ſtill enmity at the ſeed of God as ſuch. How can it be that a natural man can love, and hate the ſame perſon, upon the ſame account, at one time? It cannot be denied, but that natural men may entirely love theſe that are gracious, and that alſo their ſuppoſing them to be beloved of God, may have ſome weight with them: yet is not that reſpect had to them upon this account as they are beloved of God, or like to him; but at the moſt, as thereby they may gain God's love, or have ſome benefit by their loving of them, or the preventing of ſome evil, or confirming of themſelves in their ſecurity and ſelf-conceited opinion from this, that they love ſuch an one, &c. And it appears further in this, that they love not all who are godly, and hate not, and ſhun not, all that are oppoſite to godlineſs; and ſo do not love God and godlineſs itſelf ſingly as ſuch: becauſe then their own inclination and ſecret delights, would be hateful to themſelves. And yet certainly, all this would be, if godly men were beloved, upon this account, becauſe they are ſuch. Again, page 226. he illuſtrateth it by this compariſon of eating much and little, to ſhew that the moral good of an action conſiſteth in the degree thereof. Now, none will ſay, that ſimple ſhunning of extremes of eating and drinking too much or too little, will conſtitute an act to be ſincerely gracious, and acceptable to God, except it be conſidered as qualified with its motive and end, viz. God's glory, &c. And elſewhere, *gold*, ſaith he, *is to be tried by weight, as by the touch-ſtone.* Now, this is true that the quantity of gold is to be tried ſo, (but gold ſimply is to be tried not only by the weight; and then alſo grace is not only to be tried by the degree) yet certainly the reality and truth of it, is to be tried by the touch-ſtone, and it is here the ſincerity and truth of grace that we are inquiring for: and, ſaith he, *ibid.* it is not the *wreſtling* but the *overcoming*, that the promiſe is made to, which is true in reſpect of the promiſes of full fruition; for theſe do preſuppoſe a full and total victory; but can it be ſaid that no wreſtler may be ſaid to have true grace, or may conclude that he hath it, till he have in this ſenſe fully overcome? That would directly thwart the author's ſcope, which is to preſs the making of our election and calling ſure, and by this debate to help therein: for, upon this ground, none in this life could attain aſſurance, becauſe this victory that is mentioned in theſe ſcriptures, Rev. ii. 3. *He that overcometh*, &c. is the reſult of all: that therefore which he aſſerts, 243. cannot be granted, viz. that *fighting is the ſame action naturally in both*, viz. *in theſe who overcome, and theſe who are overcome*, 1 John iv. 5. with 2 Pet. ii. 19, 20. *For both fight, but the valiant, ſtrong, and conſtant, do conquer, when the feeble, faint, and cowardly, and impatient, do turn their backs, and are overcome.*

It may be obſerved, that though fighting be the ſame poſſibly phyſically underſtood, yet it is one thing to fight valiantly, and ſtoutly, and another to do it cowardly and faintingly, or to fight for reſpect to their captain, or for love of wages, &c. and ſo there is a great difference morally between fighting and fighting, and alſo in reſpect of the poſitive qualifications thereof: and thus the difference is admitted here. Beſides that word *niconti* in the preſent, ſheweth that the Lord doth reckon a difference before this victory be obtained. And, ſaith he, the kingdom of heaven *ſuffereth violence;* and violence is no diſtinct action, but a different degree of action. Theſe things, I ſay, may ſerve clearly to illuſtrate what we aſſerted: for here, fighting is contradiſtinguiſhed from the victory that followeth it. Now can it be ſaid, that there is no true grace in the perſon that fights, or in fighting that he may overcome? And if there be, then the ſincerity and truth of grace conſiſteth not in this actual overcoming only: nor can it be ſaid, that the renewed fighter wreſtleth in the ſame manner, or that his fighting is in the ſame kind, conſidering that he fighteth by his faith. 1 John v. 4. That he mortifieth the deeds of the fleſh by the ſpirit, Rom. viii. 13. That he putteth on the whole armour of God, Eph. vi. &c. And ſeeing an unrenewed man neither hath ſuch weapons or ſpiritual armour, nor hath a life or dexterity to uſe them, nor ſuch arguments inducing him to fight, or ſuch an end before him, or ſuch a principle as is capable, ſo to be wrought upon, &c. can it be ſaid that his fighting is the ſame with the former? And that other expreſſion, of offering violence

to the *kingdom of God*, is but a borrowed expreſſion: and therefore ought not ſo to be made uſe of here, as if there were ſtronger and weaker aſſaults made at heaven indeed; and as if there needed no more to the weak aſſault, but a further degree only, when at leaſt, there muſt be new conveyed ſkill and ſtrength, and a new way muſt be followed for attaining it. For the ſcope of that place, is, to ſhew the neceſſity of taking hold of Chriſt by faith, notwithſtanding of whatever impediments and diſcouragements would ſcar one in the way: and ſo it proves, that the faith of a believer is far different from the faith of a hypocrite; becauſe the one ſteps over difficulties, upon the conſideration of God's faithfulneſs, and by taking hold of Jeſus Chriſt, doth prevail in the conquering of heaven as if by violence and might they did carry it; whereas others, who never took hold on him, or by their faith improved his offices, for the upmaking of their own needs, have no ground of expectation to be admitted to heaven; and nothing they can do, can be of force to do violence to the kingdom of God without this. And ſo in this reſpect, the fighter prevaileth and overcometh, and gaineth heaven: becauſe, as the apoſtle ſaith, he ſtriveth *lawfully*, 2 Tim. ii. 5. and becauſe he fighteth in the right manner; and his fighting is not to be accounted ſincere, till he overcome; but he overcometh, becauſe it is ſincere; and ſo it is ſincere before that. Beſides, the native expoſition of that place looketh to a violence peculiarly called for in that time: for, *ſince the days of John Baptiſt*, ſaith the text, which will concern this nothing. For indeed then, there was a great difficulty to get the Meſſiah cloſed with as already incarnate, and to lay by all types, as now having their accompliſhment. By all which, we think, it is more agreeable to truth, to continue the received doctrine of inquiring for the truth and ſincerity of grace in the kind thereof, and not in the degree only. For further confirming whereof, beſides what is ſaid, we ſhall firſt ſhew, that there is a real difference between the habits of ſaving grace in the regenerate, and the common diſpoſitions that may be in hypocrites. 2. We ſhall ſhew, that there is ſuch a difference alſo in the acts of ſaving grace, in reſpect of theſe former qualifications, beſides the conſideration of the prevalency of the degree, and the acts that may be in hypocrites. And, 3. That this new opinion hath no more advantage with it than the former; but that it hath the ſame inconveniences, if they be inconveniences, which are alledged againſt the former, waiting upon it, and others alſo beſides theſe.

1. That the infuſed habits of grace, which are called the *new nature*, *ſeed of God*, *the unction*, and *ſpirit*, &c. do differ from the habits and diſpoſitions that are in unrenewed men and hypocrites, and that by a real and phyſical difference, even in kind, may thus be made out, 1. If the *fleſh* and *ſpirit*, &c. be different in kind, having different originals, and different effects, &c. Then grace, thus conſidered in a renewed perſon, muſt be different in kind from what is, or can be in any hypocrite: becauſe the one is *ſpirit*, the other is ſtill *fleſh*: and there is no mids between a natural and a renewed man, and what proceedeth from them as ſuch: for, what is born of the one, is *ſpirit*; and what is born of the other, at whatever length it be, it is *fleſh*: but the former is true; *fleſh* and *ſpirit* are moſt oppoſite in all the former reſpects: This, viz. the *ſpirit*, is an immediate effect of a phyſical operation of the grace of God, working a change upon the heart: and ſo muſt have ſome ſuitable phyſical thing in the nature of it, different from any thing which is not produced by the ſame cauſe, or by the ſame manner of caſualty; ſuch as common diſpoſitions are: and in the effects, there is a contrariety, the one luſteth againſt the other; for the one is contrary to the other, Gal. v. 17. and therefore there muſt be ſome real phyſical difference between theſe, whoſe cauſes and effects are ſo different. 2. If they do not differ in kind, then it is either, becauſe they are both fruits of the ſpirit, and that equally; or, becauſe neither of them is ſo; or, becauſe that which is of the ſpirit ſavingly, doth not differ from that which is not ſaving. Now, none of theſe can be affirmed. Concerning the laſt, this only can be ſaid for anſwer, that although nature and ſaving grace may differ ſo, yet common grace cannot be ſaid to make ſuch a difference, it being alſo a fruit of the Spirit. And to this we reply, If theſe common gifts can be conſiſtent with a dominion of ſin, and complete deadneſs therein, and ſaving grace cannot be conſiſtent with theſe, then there muſt be a real difference, ſeeing ſaving grace not only importeth a relative change of a man, viz. that he is juſtified, but alſo a real and phyſical

change, viz. that he is a new, or renewed creature, which by no common gifts or graces can be: but the former is true. And therefore, again, 3. If saving grace be somewhat physical, to speak so, and constituteth a physical difference between a man that hath it and others; yea, between a man and that which formerly he himself was; and if common grace cannot do that, but the man that hath it, and no more, is the old man still, and in nature. Then there must be a physical difference between them: but the former is true. *Ergo.* For this is ever certain, a man is either renewed or unrenewed, and in nature there is no mids: now, if there be any difference that is physical between these two (which must be, as there is between a good tree and an evil, a new creature and an old, and not as between a little creature, and one that is more big: for, *new* and *old* respect the kind.) Then habitual grace must differ from all other common works physically: because it is that which constituteth this difference, Add, 4. These common dispositions may evanish, or never be so through, but the person which hath had them may perish: which cannot be said of saving grace, called the *seed of God*, *immortal*, and *incorruptible*, that *remaineth* in them that once had it, &c. especially, considering that it is called *immortal*, in respect of the nature of it: and that that continuance is one of the properties thereof. For although nothing of itself be eternal, and immortal, but God; yet it cannot be denied, but what the Lord mindeth to make immortal, he doth otherwise fit and qualify it for that end than other things, as we see in the difference that is between angels and other creatures, and the souls and bodies of men, and of that glorious conformity that shall be put on the glorified members of Christ unto their Head. And though, as he saith, that all, both philosophers and divines, do say more; yet this is enough: which also the forementioned author acknowledgeth in the appendix to his Aphorisms, page 240. And saving grace being of the same nature with glory, it were hard to say, that a man in nature, did, for kind, partake of the divine nature, and of the first fruits of the Spirit and glory, who, yet may be tormented in hell for ever. *Lastly*, The multiplying of these common gifts, could never alter the tree, and make it good; so as if it were possible, that they might grow to the greatest height and bigness, they would be still but common gifts, seeing they grow from that root: therefore the tree must first be good, ere the fruit be good. Now common gifts never being able to alter the tree, as is said, there must therefore be a difference between them and saving grace in some other thing, than in the degree. And indeed, if these dispositions be of the same kind with gracious habits, then the root of common and saving grace would be one, which the scripture doth still difference; and in this respect, the habit hath not its sincerity from the acts, as if it were gracious, because the acts thereof are thus comparatively prevalent; but the acts are gracious and prevalent, and cannot but be so, because they proceed from such an habit; and the habit is first gracious, before the acts thereof be sincere: and therefore, there must be a real and physical difference in the habit itself from common dispositions, as it is considered, at least, in order of nature, before the acts: and so, the difference doth not only ly in the acts themselves. Neither can it be said here, that habits and dispositions do not differ in kind: therefore that difference is not to be sought here: for, besides that this assertion will find opposition among philosophers, it can no wise be acknowledged here, where the habit is not natural nor acquired. And certainly the names and titles, whereby the scripture doth set forth this habitual grace, (as the *new nature*, *spirit*, *new man*, *new creature*, *God's workmanship*, his *seed*, *the heart of flesh*, &c. whereby it is not only contradistinguished in its kind from nature and flesh, taken in their most gross acceptation; but from all common gifts of the Spirit also) do hold forth a real difference to be between them.

2. Concerning gracious acts, that are fruits of this Spirit, and grow upon this tree of habitual grace, mainly the question is here, If that act of love, whereby a believer loveth God, doth differ any other way than gradually, from that act of love whereby an unrenewed person loveth him, or which he while unrenewed had unto him; that is, that the one loveth him above all, and the other doth not, though both love him really, and in the same kind for the nature of the act? And so, if this be not the only mark by which the sincerity of all graces are to be tried? whereof this is a particular instance.

To say somewhat to this, we conceive, that the truth and reality of sincere saving grace,

in its acts, is otherwiſe to be inquired for, than in ſuch a degree only: for, true love loveth God above all, becauſe that is the nature of true grace, as ſuch, to have ſuch acts: and ſo it is rather a conſequent following on, or a concomitant of true grace where it is ſincere, than that which conſtitutes the truth and ſincerity thereof: although it may well being rightly underſtood, evidence that: even as a woman that loveth her huſband chaſtly, cannot love him beyond any other; yet doth not that conſtitute the ſincerity of her love; becauſe an adultreſs may do ſo to an adulterer; but eſpecially, it is in loving him as her huſband, and according to that relation: otherwiſe we ſuppoſe, it is not impoſſible for a wife to love her huſband beyond any other man, and yet not to do it with true conjugal love, but poſſibly upon ſome worldly, and it may be, ſinful principle: which if contraried, would ſoon diſcover that love not to be ſound, as not loving him as her huſband, but for ſome other advantage or ſatisfaction, as often experience doth clear: and muſt not that differ from the love of another, who cleaveth to the huſband out of conſcience and affection, from that conjugal relation that they ſtand in, and becauſe he is her head, even when many croſſes and diſcontentments occur to her in her adhering to him? ſo it may be in other caſes, a ſervant may fear his maſter more than any man, as a ſon may do his father; yet that there is a difference in that fear, (although both agree in the comparative, and neither of them dare offend him) none will deny. This difference then muſt be in the formality of it, to ſpeak ſo, as the ſame perſon is diſtinctly or differently considered by the one, and the other; and as they are differently ſwayed, and acted in the ſame thing, as in the inſtance of filial and ſervile fear, is ordinarily illuſtrated: much more may this be conceived in the acting of grace on God, their being ſo many relations under which we may consider him, and act on him. And may it not be ſuppoſed, that a woman may at firſt love a man above all others, and yet not love him for himſelf conjugally, who afterwards being married to him, may come to love him on other principles, and from other grounds: and though there be no difference in the comparative degree, and the firſt poſſibly ſeemed to be moſt vehement; yet is there a difference really betwixt what it was, and what it is. And if this may be in moral and natural acts, may it not be much more in ſpiritual ſaving acts, when compared with thoſe that are not ſo? It is upon this ground that the acute divine Cameron doth expreſly aſſert, That the love whereby a wife loveth her huſband, doth differ *ſpecie* from that whereby ſhe may warrantably love another; ſo that if ſhe loved any other in the leaſt degree with that kind of love wherewith ſhe loveth her huſband, ſhe were really an adultreſs. And this is when he is ſpeaking of that queſtion, *Num Chriſtus Mediator ſit adorandus?* intending thereby to ſhew, that that kind of love, adoration, &c. which is due to God, can be given to none other in any degree, without manifeſt impiety. And will it look well, to ſay, that warrantably we may give love and fear, &c. of the ſame kind to men and creatures which we are called to give to God? And that only the degree to him, is comparatively to be ſupreme; yet upon the former aſſertion, this will neceſſarily follow: for, if a believer's *love*, *fear*, &c. differ no otherwiſe from the *love*, *fear*, &c. of hypocrites: then that act of love which he hath to God, muſt be of the ſame kind with what he hath to wife, children, &c. except in the degree: which yet I ſuppoſe he would be mightily affected within himſelf, to approve himſelf to do ſo in the leaſt degree. We ſay then, that the ſincerity of grace is not to be inquired allenarly in this prevalent and predominant comparative degree thereof; but there muſt be ſome other things concurring, at leaſt, that conſtitute the difference betwixt ſaving acts of ſpiritual grace, and theſe common acts which may be in hypocrites. For, if theſe two may be ſeparated, that is, if there may be this comparative degree, in the common gifts or graces which an hypocrite may have, then that which conſtitutes the difference or the ſincerity of grace, cannot conſiſt in that only: for that muſt be proper to ſaving grace *quarto modo*, which doth difference it from all other things: but we may ſee in inſtances, that if we consider this degree without reſpect to any other thing, it may be found where ſaving grace or sincerity is not; and contrarily, ſaving grace may be, at leaſt in reſpect of particular acts, where that degree is not. Therefore it is not that alone wherein properly, and eſſentially the difference doth conſiſt.

Before we give any inſtances, we would premiſe

ſome advertiſements, eſpecially concerning the firſt, which may poſſibly look ſtrange-like to ſome, viz. that there may be ſuch a comparative degree of love, fear, ſorrow, &c. in hypocrites, who yet have nothing of ſincere grace; and that therefore ſincerity is not to be tried by that comparative degree alone. Concerning which it is to be adverted.

Firſt, That when we ſay, there may be in an hypocrite ſuch a degree of love, fear, &c. that may be comparatively prevalent, that is not to be underſtood, as if there were love, fear, &c. or ſincerity in the leaſt degree in any hypocrite; but only this, that ſeeing it is certain, and this learned author aſſerteth it, that hypocrites upon carnal conſiderations may love and fear God in ſome reſpects, which yet is out of no true reſpect to God: ſo it may be ſuppoſed, that upon the ſame conſiderations they may come to love him, or fear him above any other object comparatively. Certainly upon this ſuppoſition, that it were at that degree upon theſe carnal conſiderations, it would ſtill be but of the ſame kind of which it was, viz. carnal and hypocritical love, and ſervile fear. Neither can this ſuppoſition be thought ſtrange, ſeeing, 1. No hypocrite can fear God ſincerely more than love him; yet that ſuch an one may, upon apprehenſions of God's terror, fear his wrath more than all the world beſides, cannot be denied. 2. Seeing alſo, it is but ſome carnal motive that leadeth natural men to love any thing moſt, why ſhould it be thought impoſſible, that upon ſuch motives and conſiderations, they may be ſwayed to love God moſt? eſpecially conſidering what flaſhes of joy may be in temporary believers, although they continue not, and what may be ſuppoſed to have been in Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iv. and Darius, chap. vi. and poſſibly in many hypocrites amongſt the Jews; and others, upon ſome ſignal manifeſtations of God's goodneſs to them; yet, even the ſuppoſition of the being of ſuch a thing, altho' it actually had never been, even that were enough for confirming of what we ſay. 3. It cannot be denied, but hypocrites may have a zeal of God, which may bear great ſway with them, and more than any meer temporal thing, as in the inſtance of the Jews, Rom. x. Yet there cannot be zeal of any kind without love of that ſame kind; yet, zeal preſuppoſeth love, and that in an high and intenſe degree. But we ſhall offer ſome inſtances afterward.

Secondly, It would be adverted, that we do not aſſert, that hypocrites may thus love or fear God habitually, and, to ſay ſo, in their ordinary ſtrain: nay, we think it extraordinary to them, to attain even to this; and that it followeth upon the back of ſome extraordinary manifeſtation, either of God's love, wrath, terror, &c. If it be ſaid, that this meeteth not the queſtion. *Anſw.* Indeed that reverend author ſtateth it upon habitual and deliberate acting; yet, conſidering that the thing inquired in here, is the ſincerity of particular gracious acts: if there can be any particular act which hath that comparative degree, and yet is not ſincere, nor will prove the perſon to be gracious. Then it will follow, that the ſincerity of particular gracious acts, is not alone, nor mainly to be inquired for in that.

Thirdly, It would be remembered, that when we ſpeak of this prevalency in the comparative degree, that we take not the phraſe largely, as including, the motive, end, &c. or God's intereſt ſwaying to ſuch an act, by ſuch a ſpiritual motive, &c. but ſtrictly, according as we held it forth in two diſtinctions, mentioned before this. God's intereſt then in this act, is not to be conſidered, as it reſpecteth motives, and compareth all theſe, amongſt which reſpect to him doth ſway; but it is to be underſtood, as it reſpects the act only, without reſpect to the motive, whatever inducement it be that perſuadeth thereto. Otherwiſe, as we ſaid, the difference is but in expreſſions: and it is not our purpoſe to contend for words. And therefore in ſuch an explication, as we ſhall acquieſce, as to this, and we profeſs not to diſpute againſt that.

If it be ſaid, that the loving of God ſo comparatively above any thing, is not to love him above all: becauſe that for which we love him, is more beloved by us, even though thereupon we ſhould be induced to give our lives for his cauſe, &c. *Anſw.* 1. It is true, this proveth it not to be ſincere love, or to proceed from right principles and motives, as is ſaid; and this is not intended: for even ſuch a perſon hates God really, as was formerly aſſerted. Yet, *Secondly*, It is ſuch love as hypocrites uſe to have to other things, viz. that love wherewith they love the world, their patrons and idols of any ſort, which is certainly ſtill from ſome ſelfiſh principle or motive: and therefore indeed ſtill they love them-

ſelves beſt; yet are they ſaid to have ſuch things to be their idols, and comparatively to love them above all other things, even above the Lord himſelf, although it be ſuch a motive as prevaileth with them for that end: and may not the ſame be acknowledged here, ſuppoſing that the Lord may for a time get that from a man upon carnal conſiderations, which ſome idol uſeth to have? *Thirdly*, We conceive it will be, in this caſe, *argumentum ad hominem:* for this reverend author inſtanceth the prevalency of love to God and the brethren, not in the motives that ſwayeth to love them moſt, but in the acts, being compared with other objects: that is, *If God be loved above his temporal good things, if the ſaints be loved more than our eſtate, place,* &c. *ſo as we can quite all theſe for them,* as the former inſtances do clear. Now ſuppoſing it may be made out, that as to the effects, hypocrites may ſo love God and the ſaints, as to abandon all their temporal ſatisfactions for them, and poſſibly even their life, (which is the only thing that that reverend author ſaith, was deſiderated in the love of ſome in queen Mary's days, page 237, 238, 239.) though ſtill upon carnal principles and motives: then it will follow, that the aſſertion, as formerly underſtood, will be ſufficient to oppoſe that propoſition, that the difference betwixt ſaving and common grace, is only gradual, and that in reſpect of ſuch a degree as is explained. Now, we come to inſtances.

1. We may find it in *love*: one that is an hypocrite, may in ſome reſpect, as is qualified, love God above all: for, 1. May it not be ſaid, from the zeal that many Jews had, that they loved God above all; and out of their blind zeal would have preferred him to their lives, or what elſe was dear to them? Yea, 2. Was not that in Paul, while yet a Phariſee before his converſion, who in ſome reſpect had that teſtimony from his conſcience, that zeal and love to God put him to all that he did, ſo that it is like he could have ſuffered the loſs of all things in that quarrel? Yet, it cannot be ſaid, but that his love to God after his converſion, was exceedingly different from what it was before, although in this comparative degree it might be ſome way the ſame, viz. he loved God above all before; and he continued to do ſo thereafter but with love, far otherwiſe qualified, than formerly he did. If it be ſaid, that although the Jews and Paul had a zeal of, and did love God above all; yet, was it not according to knowledge, as is ſaid, Rom. x. and ſo could not be accepted by the covenant as ſincere love. *Anſw.* This is truth, and doth confirm our aſſertion: for, wherefore was it not accounted ſincere, and as ſuch accepted? It cannot be ſaid ſimply, becauſe they loved ſome other thing better: for the degree of their zeal and love is not controverted; but it is in reſpect of the qualification thereof, *it was not according to knowledge*, that is, in a word, not regulated and qualified in reſpect of the principle, end, motive, and account thereof, according to the rule whereby true love ſhould vent, which in their ignorance they could not do; and therefore ſtill there is ſomething beſides this degree neceſſary to the conſtituting of the ſincerity of love, that it may be acceptable: and ſo in other acts, this muſt ever be preſuppoſed, that they be according to knowledge, that is, 1. That the matter of it be right in itſelf. 2. That the manner be according to the rule preſcribed, that is, not only God's glory for the end, but the glorifying of him according as he requireth and preſcribeth. 3. That both theſe be known to the perſon. And, 4. That as ſuch he perform them: and upon that account, act in them, as they agree to his will: otherwiſe it can never be accounted to be an act according to knowledge, as in the former inſtance is clear: whereby it appeareth, that the ſincerity of an act, and this prevalent comparative degree thereof, may be ſeparated.

Thirdly, That men may love their idols above all, cannot be denied, ſeeing men are naturally mad upon their idols, ſo Turks love their Mahomet, Baal's prophets their Baal, even beyond their own lives. Now, may not one love God and Chriſt, as one may love Mahomet or their idols? This argument is alſo made uſe of by the forecited author, to prove that a natural man may love Chriſt really for kind, page 236, 237. And will not this ſame hold in the reſpect of the degree alſo? conſidering that there is as good ground, and more, even in a humane reſpect, for hiſtorical faith, to believe the truth of the being and worth of God, and Jeſus Chriſt, and as much proof and experience of the advantages and benefits that come from him, as there are for any to be aſſured of the being and worth of Mahomet, Jupiter, Apollo, &c. Now ſuppoſe one that formerly loved Mahomet, or Jupiter, above all, ſhould by the force of hiſto-

rical faith, or ſome extraordinary deliverance be brought to account of, and love the only true God, as he did formerly love Mahomet or his idols, could that be accounted ſincere love, becauſe the object were changed? Suppoſing ſtill no change to be in the man, nor intrinſickly in the act itſelf in reſpect of its kind? And yet upon the ſuppoſition foreſaid, this act would not be defective in reſpect of the comparative degree, ſuppoſing him to love God now, as formerly he did his idol: it muſt therefore be in kind. And may not ſuch acts as have proceeded from Nebuchadnezzar and other hypocrites, upon ſpecial and ſingular appearances of God be accounted ſuch, wherein there was ſome kind of reality as to their actual eſteeming of God above all; yet ſtill being without ſincerity, as the zeal of the Jews was becauſe God was not eſteemed of according to knowledge, that is, as in Chriſt Jeſus: in which reſpect he hath manifeſted himſelf in his word, and without which there can be no degree of love acceptable to him.

Fourthly, Might not one have loved Chriſt above all, while he was upon earth, from the convictions of the worth that was evidently ſeen in him, and from particular favours received from him, ſuppoſe of health, freedom from the rage of the devil, &c. as one man may love another, eſpecially his benefactor above all things, ſo that he may become his idol? Now, ſuppoſe it had been ſo, which was not impoſſible, that men had known and loved Chriſt thus after the fleſh (as the apoſtle ſpeaketh, 2 Cor. v. 17.) could that have proven that love to be ſincere? And yet the fault, is not in reſpect of that degree.

Again, we may inſtance it in faith: for, that one may truſt Chriſt in ſome reſpect above all, is clear by the many examples of the faith of miracles, and that both active, and paſſive; yet is it alſo clear that ſaving faith is of another nature, and hath other qualifications concurring in its acting as ſuch: the firſt acteth on him, as powerful to bring forth ſuch an act, and in reſpect of ſome particular manifeſtation of his will for the bringing forth thereof; the other conſidereth him as a Saviour offered to us by God's faithfulneſs in the word; and for that end, viz. ſalvation: and upon that account, viz. as offered, and as ſuch, it receiveth him and reſteth on him, being moved thereunto by its giving credit to the faithfulneſs of God in reſpect of his covenant and offer of ſpecial grace. So, to be willing to have Chriſt, is a main act of faith; and that one in nature may in ſome reſpect be willing to have Chriſt and heaven above all, cannot be denied, eſpecially by this author. Neither can it be ſaid, that this reſpect to God and Chriſt, is inferior to their love to earthly bleſſings, which they prefer to him, as is inſinuated, page 237. for certainly they may eſteem him beyond temporal bleſſings: therefore they will ſuffer the loſs of theſe, and their life itſelf upon this preſumptuous ground of gaining him by the abandoning of theſe; yet cannot that be accounted ſincere willing, becauſe they will him not as ſuch, and according to the terms of his covenant.

Further, it may be inſtanced in *fear*, *repentance*, *love to the brethren*, &c. as was formerly hinted: wherein we will find that natural men may come to this comparative degree in reſpect of the external object, viz. to fear God more than to fear men, or any other thing; to ſorrow for ſin in ſuch a degree, that it may prevail over delight in it, and love to it: wherein the comparative degree that conſtituteth the ſincerity thereof, is inſtanced, page 231, 232. and they may love the brethren ſo as to relieve, clothe, viſit them, &c. and for this end to part with their own eaſe and eſtate, which is the degree that is only marked as wanting to ſuch as loved the ſaints; but yet could not part with temporal things for them, page 239. and upon this ground it is, we conceive, that page 232. this neceſſary advertiſement is given. *That theſe graces which are expreſſed by the paſſion, as fear, love, joy, &c. are not ſo certainly to be tried by the paſſion that is in them, as by the will that is contained in them, or ſuppoſed to them:* which muſt either be to ſhew, that ſometimes the vehemency of the paſſion may ſeem more towards one object, ſuppoſe in fear of men, or love to creatures; when yet the will rationally feareth and loveth God more: or, it is added to ſhew that ſomething muſt be reſpected in the trial beſides the degree ſimply; ſo that this degree is not to be accounted the alone mark of trial; otherwiſe this advertiſement were needleſs. And what is ſpoken of the will its acting rationally in its act, as contradiſtinguiſhed from the paſſion, or act of the ſenſitive part, muſt infer ſome concurring qualifications to be neceſſary in the act of the will, which cannot be in the ſenſitive part, which doth neceſ-

infer a tacit acknowledging of the neceſſity of obſerving ſomething in the nature of the act, beſides this degree alone, for the evidencing of the ſincerity thereof.

On the other ſide, may not habits for a time be without acts, at leaſt without acts prevalent in reſpect of this degree? Now then, what ſhall be judged of ſuch acts, ſuppoſe of love, fear, faith, &c. which for a time are prevailed over, and the heart is led captive by the oppoſites? They cannot be denied to be ſincere acts of grace; nor can it be ſaid, that there are none ſuch at all: for, in that one place, Rom. vii. we will find the apoſtle ſpeaking of ſuch motions of the ſpirit, or inner-man, which yet prevail not as to the effect, but the heart is led captive over them, ſo that what he would, that he doth not; and he is led captive to the law of ſin, over the law of his mind; yet, even then doth he acknowledge theſe acts of the inner-man to be ſincere acts of grace; and therefore doth comfort himſelf in them; and doth oppoſe them to the law of ſin in his members, which otherwiſe he could not do. And this ſincerity cannot flow from this degree, which then is not: it muſt therefore flow from the kind thereof, and ſo be contradiſtinguiſhed in that reſpect from any common work of a hypocrite. If it be ſaid here, that it is true *love*, *faith*, &c. that in its ſober, compoſed and deliberate rational actings doth prefer God, although at fits and times it may be overpowered; and that in this reſpect Paul did in his deliberate actings, prevail over the law of his members, though by its ſurprizals it did captivate him. *Anſw.* Although this be granted to be truth: yet it will not infringe the argument: becauſe we aſk not only what Paul was in reſpect of his ſtate, or of his deliberate acting, but what theſe motions and ſtirrings of the ſpirit in him were, that were overpowered, whether even theſe were gracious and ſincere, or not? for, if theſe ſtirrings be acts, as is acknowledged, page 224. they muſt either be ſincere, or not; it cannot be ſaid, *not*, upon the grounds formerly given; they muſt be then ſincere: and if ſincere, then they muſt be ſincere, not in reſpect of the prevalency of the degree; but in reſpect of the nature of the act itſelf, as is ſaid. For although we ſay that ſuch a perſon did in his natural acting of *love*, &c. prefer God above all; yet that would only prove that the perſon were habitually gracious, and a true lover of God; or, prove that once he hath had acts truly ſincere; but that could never be the ground upon which the ſincerity of theſe preſent acts could be founded. And ſo as the cloſe of all, ſeeing this prevalent degree may be ſeparated from ſincere acts, and may be in acts that are not ſincere in the manner qualified *et contra*: therefore the formal reaſon of ſincerity, is not to be inquired in it alone. If it be ſaid, that even in ſuch acts wherein corruption prevaileth in the affection or paſſion; yet grace is ſtill prevalent in the will. *Anſw.* Then whether can it be ſaid that there is no true grace in the affections, or, whether the actings thereof in them be not ſincere, although not prevalent? If they be gracious, even as ſuch. Then the argument doth ſtill hold, that grace may be ſincere where it prevaileth not as to the effect: if it be denied that they are ſincere as ſuch, then it will follow that true grace is not univerſal as to the ſubject thereof; or, that it may be ſincere in the will and not in the affections: which yet are acts of the ſame grace and ſoul in ſo far as renewed ſtriving with itſelf in ſo far as unrenewed. Beſides, prevalency is but in the will as renewed, ſo that it is only as ſuch induced to diſſent or conſent; whereas, that ſame *will*, as unrenewed, yieldeth over that diſſent of the renewed will: whereby it cometh to paſs that acts are elicited thereby, which the renewed part did oppoſe; and ſo indeed, as to the effect, the renewed will is not prevalent; becauſe that is not acted, which it would be at; yea, acts are elicited by the will, as is ſaid, which had the renewed part been prevalent, had not been at all, which ſheweth that in ſuch a caſe there is a prevalency even in the will.

If it be ſaid further, that the love wherewith natural men love God, as it is formerly deſcribed, is but ſtill ſelf-love: becauſe they love not God as God; but upon ſome other ſelf-account: and therefore do ſtill love themſelves more; and ſo do not love God above all ſovereignly: becauſe they love him not for the goodneſs that is in himſelf; whereas if God's intereſt were main and chief in that love, it were to be accounted ſincere: and this preſupposing the habits to be infuſed, this ſovereign intereſt of God will take in the end, motive, and that which we called the reduplication of the act. *Anſw.* If that aſſertion, that ſincerity doth ly in the comparative prevalent

degree, be thus explained, as to take in God's intereſt as ſovereign in the end, motive, and formal conſideration of the act, then it cometh indeed to be one: and if ſo then, there were no reaſon to fall out with the doctrine that ordinarily is delivered concerning this: and for the expreſſions we will not contend, as we formerly ſaid: but when we conſider the explication of the author, eſpecially as it is oppoſed to the common doctrine, it ſeemeth that he meaneth the ſovereignty of God's intereſt in reſpect of objects, compared together, that is, God more ſovereignly loved, feared, and truſted, than any other; and doth not take in the conſideration of God in the motive, end, and formal conſideration of the act, which hath influence on the perſon for bringing forth of ſuch an act; and ſo on the act itſelf, that is brought forth: for, the compariſon runneth thus, betwixt the objects, *fleſh* and *ſpirit*, who doth prevail moſt on the heart, but is not in comparing the motive and other qualifications of that act, which materially is ſpiritual: and therefore ſtill in that reſpect, the former argument will hold, and the ordinary expreſſions will ſuit better to the thing.

It may be further argued againſt the placing of the nature of ſincerity in the prevalent degree alone, thus, if the acts of ſaving grace be ſincere, before they be in this degree prevalent, then this prevalency of the degree cannot be the thing that conſtitutes the ſincerity thereof, much leſs alone be it; but the former is truth, that act of love, faith, &c. is ſaving, which is wreſtling againſt its oppoſites, ſo as to win the heart to love God more than all other objects, even before it attain it: for, we are to ſuppoſe this method, 1. Gracious habits are ſuppoſed as infuſed, whereby the tree is made good. Then, 2. That theſe habits have their inclinations and acts, that luſt againſt the fleſh, and fight with the fleſh for winning of the heart to the following of its motions: and as fighting goeth before the victory; ſo in this ſpiritual combat, do theſe luſtings and actings go before the prevalent degree, and by theſe the heart is engaged to love God above all; whereupon followeth that prevalency as a degree of victory. And yet we ſuppoſe, that were the leaſt ſpark of grace kindled in the heart, ſo that it were but ſmoaking in deſires of love to God and faith in him, it cannot be denied to be ſincere; although it hath not broken out in a flame. For, if this prevalent degree be in ſome reſpect an effect of theſe ſtirrings, theſe ſtirrings muſt be ſincere before they come this length, as to prevail: for, they were acts before, and if not gracious acts, then how could acts that are of themſelves unſound, produce an effect that is ſincere, ſeeing the cauſe muſt be of the ſame nature, and as noble as the effect? And ſo conſequently its ſincerity doth not flow from this degree; but, on the contrary, rather this degree is attained by theſe ſtirrings, becauſe ſuch ſtirrings, are acts of ſincere love and grace: whereas they are extinguiſhed in another, and come not up that length, at leaſt in the former reſpects, becauſe theſe ſtirrings were for their kind unſound: and ſo natively the actings and ſtirrings of grace of any kind, muſt go before, either the prevalency or repulſe thereof. For, ſuppoſing creatures once to have the heart of man, there is firſt an eſſaying, as it were, by ſome inward motions to gain the heart from theſe, before actually it be gained. Now, we ſay, that which maketh ſome motions gain the heart deliberately to prefer God above all, is, becauſe theſe motions are ſincere, and do ſuppoſe as antecedent to that degree, at leaſt in order of nature, 1. An inward gracious principle fitting the heart ſo to conceive of God, and making it capable to be ſwayed by ſpiritual and ſupernatural motives, and in ſincerity to act on them as ſuch.

2. It preſuppoſeth an actual putting forth of this gracious principle in its conſidering God as ſuch a good in himſelf, and for its happineſs in himſelf, deſirable, and lovely in an other kind, than any creature: whereupon, 3. The heart is actually inclined as being ſwayed by ſuch a motive, viz. the goodneſs of God himſelf, and the ſpiritual happineſs that is in enjoying of him, and as ſuch, upon that account to love him, deſire union with him, and prefer him above all; whereby *ſelf*, as it is properly *ſelf*, ſinful and corrupt is, ſhut by, and a ſpiritual motive beareth ſway in the act, and ſo muſt be ſuppoſed in order of nature, at leaſt, to be before it. 4. When the heart is thus affected towards God, then the former three, viz. a ſpiritual end, the enjoying of God, a ſpiritual motive, that is, a reſpect to his worth, and a ſpiritual principle whereby he was enabled ſo to conceive of him) do concur for the eliciting of

this act, and that in a new manner, upon that object ſo conſidered; whereupon it acts otherwiſe in the cloſing with God as God, than ever formerly it did. Upon which this prevalent degree and victory doth follow, as the reſult of the heart's ſo acting on God, which cannot but prevail. And thus it loveth God above all, and ſhutteth down all competitors, becauſe conſidering him as ſuch as he is, and in reſpect of the underſtanding's uptaking of him, it doth, for ſuch an end, from ſuch a motive, by ſuch a principle, and in ſuch a manner, act on him, as ſo conſidered; which others do not, who though they may have a ſort of ſtriving in them; yet their fighting, not being according to the former qualifications, can never prevail, as it cannot but in the end be a conqueror in them that thus fight.

Further, ſuppoſing this ſincerity to ly in that prevailing comparative degree, we aſk, what maketh the love, which is in one to prevail, ſo to love God above all, more than in another? Or what made Paul, after converſion, love God in that reſpect ſincerely, more than before? It muſt be ſaid, that it floweth from the interveening work of the Spirit, both operating in the infuſion of habits, and co-operating in the bringing forth of acts; whereby Paul is now enabled to do that which could not be done, till firſt the tree was made good. And if ſo, then there muſt be a real difference in the act itſelf, as being the fruit of another tree, or of a tree that is changed: and if the trees be different in kind, the fruits muſt be ſo alſo: for grapes are not gathered of thiſtles; nor *contra:* and ſo it muſt be ſaid of theſe acts, either they proceed from different habits, and ſo muſt differ in kind; or, both muſt be from a gracious habit: which cannot be granted, ſeeing often theſe acts in hypocrites evaniſh, which of gracious habits cannot be aſſerted: and to ſay that different infuſed habits are not requiſite to either, will not be urged by any, as hath been ſaid.

We add, that acts of love that flow from common diſpoſitions in a natural man, may be conſidered as acts before they be thus prevalent: for he *loves*, *fears*, &c. and ſo they be acts, although not gracious acts or ſincere; but we cannot conſider the acts of the gracious habits of *love*, *fear*, *faith*, &c. (as that a man, as renewed, doth *love*, *fear*, &c.) but we muſt conceive them as ſuch to be gracious and ſincere: for, they are of the Spirit, and what is of it, is of that kind; and what is but like to a grain of muſtard ſeed, and cannot be conſidered as leſs, is yet ſaving and true grace, having the qualifications foreſaid: the leaſt bloſſom on that tree being good fruit: therefore there muſt be ſome difference in kind between common acts, and theſe of ſaving grace, beſides any thing that can be conceived to be in the degree: becauſe in the one the qualifications may be, and are ſeparated from the act; but in the other, no act can be conceived as influenced by the Spirit, and proceeding from it, but it muſt be conceived as having theſe qualifications in it, viz. it hath a ſpiritual end, is ſwayed by a ſpiritual motive, and acteth from a ſpiritual principle, and, as ſuch, is ſwayed to ſuch an act. If it be ſaid, that it is the leaſt degree of grace when it is ſincere, that is ſo to be accounted, that is, when it is ſo prevalent; and that in that reſpect no act, as ſuch, is in the leaſt degree prevalent, but it is ſincere. *Anſw.* That will not ſatisfy: for, here it is aſſerted, that the act of love, as proceeding from theſe habits, cannot be conceived as an act: but muſt alſo be conceived as gracious, and as a riſing from that root, but according to the other opinion, theſe may be ſeparated, that is, although love act; yet is it not ſincere love, till it act prevailingly; and ſo it may be conſidered as an act before it come to that prevalent degree of acting, which cannot be in the other. Beſides, if ſo, then were not ſaving grace, grace, as having a different original from common gifts; but as having different fruits or effects, or different degrees of fruits. For clearing whereof, we may ſuppoſe gracious habits to be in one. And, 1. Do not the acts of *love*, *faith*, *fear*, &c. proceed from theſe infuſed habits; and are they not actings of the new creature? And, 2. Are not theſe acts gracious as ſuch? and becauſe they are ſuch, they are ſaving and ſincere, that is, becauſe acts of the new nature. 3. Do not theſe habits fit and qualify one to act otherwiſe than one can do who hath not theſe habits; and that not only in reſpect of degree, but in reſpect of kind? otherwiſe theſe habits would not be a different principle from common diſpoſitions, or as infuſing a different life, but helping one to exerciſe the life which he had: which were abſurd. 4. Do not men who are ſo fitted by theſe habits, act accordingly in the producing of their acts otherwiſe than any other who is not ſo qualified? And ſo,

5. Must not then the acts produced, be differenced, which are thus differently produced? And wherein can this difference consist but in the kind? for, if it be said, they differ, because these gracious habits bring forth acts in that prevalent degree, wherein the Lord's interest hath the chiefest room, then it may be inquired, 1. Is that the alone difference? or can it be said that the new life hath no influence even on the manner of acting? considering that the person is furnished with new qualifications, both in the understanding, will, and affections: and these cannot but concur in the act; and yet must concur differently in respect of what one in meer nature can do. 2. It may be inquired, could that man have brought out these acts without these habits? And if not, they must be then different in kind from what formerly he did bring forth, seeing they could not be produced without a new and different cause. 3. Neither can any acts proceeding from these habits be accounted common acts; they must then, even the least of them be saving. And, 4. If they be saving, and that as acts simply, it must be because of something that is in their kind, without respect to their degree; as the least motions and actings of corruption are sin, because they are from flesh, even when by grace they are kept from victory: so is it, on the contrary, with the least motions of the Spirit.

Yea, if we were strictly considering this very difference, as it is proposed in respect of the prevalent comparative degree, we will find it to infer a real difference in the kind of the act, besides this comparative degree: for (suppose in the act of sincere love) by one the Lord is preferred, and all other objects are rejected; by another, he is loved, but some other thing is preferred to him: now that act of love, which respects God as the chief good, and as such closeth with him, must be different in kind from that that taketh him, but not as the chief good: and therefore loveth some other thing more. For, in this act, there is not only a comparing of God with other things, but an act resulting from that comparison, whereby the heart of one saith, when this question is proposed, *Is God thy chief good? Yea:* and so positively it closeth with him as such: in the other, when the heart compareth, it saith, *Nay, God is not the chief good:* and therefore closeth not with him as such, but refuseth him. Now these two, *nay*, and *yea*, to accept of him as such, or to refuse him, must differ oppositely, and not in degree only. For the consideration of God here in the act of the heart, is not simply if he be good: for that cannot come under consideration, but if he be the chief good, and so to it, and if it will take him as such; and so that act of love to him must be such as determineth that question by *yea*, or *nay*; and in that respect the one yieldeth, the other rejecteth. Therefore here it is not yielding in this or that degree, but yielding or refusing; which in that *pinch* are contradictory. 2. By the one act of love, God getteth the chief room, and other things are casten down: it is quite contrary in the other; and can these two be of one kind? Or can that act of love which preferreth many things to him, act for its kind on God, as that act of love that taketh him as infinitely preferable to all? Because the one considering him as the chief good, accordingly loveth him; and the other, not doing so, but otherwise, this difference must follow thereupon. 3. That act wherein there is this prevalency, must either have somewhat peculiar in it, which doth make it prevail over its opposites, as to love God above all, which another hath not, that loveth created things above him, or, it must have its prevalency from what is common to both. Now, this last cannot be said: because so, it were man himself that did make himself to differ: there must therefore be something peculiar in the other, as a cause producing that effect; and if there be a peculiar cause, and some peculiar thing in the one, which is not in the other, differing the rise of this from the rise of the other. Then this prevalent act of love which is the effect of that peculiar cause, must, besides this degree, differ in kind also, as being peculiarly influenced by that cause which the other is not. And seeing this peculiarness is presupposed to precede the prevalency of the act, it must necessarily follow according to the same grounds, that there must be some positive qualifications concurring for the constituting of the sincerity of grace besides the prevalent degree thereof, and that therefore sincerity doth not consist alone in it: and so, that hypocrites cannot do the same acts for kind, which the regenerate may do, without respect to this comparative degree.

To conclude, then, we may illustrate all, thus, Suppose a dead body were by the power of God made to move, or speak, as once Balaam's ass did, there is motion and speech there, suppose it to be

the ſame object, and in the ſame words; yet doth it differ from the motion and ſpeech of a living man that acteth according to reaſon. 1. A dead man is moved only from ſome extrinſic power without the interveening principle of life from within: although he may be moved more ſpeedily and ſwiftly towards a certain object, than one that from an inward principle of life acts himſelf; yet doth the motion of the living man differ in kind (beſides any comparative degree which can be in the act of moving) by a poſitive concurring of an inward principle of life and a loco-motive faculty whereby he is immediately acted: ſo, natural men being dead in ſins, whatever acts are produced by them, are merely produced by the common work of God's Spirit from without, without the interveening of any ſpiritual principle influencing theſe acts; whereas the acts of a renewed man are indeed performed by the power of God's ſpecial grace; but *(mediantibus habitibus)* by the interveening of infuſed habits, whereby he not only is acted, but acts himſelf in the bringing forth of theſe. As, 1. A tree in the ſpring-time, doth ſend forth her buds, from the native ſeaſon of the year its having influence thereupon; yet alſo by the quickening of that natural ſap and moiſtneſs wherewith it is furniſhed within itſelf. 2. A dead man hath no end before him in his motions or actings, as a living man habitually hath concurring in his act: ſo an unrenewed man hath no pure ſpiritual end in the beſt acts, which the gracious man hath; the one eating, drinking, living, and bringing forth fruit to himſelf, Hoſ. x. 1. Zech. vii. 5, 6. and the other living, and thenceforth bringeth forth fruits to God, 2 Cor. v. 16. Hence men in nature are ſaid to ſerve ſin, and men in grace to become ſervants to God, Rom. vi, in reſpect of their deſign in the ſame acts. 3. Dead men, as they have no end before them, ſo have they no reaſonable motive, as a living man is ſuppoſed to have in his actings; ſo natural men have no ſpiritual motive, ſuppoſing it be, in loving of God, it is ſome carnal ſelfiſh thing that ſwayeth them: for, having no ſpiritual principle within, as matter to work upon, no ſpiritual motive can have influence upon them, more than fire can be kindled by any blowing, where no kindling, or combuſtible matter is: a renewed man as ſuch hath a ſpiritual motive concurring with, and having influence on his actings: and ſo, not only loveth God, becauſe of ſome external benefit; but he loveth him, as being provoked from that inward principle of the divine nature that is in him, and reſpect to God's commands and goodneſs, whereby as ſuch he cannot but love him, and theſe who bear his image, and what is ſpiritually good: even as a natural parent, or ſon, cannot but love his own child, or father, and that from another ſpecial principle than they love any other child or parent; ſo alſo he hath a pure ſpiritual motive, warming this principle, and kindling the ſympathy: and thus he is ſwayed to love God, becauſe of ſome ſpiritual good, as the ſubduing of ſin, the conforming of him to God's image, the manifeſting of himſelf to him and ſuch like: and he loves God's people becauſe he taketh them to be beloved of God, or to love him, or be like him, as ſuppoſe a woman did carry affection to a man, it may be from ſome carnal principle, as his furniſhing of her in her vanity, and his being ſubſervient to the luſt of vanity, pride, &c. in her: yet afterward, being matched with him, might love him, becauſe he were her huſband, and had condeſcended to marry her, although he ſhould not ſerve her vain humour as formerly: in this reſpect, her love doth differ from what it was, as having a conjugal motive added to it, which it had not formerly. 4. A living man, in his actings, is ſwayed to them as good to him; and it is impoſſible for him to will any thing, even though it be good, but as it is conſidered as ſuch by him; yea, even things that are hurtful are in his deſiring of them conſidered under this notion as good to him; but there is no ſuch thing in the motion of a dead man: ſo a renewed man, not only acteth on that which is ſpiritually good, ſuppoſe in the loving of God or his people; but alſo he is ſwayed therein, and acteth therein upon this formal conſideration, as it is ſuch, that is, he loveth God as he is good in himſelf, and to him in what is ſpiritually good; and others as they are ſuch as have a title to him, Matth. x. *To love them in the name of righteous men*, that is, upon the formal conſideration, as ſuch, to love them. And this is that wherein mainly godly ſincerity and ſingleneſs doth kythe, when we are not only moved to do what is good, and that from a ſpiritual motive upon the matter good; but are ſwayed to that thing, by this motive, as they are ſuch, and ſo conſidered by us: and thus, this *as* doth not only reſpect the object, as it is conceived by the underſtanding to be ſuch; but it doth reſpect the act, as it is inclined to, undertaken and

performed by the will, viz. it willeth it as ſuch: although the act itſelf be not in reſpect of its degree every way adequate to ſuch an object, that is, though God get not ſo much of the heart as it becometh him to have; yet the heart conſidering him as ſuch a God who deſerveth the heart, and ought to have no competitor with him, and as ſufficiently able of himſelf to make it happy, doth ſo will him: and, upon that account, doth love him and delight in him, although it be exceedingly defective in the degree of both, and they be but conceived as ſuch, to have a being. Now, as a man is to try the truth of his life, not only becauſe he moveth and ſpeaketh, but becauſe he moveth and ſpeaketh ſo, in reſpect of the kind formerly mentioned; ſo a renewed man is not ſimply to try his new life from his acts, but as they are ſo qualified, as is ſaid.

If it be objected, *That hitherto this ſeemeth to admit no motive that concerneth ourſelves, as ſuppoſe one loved God, for being good to him; or, heaven, becauſe they expected to be happy in it? And that as if no motive could be admitted in loving God but for himſelf: or, how may this motive be differenced in the love of a natural man, from one that is renewed?*

Anſw. There is no ſuch thing as the firſt intended: it will only ſay this, that as the natural man is ſwayed in the purſuing of moral good, as it is ſo conſidered by him; ſo a renewed man doth that which is ſpiritually good, and that as it is conſidered as ſuch by him. Hence there is this difference, that a natural man in his conſidering any act, which in itſelf is ſpiritually good, and materially agreeable to the law; yet in his yielding to perform it, he doth ſtill conſider it as a natural good, or moral at the beſt; as ſuppoſe in loving of God, he is conſidered by ſuch, as good to them, on a natural, or, as to them, a ſinful account, as he loveth God, becauſe he hath gotten temporal peace, deliverance from bodily hazards, an eaſy or honourable life; it may be, becauſe in providence he hath proſpered him in ſome ſinful courſe, this the learned forementioned author, page 203. doth juſtly call *one of the greateſt of all ſins, when the holy God is made a pander and ſervant to our fleſh:* and no queſtion, many do love God upon ſuch an account; or, if they love God for the hope they have of being brought to heaven by him, which is one of their higheſt motives, it is becauſe they hope to get heaven from him, and acceſs to their ſinful luſts here alſo: thereby ſuppoſing, becauſe of his goodneſs and mercy, that they may ſin, and ſerve their luſts, and expect even heaven alſo afterward: or, they love him under the hope of heaven; not becauſe they do expect or deſire ſpiritual or heavenly ſatisfaction in himſelf, in being ſatisfied with his likeneſs (which they never delight in here) but becauſe they have a ſuppoſed opinion of a greater degree of that ſame happineſs, which now they hunt for: and ſo heaven is never conſidered by them as a ſpiritual good: or, they may love God, as ſuppoſing him to love and eſteem of them, becauſe of ſome lovelineſs and excellency that is in themſelves: and upon that ground expect, even heaven from him, and love him, becauſe he eſteemeth of them: and this is to think God like themſelves, and not to love him upon any ſpiritual account, as is ſaid.

Again, the renewed man as ſuch, is ſwayed by ſpiritual motives in theſe things, that are but naturally and morally good; and under a ſpiritual conſideration he acteth on them, viz. as they are commanded of God, tend to his honour, and are uſeful to help one in the worſhipping of him, &c. and thus he may be acted even in eating and drinking, and things that are ſpiritually good in themſelves, as the loving of God, ſtudying of holineſs, &c. He acteth in them as ſuch, that is, he loveth God, becauſe he is an infinite ſpiritual good in himſelf, and becauſe he hopeth to be made bleſſed and happy in him: thus, to love God, and deſire union and communion with him, that we may not ſimply be happy, but happy and bleſſed in the enjoying of him, and in being made conform to him, is no carnal, ſinful or mercenary love: becauſe, this the Lord himſelf doth warrant: and it ſuppoſeth a ſpiritual principle, withdrawing one from common ſatisfactions and delights; and it loveth God as God, becauſe thus God is conſidered as the chief good, ſufficiently and only able to make happy in himſelf: and therefore he is deſired, becauſe no other thing is accounted ſufficient or meet for happineſs, but he. And ſo, love to God for himſelf, and love to him becauſe we expect to be happy in him, or have already gotten ſpiritual good, ſuch as regeneration, ſanctification, repentance, &c. from him, are no way inconſiſtent together: and therefore, when we ſpeak of lov-

ing God for himſelf, it is not to exclude all reſpect to ourſelves, and our own good in him; but it excludeth all carnal reſpect to ourſelves, or reſpect to ourſelves as carnal, and delight with things that are ſuch; and to ſhew that the good which we expect from God, and for which we love him, is a ſpiritual and heavenly good, having the enjoying of himſelf joined with it: which doth commend all other good to us: ſo that it is reſpect to God and our enjoying of him, that doth make theſe things lovely. And ſo we love God, becauſe he is good, and becauſe he heareth our prayers, and becauſe he furniſheth us with what is needful, and ſo forth: not becauſe any fleſhly luſt is pleaſed, or temporal end is gained; but, becauſe he confirmeth our faith or ſpiritual joy in him: which many that have the ſame things which we have obtained from him, and are alſo carnally chearful in the uſe of them; yet, are not joyful upon this account, but are delighted in the things themſelves, or what pleaſeth their natures in them, but not in God himſelf, and ſo in other things.

Before we cloſe, it will be of concernment for the underſtanding of all this queſtion, to take up rightly the true difference between a moral ſpecific difference, which is acknowledged, and a phyſical difference, which is denied. This phyſical difference doth flow from ſome poſitive qualifications concurring in the act itſelf, which are not in another act, that hath other, or contrary qualifications in the place of theſe: again, a moral difference, as it is expreſſed, doth not conſider the act with reſpect to any qualifications in itſelf; but, in reſpect of ſome intrinſic conſideration; as a pound of gold, and an ounce of gold, are of the ſame kind in reſpect of their qualifications phyſically; yet, ſuppoſe one had hired a ſervant for a pound, or had conditioned ſo much for the rent of ſome lands by a ſubſcribed contract and covenant; in this reſpect, the pound would differ from the ounce morally: becauſe the pound by virtue of ſuch covenants, would become the ſervants hire, and the land-lords rent, which the ounce would not be. This is a moral difference, and floweth from the bargain, wherein it was conditioned that ſo much, and no leſs, ſhould be accounted ſo; ſo ſaith the forenamed learned author, that this moral difference of grace, doth flow from the conſideration of the covenant, whereby only it can be determined what is ſaving grace, according to the tenor thereof, whereby juſtification or ſalvation are beſtowed upon any act, page 205. And therefore, *Grace that is thus comparatively prevalent in degree, is to be accounted true ſaving grace; becauſe, by the covenant of grace that is called for, and only accepted as the condition thereof*, page 226. where alſo he doth ſay, *That the ſincerity of grace doth ly in the degree, not formally, but materially only: becauſe the form of theſe gracious acts, conſiſteth in their being the condition on which ſalvation is promiſed.* Where, 1. To forbear the author's eſteeming of all graces equally, and gracious acts indifferently to be the condition of the covenant, (which yet neceſſarily this opinion doth preſuppoſe, and ſo is the more to be adverted unto) there are two things to be obſerved, wherein the miſtake lyeth here. 1. That it accounteth nothing to be ſaving, or an evidence of what is ſaving, but what is called for, or accepted by the covenant as the condition thereof, whereas any thing that conſequently will prove one to be renewed, will alſo prove him to be juſtified; although it be not that to which his juſtification is covenanted; but is ſomething that doth neceſſarily preſuppoſe it, and follow after in a juſtified perſon, and can be in no other elſe: for, if an act, ſo and ſo qualified, will prove one to have the habits of grace, without which he could not prove it; then muſt they prove him to be renewed, and ſo to be juſtified: becauſe theſe acts are holy acts, and *fruits of the Spirit*, as they are called, Gal. v. and *motions of the inner man*, Rom. vii. and fruits of a good tree: and therefore, muſt prove that the tree is good. 2. There is a miſtake in this, that it ſuppoſeth the covenant not to accept of graces (whether as the condition or otherwiſe) ſuppoſe of love, faith, &c. but at ſuch a comparative degree only; and not ſimply to accept of them as ſincere, although not as fully perfect. As ſuppoſe one by covenant had farmed ſome portion of land, that doth for the time bear nothing but brambles, upon this condition that he ſhould have returned to him ſo many wine grapes, bigger than the brambles that grow thereon; in this reſpect, one that really gave grapes, could not expect to have theſe accepted, as being the covenanted fruit of the vineyard, or the rent of his leaſe, if they were not bigger than the brambles which formerly did, or doth continue to grow therein: whereas the tenor of the

covenant in the condition that it propoſeth, and in its acception of grace, to ſpeak ſo, doth never propoſe and accept theſe graces, ſimply conſidered as ſuch, that is, it accepteth of faith: and the believer is to be accounted a believer, and in covenant, not only becauſe of the degree of his faith in Chriſt; but becauſe he, conſidering him as the Saviour of ſinners, and as ſent of God for that end, is drawn, out of reſpect to the faithfulneſs of God in his word, to receive Chriſt, as he is offered to him; and upon that account, according to the terms of the covenant, to ſubmit to his righteouſneſs, and reſt on him for attaining of ſalvation. Likewiſe in repentance, pardon and juſtification are not knit to any degree of ſorrow, as was formerly hinted, that is, that God will account him a penitent, whoſe ſorrow for ſin doth exceed his delight in it; but unto true repentance, which is for its qualifications ſuch, is the promiſe, made, *whoſoever repents, &c.* And in this reſpect, God's covenant runneth not, that he will have grapes bigger than brambles, or gold of more weight than the perſon himſelf; but, if they be true grapes, growing upon a good tree, and not grapes of Sodom, or brambles, he doth accept of them, and ſaith, deſtroy not, for there is a bleſſing in it though it be like unto the ſmalleſt berry upon the uppermoſt tops of the boughs, and although ſtill he call for perfection in the degree of all as the covenanters duty. And if it be gold, and may abide the touch-ſtone and fire, and not be conſumed, he rejects it not, of whatever weight it be in the ſcales, as 1 Cor. iii. 13, 14, and 15. is clear. Now gold abideth the fire, not as it is in quantity but as it is in kind, and for the quality upright: and no place is there which doth expreſs God's way of trial more plainly; and it hath the promiſe to the man whoſe work in any degree will abide the fire, though the droſs that is with it (which ſhall be conſumed) be in the quantity far beyond what is ſolid. Hence we will find in ſcripture, that ſuch expreſſions are uſed as do ever lay the weight of the ſincerity of men's acts, and place the difference of gracious and ſinful acts in the kind thereof, as accounting all of ſuch a kind to be gracious, without ſuch reſpect to its degree, as when it is ſaid, *A tree is known by its fruit*, Matth. vii. the meaning is not, that it is known by the fruit of ſuch a bigneſs, but by their kind; ſo it is not every tree, that bringeth not forth fruit at ſuch a degree, but that bringeth not forth good fruit, that is of ſuch a kind; that is hewn down, Matth. iii. A vine is known to be a vine, by its grapes of the ſmalleſt bigneſs; yea, even by its bloſſoms. Hence ſo frequently in the Song, the Lord's trees are differenced by their buddings, and bloſſomings, and moſt tender grapes, or firſt buds; which could not be, if it were not the kind of fruit that evidenced the difference of trees: *for, men gather not grapes*, even of the ſmalleſt bigneſs, *from thorns nor figs from brambles.* So all true believers, are ſaid to have *the ſame Spirit of faith*, 2 Cor. v. 13. and the like *precious faith*, 2 Pet. i. 2. which doth hold forth this, that as all believers, who have faith, have the ſame for kind, though not for degree precious; ſo alſo, all theſe who partake of that faith, that is true for its kind, muſt alſo neceſſarily be believers, and in covenant with God of whatever degree it be, if it be the ſame for its qualifications and kind with the former, it is precious; otherwiſe, even believers have not the like faith in degree: The likeneſs then and precioufneſs thereof, muſt be in the kind, which no hypocrite can have, and it cannot but be accepted by God: ſo true repentance, and worldly ſorrow are differenced, 2 Cor. vii. not in reſpect of any degree, but in reſpect of the kind; and the one is worldly, and the other is ſorrow, verſe 9. after a godly manner, and verſe 11. after a godly ſort: which muſt be becauſe of poſitive qualifications concurring in it, which the other hath not. And the inſtances that are brought to prove their ſorrowing after a godly manner, in the words following, do confirm this, viz. their carefulneſs, zeal, &c. So 1 Pet. i. 22. there is unfeigned love; and elſewhere unfeigned faith, which are differenced from the counterfeits in hypocrites, as that which hath reality, is from that which is only in appearance. For although they may have hiſtorical faith, and a kind of natural love to God, to let theſe go as ſuppoſed, yet, can they never have juſtifying faith, or real ſpiritual love, or of that kind; otherwiſe, it were not feigned, and could not but be accepted, ſeeing what is unfeigned is ever accepted. Now, love and faith, cannot be called feigned ſimply in theſe, who have truly the ſame kind of acts of love and faith, or yet true acts of ſome kind: they muſt therefore be in this reſpect feigned, that though they be in their own kind, true acts of hiſtorical faith, and com-

mon love; yet in this they are feigned, that they ſeem to be of another kind than they are of, viz. ſaving and gracious: and therefore common acts in an unrenewed man, and ſaving acts in him that is renewed, muſt differ in kind, as that which hath reality and ſuch a being, doth differ from its counterfeit, and that which is but in ſhew.

The ſame might be followed in all ſuch ſcriptures, where ſome practices are differenced from others in reſpect of poſitive concurring qualifications, as to do with a perfect heart, is frequently in the hiſtory of the Kings, to walk with *godly ſimplicity*, and *ſincerity*, and that *as in the ſight of God*, 2 Cor. i. 13. and ii. 17. to have *zeal qualified according to knowledge*, &c. and almoſt ever when a gracious act is deſcribed: yea, we will find it even in outward duties, ſuppoſe in the duty of praying, or preaching; that is acceptable prayer to God, which is praying in the Spirit, in the name of Chriſt, &c. otherwiſe the gift of prayer may be, where the grace thereof is not, and no intenſeneſs of the exerciſe of the common gift can make it, without theſe qualifications to be acceptable, &c. whereas the leaſt ſigh or groan rightly qualified, and ariſing from the right root, cannot but be acceptable.

To come then to ſay a word to the third thing propoſed viz. that this inquiring for the truth of grace, in its kind, and not in its degree only and ſimply, but at leaſt in its degree and kind together, is no way prejudicial but helpful to the exact and ſafe ſearch of ourſelves. This ſeemeth to be the reaſon that moveth that learned author, (who is an eminent batterer down of preſumption, and a preſſer of holineſs) to place the ſincerity of grace in this comparative degree, that thereby preſumptuous hypocrites be not ſtrengthened in their ſelf-deluſions, who may abuſe this maxim, which ſaith, *That the truth of grace lieth in the kind, and not in the degree thereof:* for, readily do they think they are aſſured they love God, and believe him truly, &c. But there is no ground for fear of that here.

Therefore, 1. We ſay, That this degree being well underſtood and expreſſed, is indeed neceſſarily knit with ſaving grace; ſo that if any man deliberately and habitually prefer the intereſt of fleſh, or any carnal reſpect to the intereſt of God and his way, or love any thing more than God, or equally with him, that man can never warrantably conclude that he hath ſaving grace, this being inconſiſtent with it; and alſo one who loveth God ſincerely, cannot when he acteth deliberately, and according to the former qualifications, but love him beyond all, becauſe that is the nature of ſincere love.

And, 2. We do not ſeclude this, but add the former qualifications of the kind thereof; and therefore this way muſt be both more convincing to diſcover a hypocrite, when he muſt not only look to the degree, but to the kind alſo: and on the other ſide, be more ſatisfying to the poor believer, when he hath not only his mark to gather from the degree, which often may be exceeding dark and doubtful to him, when he conſidereth many idols that may have great place in himſelf, and how far hypocrites may come in that reſpect; but when he may alſo reflect within himſelf upon his end, motive and manner of acting, &c. he may be helped to diſcern the ſincerity and honeſty of his own act and purpoſe, and have the help of his conſcience teſtimony in reference to theſe alſo: and ſo come more confidently to conclude concerning himſelf.

It is true, it is a moſt hard taſk, though a moſt neceſſary taſk, to diſcover the nature of ſincerity and ſaving grace for the comfort of a tender believer, ſo as preſumptuous hypocrites may not juſtly ſtumble thereon to their own ruin; yet, are they, viz. hypocrites, more apt to flatter themſelves in the truth of their grace, ſuppoſe of faith, love, &c. in reſpect of the kind thereof, than in reſpect of the comparative degree thereof. And are they not as confident and perſuaded of this, that they love God above all, and truſt and lippen to him more than to any other thing for attaining to life? And will be ready to ſay, there is no other thing they can lippen to; and in this they are fixed ſo, as none ſhall be able to convince them of the contrary, becauſe God's ſovereignty in that reſpect, is ſo naturally fixed in the conſcience, that they never debate it, but think themſelves through in it, the conviction of its reaſonableneſs is ſo ſtrong on their judgments. And indeed upon what hath been ſaid, if we ſeparate the degree from the kind and qualifications formerly mentioned, they will have much ſeeming reaſon for them: and yet even then, they will bewray that love, faith, &c. which they eſteem to be in this degree, to be unſound in its kind, as being but the

fruit of nature, and ſomewhat readily which is of age equal to themſelves, &c. and therefore cannot be found. Therefore we add, that this way will be more uſeful to convince natural men, than the other is: becauſe generally, they are perſuaded of the truth and reality of their grace: and to ſay, that their grace were but defective in its degree, would, 1. Keep them from the thorough conviction of their graceleſneſs, and the right uptaking of their deceitful nature; which yet is mainly and principally neceſſary to the work of converſion. For it would make them ſuppoſe that they had already attained ſome beginnings, whereas this placing of the ſincerity of true grace in the kind, doth, at the firſt, point out to them the neceſſity of a change, and more eaſily diſcovereth the unſoundneſs of every thing that groweth from the natural root of an unrenewed condition. 2. This placing of it in the degree, doth put hypocrites only to amend or quicken their pace, and to be adding to their building; but not to take a new way, or to lay a new foundation: now this exceedingly ſuits with a preſumptuous hypocrite's humour, who will eaſily grant that their faith is weak, but not that it is unſound, and are ever deſirous to increaſe what they have, which will prove but a building upon ſand: and if this were the alone mark of trial, whether God had the chief room by this comparative degree in their acts, they would be exceedingly confirmed in their opinion that all is well. It is like when Nicodemus came to our Lord, he would not eaſily have been convinced, that he loved or truſted any thing more than God: neither doth our Lord take that way for convincing of him; but doth ſhew the unſoundneſs of what he had, in reſpect of the kind thereof, and that the tree behoved to be made good, and of another kind, before any fruit thereof could be approvable: and therefore he preacheth to him the doctrine of regeneration, and the neceſſity of being born again, and doth not inſiſt to ſhew any defect of degree, but of kind, as in that, John iii. 6. is clear, *That*, ſaith he, *which is born of the* FLESH, *is* FLESH; that is, whatever fruits may be in a natural man, they are of a corrupt kind as the root is: whereby he would obviate a ſecret objection that Nicodemus, or a formal hypocrite, might have from the degree or abundance of ſeeming good acts of *zeal*, *love*, *prayer*, &c. (as may by Nicodemus his words to Chriſt be gathered to have been in him.) Be it ſo, ſaith he, let there be many fruits, and that in a great degree, that is not the thing that maketh them acceptable: for, they are ſtill but *Fleſh;* that is, of a corrupt kind: and thus he rejecteth them all at once, and ſtoppeth his mouth, without comparing them in reference to their objects, wherein Nicodemus had not been ſo eaſily convinced. And, on the contrary, ſaith the Lord, *What is born of the Spirit, is ſpirit:* whereby he doth not only ſhew, that there muſt be fruits of another kind, viz. ſpiritual; and that nothing of whatſoever degree can be accounted ſincere, except it proceed from this principle, viz. the *Spirit*: but alſo it ſheweth, that there is nothing which doth come from that principle, if it were but the leaſt motion, but it is *Spirit*, and acceptable according to the root that it cometh from, without conſideration of the degree thereof. And ſeeing our Lord took that way, to diſcover and convince, it cannot but be ſafeſt. 3. This way alſo would be dangerous to many poor tender believers, if they were put to try the ſincerity of their grace by this prevalent degree alone: for, do not they often find their unbelief, or leaning to creatures, at leaſt in their ſenſe to exceed their faith in God? and do not they find love to things of the world more frequently carry the heart to delight therein, than God alone; and ſhall they caſt all as unſound in ſuch a caſe? What had Paul done, if he had walked by this mark, when the motions of ſin captivated him, Rom. vii. and yet is he ſtill comforted in the ſincerity of his grace, and in the actings of the inner man: which cannot be grounded upon this comparative degree; but upon the kind thereof. Now, if this maxim were true, theſe things would follow it; 1, He could have no evidence of his ſincerity, except he had more grace, and that ſtill in exerciſe, not corruption, and that to his ſenſe: for every grace hath ſome oppoſite corruption, and if it were not prevalent over its oppoſite corruption, then could he not conclude that he were gracious, and ſo not, except he were more gracious than corrupt. 2. If any grace were prevailed over by its oppoſite corruption, he could not conclude that he were in a gracious eſtate; becauſe this is certain, that where one grace is ſincere, there all graces are, they being all members and parts of the new creature, which in regeneration is brought forth; and it being certain alſo, that for

a time, ſome graces will be exceedingly prevailed over by their oppoſites, more than others, as the fear of men will keep a believer under in a particular more than the fear of God; then it will follow, that either he hath true fear of God at the ſame time; and ſo the ſincerity of this grace of fear doth not conſiſt in the prevalent degree thereof, or, hath no grace ſincere at all, becauſe where one is unſound, all is unſound, *et contra;* or, one grace muſt be ſound, and another unſound, which cannot be ſaid ſimply, upon the ground formerly given. The believer then, in ſuch a caſe, muſt either conclude himſelf to be unſound: or, he muſt try it by ſome other mark from the kind thereof. And though a believer ought to account himſelf greatly faulty, when any one corruption prevaileth; yet it will not follow, that he ſhould reckon all to be unſound, which this would infer, and ſo contradicteth the ſaints practices in ſuch caſes.

From all this we conclude, that it is more ſafe to keep both the common doctrine and expreſſions: and although we have been longer upon this than poſſibly may be thought ſuitable to our purpoſe; yet we have adventured upon it, if ſo be it may conduce any thing to the clearing of that wherein the trial of mens ſtates is ſo much concerned; or, if it may occaſion ſome more unanimous expreſſing of this matter, by others who may more dexterouſly perform it, that ſo this be not ſtated as a new controverſy in the church, at ſuch a time when ſhe is almoſt overwhelmed with inteſtine debates already. For we are ſure in the general, that theſe qualifications formerly mentioned, of the end, motive, reduplication, &c. are neceſſary to the conſtituting of any act to be ſincere, as hath been ſaid. And if they be neceſſary, they muſt either be comprehended under the expreſſion of this prevailing degree of the act, and ſo it is but (λογομαχία) a ſtriving for words, which are not to be contended for. And ſo both theſe are upon the matter one. Or, if they be not comprehended under that expreſſion, then they muſt be ſomewhat different from it; and ſo there muſt be more requiſite to conſtitute the ſincerity of grace, and to difference it from common works in hypocrites, than this degree foreſaid. Or, we muſt ſay, that theſe qualifications muſt be accounted common to the acts of hypocrites, and theſe that are renewed: which is a thing that we cannot admit, upon the grounds formerly laid down: although we ſtill acknowledge, that the preſſing at the moſt eminent degree of grace, even in that comparative reſpect, is exceedingly neceſſary and uſeful for attaining to the clear diſcerning of the ſincerity of grace: for, often believers do make their own ſearch exceedingly difficult, becauſe of the want of this. And the agitation of this queſtion, being ſomewhat new, we hope what is ſaid, will be the more favourably conſtructed; eſpecially this, being our fear, that by ſuch expreſſions, or aſſertions, as this opinion hath with it, grace may come to be looked on as too common a thing, and it and nature, to be thought more ſib than indeed they are.

LECTURE IV.

Ver. 8. *And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna, write, Theſe things ſaith the firſt and the laſt, which was dead, and is alive.*

9. *I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blaſphemy of them which ſay they are Jews, and are not, but are the ſynagogue of Satan.*

10. *Fear none of thoſe things which thou ſhalt ſuffer: behold, the devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into priſon, that ye may be tried, and ye ſhall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

11. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the churches. He that overcometh, ſhall not be hurt of the ſecond death.*

THE ſecond epiſtle is directed to the church of Smyrna: and as her caſe doth differ from the caſe of Epheſus, and that both in reſpect of ſuffering and integrity; ſo doth the Lord's meſſage to her differ, and is wholly comfortable.

There is no charge againſt this church, as in many of the reſt: this doth not imply an univerſal freedom from guiltineſs of all ſorts: but, *Firſt,*

That this church hath been free from groſs evils, and hath been in honeſt ſimplicity aiming at

their duty. And, *Secondly*, It beareth out the Lord's tenderneſs in paſſing over many infirmities in an honeſt church where there is much ſuffering.

It is not our purpoſe to inſiſt in theſe epiſtles (the matter being clear, and ye having good opportunity of hearing them more fully opened) we ſhall only give a view of the ſcope, to keep the coherance of the whole book.

The epiſtle hath the diviſion common with all the reſt, in theſe three general parts, viz. *Firſt*, A preface or inſcription, comprehending the perſon from whom, and to whom, this meſſage is directed. The titles given to Chriſt, the ſender, were ſpoken to, chap. i. They are two, 1. He is the *firſt and the laſt*: this ſetteth out the eternity of his Godhead, or his eternity as he is God. 2. He is ſtyled, *He that was dead, and is alive*: this ſetteth out his office, with the efficacy of his death, and the victory that he hath obtained, by overcoming death and the devil; and being now above death and ſuffering, to live *God* and *man* in one perſon for ever. Theſe titles are ſpecially choſen here for the conſolation of this ſuffering honeſt church: for, his ſuffering and dying commendeth him as pitiful and compaſſionate: and his Godhead and victory, ſetteth him out as ſufficiently able: both which being put together, do exceedingly comfort his people, who cannot but live, ſeeing he liveth, and cannot but continue ſo for ever, Pſal. xviii. 46. John xiv. 19.

Secondly, The body of the epiſtle is contained, ver. 9, 10, 11. it eſpecially runneth on theſe two, 1. To hold out Smyrna her caſe, and that both in reſpect of what was preſent, ver. 9. and alſo in reſpect of what was to come, ver. 10. 2. It holdeth out the conſolations which are allowed to her for her encouragement in reference to both, and theſe two are intermixed.

Her preſent caſe hath two things in it. 1. Her outward afflictions are mentioned. 2. Her honeſty and integrity under them, is taken notice of, and approven by Jeſus Chriſt. And this laſt is a main ground of conſolation againſt the firſt.

Her outward afflicted condition is expreſſed in theſe three words: 1. They were under tribulation; that is, ſad and great ſtraitening preſſures, as the word ſignifieth; and by this may be underſtood the afflictions of body, name, and eſtate, and the ſad conſequence following thereupon, which the godly are put to by the perſecution of wicked men. 2. POVERTY: *I know thy poverty:* we take it literally to be underſtood of ſuch pinching ſtraits in their outward eſtates, as plundering, ſequeſtration, finings, and other means of that kind uſe to bring upon men: unto this ſort of affliction the Chriſtians in the primitive perſecutions were exceedingly liable: who yet *joyfully ſuffered the ſpoiling of their goods*, Heb. x. 34. This is indeed no little part of trial, when parents and children are caſten looſe of all temporal things, and have not for the refreſhing of themſelves and their families. The third part of their affliction, is the reproach of wicked men, that wanted not altogether profeſſion; *I know*, ſaith the Lord, *the blaſphemy of theſe which ſay they are Jews, and are not, but are of the ſynagogue of Satan.* Amongſt all the ſaints croſſes, there are none more bitter than cruel mockings, as they are called, Heb. xi. 36. and mockings from Jews that pretended to worſhip the God of Abraham, of Iſaac, and of Jacob, would be more heavy, than the reproaches of heathens: there were none alſo more bitter revilers of the Son of God, and of his followers, than theſe hardened Jews: who having ſynagogues in conſiderable cities, did ever, with all their might, join themſelves to reproach and perſecute the Chriſtians. It is like that they had a ſynagogue in this place, pretending to worſhip God according to the manner of his law; but becauſe of their obſtinate maliciouſneſs, they are by the Lord denied to be Jews; and are ſaid to lie, and to be of the ſynagogue of Satan: becauſe indeed they looked liker a combination for the devil, than a congregation for worſhipping of God, who ſlew the Lord, forbade to ſpeak in his name, and did perſecute his miniſters and people, as the word is, 1 Theſſ. ii. 14, 15.

From which we may ſee, 1. That the moſt honeſt and tender may be liable to moſt ſharp afflictions. 2. That often rods and croſſes of ſeveral kinds are joined together. 3. That reproach is not the leaſt part of affliction of the people of God; and the ſhame thereof, being well endured, will be accounted honeſt ſuffering of a croſs, as if it were a bodily affliction. 4. There is no perſon more bitter and invective againſt thoſe that are ſincere, than ſuch as have had ſome engagements to God by profeſſion, and have fallen from the ſame.

5. Pretended friends, as theſe Jews were, may come to be moſt groſs enemies, which is both their ſin and their plague: therefore, 1. Theſſ. ii.——16. it is ſaid, *That wrath was come upon them to the uttermoſt.* 6. God's people may look to be met with, and entertained by men, as the Lord Jeſus uſeth to be: if he be well entertained, ſo will it be with them; if he be deſpiſed, as he was by theſe Jews, let them look to be blaſphemed and deſpiſed alſo: for, it is enough to the ſervant that he be like his Maſter.

The conſolation that is propoſed againſt the foreſaid affliction, is two ways ſet down, 1. More generally, *I know thy works:* which doth not only relate to his omniſciency, as is uſual in theſe epiſtles: but here it taketh in his approbation as the word after cleareth. Alſo it is oppoſed to his taking notice of their enemies malice, *I know the blaſphemy of them that call themſelves Jews*, &c. Therefore, his knowing of their works muſt include his reſpect to their honeſty, as his knowing of their blaſphemy pointeth out his deteſtation of the ſame. It is no little part of believers conſolation in any ſtrait, that the Lord Jeſus knoweth how it is with them, and can bear teſtimony to their integrity, when they are even almoſt overwhelmed with reproaches before men. It is no little encouragement alſo, that he doth take notice of his enemies malice, as here is obſerved.

The ſecond way the conſolation is expreſſed, is more direct: by Chriſt's plain teſtimony in theſe words, *Thou art rich;* that is, whatever men think of thee, as being moſt deſpicable, or, whatever thou be in thy own eſtate, moſt poor and deſolate; yet really, and in my eſtimation, thou art rich; that is, thou art indeed ſtrong in the grace of God, well furniſhed with promiſes and privileges, and abundantly rich in faith and good works, James ii. 5. 1 Tim. vi. 18. In which things, true riches do conſiſt. This ſeemeth to be a ſtrange paradox unto the men of the world, thou art poor, and yet thou art rich; yet often have the ſaints found this to be a truth; *as having nothing, and yet poſſeſſing all things*, 2 Cor. vi. 10. And if this were believed, it might allay the fervour that men have in purſuing after temporal riches: for, the having of them cannot make them rich, (the greateſt men in Smyrna get not this teſtimony from our Lord Jeſus, that *they are rich*) and the want of them cannot make them poor: and therefore Smyrna, even in her poverty, is rich. This alſo would make the heavenly riches to be eſteemed of, if men believed that their life did not conſiſt in the abundance of the things that they enjoy, as it is Luke xii. 15.

The future caſe of Smyrna, which is ſet down, ver. 10. is alſo an afflicted condition; and hath its encouragements ſuitable thereto, laid down. It is, 1. Generally propoſed to be ſuffering, *Fear none of theſe things which thou ſhalt ſuffer.* This church had been ſuffering; and though honeſt, was yet to ſuffer more.

Obſ. 1. Sufferings when they begin oftentimes are not inſtantly at a cloſe. Yea, 2. The Lord will ſometimes exerciſe theſe that are moſt tender, with one croſs upon the back of another. 3. He himſelf is notwithſtanding ſtill tender of them, even when they ſuffer, as may be gathered from this comfortable meſſage to Smyrna.

2. Theſe ſufferings are more particularly deſcribed, 1. In the kind of ſuffering, viz. *Impriſonment*: This is not ſo to be underſtood, as if they were to be tried by no other kind of ſuffering; but it ſetteth out a main part of their croſs, viz. that ſome of them ſhould be caſt in priſon, and liberty taken from their perſons, which it may be, heretofore they enjoyed. 2. It is deſcribed in the principal agent and inſtrument of their ſufferings, *The devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into priſon.* Heathen emperors, wicked governors and ſoldiers, were inſtrumental therein: yet it is aſcribed to the devil, as if it were immediately acted by him, for theſe reaſons, 1. To ſhew what influence the devil hath in the acting of wicked men, ſo that in effect their deed is his deed, they are ſo ſubſervient to him. 2. It is to ſhew from what author all perſecutions do flow, viz. from the devil, who is a murderer and a liar from the beginning, and father thereof, John viii. 44. 3. It is to aggravate the horribleneſs of this ſin of perſecution, as being a main piece of the devil's buſineſs, be inſtrumental therein who will. 4. It ſerveth alſo to comfort and encourage the ſuffering people to patience and conſtancy, ſeeing the devil is their ſpecial enemy, they ought therefore not to faint in oppoſing of him, nor to ſtumble in being oppoſed by him.

3. Their ſuffering is deſcribed by a deſignation of the perſons, who were eſpecially thus to ſuffer, *he ſhall caſt* ſome of you *into priſon*, &c. By

you, we underſtand eſpecially the miniſters; ſome whereof, ſaith the Lord, were to be caſt into priſon, and yet but *ſome;* to ſhew that he was not altogether to extinguiſh their light. The reaſons why we underſtand it ſpecially of miniſters, are, 1. Becauſe that doth eſpecially prove a trial to the church, when her miniſters are ſet upon. 2. Becauſe the preſerving of ſome of them is a ſpecial comfort againſt affliction, according to the promiſe, Iſa. xxx. 20, 21. And were it not to be underſtood of miniſters, it might have a fulfilling, though they ſhould all be caſt into priſon. 3. The ſenſible altering of the number from *thou* in the ſingular, to *you* in the plural number, doth clear that the ſame party is to be underſtood by both: and ſeeing by the firſt, the angel, collectively taken, is certainly to be underſtood; this ſheweth that in this laſt place, ſuch, viz. Miniſters are alſo to be underſtood. This form of changing the number, will be more clear in ver. 24.

4. This future affliction is deſcribed in its end, that is, trial; *that ye may be tried:* this is neither the end that the devils or perſecutors have before them; but that which the Lord intends, who, by this ſuffering, minded to diſcover ſome infirmities to themſelves, and to bring forth the ſolidity and ſtrength of his grace, to his praiſe, and their comfort before others.

It is deſcribed in its height and continuance: its height is *tribulation;* that is, very ſore and great preſſures; its continuance, is *ten days*, a definite, for an indefinite time, and doth ſet out, 1. That their afflictions in general were determined by the Lord to a day. 2. That it was not long; it was but for *days*. The ſaddeſt afflictions of the people of God have an end. Yet, 3. It is for *ten days:* to ſhew that it was for ſome continuance, and that the people of God ought not to look for freedom from their croſſes in the firſt, ſecond, or fifth day. Some apply it to the perſecution that followed in the days of Trajan, for the ſpace of ten years; but we conceive the moſt general acceptation is ſafeſt.

The ſpecial encouragements that are expreſſed, are two: (for, ſome are implied in the former words) the firſt is, *Fear none of theſe things*, &c. This is a general comfort, frequently given by the Lord, *Fear not*, &c. Iſ. xli. 42, 43. And certainly though it be general; yet being ſpoken out of Chriſt's own mouth, muſt be very comprehenſive and maſſy. By which we *learn*, that the ſaints conſolations flow not from their freedom, or being preſerved from croſſes, (for that is not their comfort here) but they flow from Chriſt's being engaged to ſuſtain them under the ſame, and from his word, which ought to keep them from anxiety and fainting in the greateſt tribulations. The ſecond encouragement is ſubjoined to an exhortation. *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* The Lord ſubjoineth the promiſe to the exhortation. 1. To ſhew the neceſſity of ſtedfaſtneſs, even under ſuffering, ſeeing without it, there is no promiſe of reward. 2. It is done to mollify and ſweeten the peremptorineſs of that exhortation by ſuch a ſweet encouraging promiſe annexed to it. The promiſe is, of a *crown of life;* which looketh to the eternal happineſs that believers are to enjoy after this, as 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. It is called *life*, becauſe of the cheerfulneſs of that condition where mortality is ſwallowed up of life; and the life that is here, is not worthy of that name. And it is *a crown of life;* to ſhew the dignity and excellency thereof; and alſo to intimate that it is a prize to be obtained (as crowns uſually were given) after a fight. Alſo, the Lord ſaith, *I will give it, if thou be faithful unto death*, to ſhew, that faithfulneſs and perſeverance therein, is a neceſſary pre-requiſite to the obtaining of this crown; yet that it hath no meritorious influence to alter the nature and freeneſs of it, it is ſtill a gift of grace even to thoſe that perſevere.

Obſ. 1. That faithfulneſs and perſeverance in holineſs, are no leſs neceſſary than heaven: for, a man cannot attain the one without the other. 2. Whatever pinches a believer may have, the crown of glory ought to make all ſweet in the very hope thereof: therefore it is propoſed here. 3. It is not every one that have this promiſe, nor every one that may warrantably apply the ſame, although moſt men uſually exceed in this, and beguile themſelves.

The concluſion, which is the third part of the epiſtle, followeth ver. 11. wherein there is, 1. The common advertiſement to all that *have an ear to hear:* which ſheweth how careful men ought to be in hearing of this word, even as if particularly it were ſpoken to them. 2. There is a ſpecial promiſe made to overcomers, *He that overcometh, ſhall not be hurt of the ſecond death.* The per-

ſon to whom the promiſe is made, was formerly ſpoken of: it is not the man that pleaſeth himſelf, or yieldeth to all ſorts of temptations, or for a time ſeemeth to be diligent; but he that fighteth and overcometh. The thing promiſed, is, to be kept from the *hurt of the ſecond death*. There is a firſt death, which is a ſeparation of the ſoul from the body, common to good and bad; there is a ſecond death, which is to be eternally ſeparated from the preſence of God and the Lamb, eſpecially at the day of judgment, viz. when all the wicked, as dogs, ſorcerers, and liars, ſhall be caſt into the lake, which is the ſecond death, Rev. xxi. 8. In ſum, the promiſe is, he that overcometh ſhall be kept from hell.

From which we may gather, 1. That there is a ſecond death after men are laid in the grave. 2. That this death is moſt horrible and dreadful. 3. That it is a ſingular, rare, and ſpecial favour and privilege to be kept from that ſecond death. 4. It is implied, that the generality of men, who are ſlaves to their luſts, and war not againſt them for Chriſt, ſhall be made liable to this ſecond death, and for ever be a prey to the ſame. 5. It ſheweth what is the believer's advantage by Chriſt's moyen and friendſhip, that lives for ever; he ſhall be freed from this. And, *laſtly*, From the ſcope, we may gather, that if a man may be kept from the ſecond death, and wrath to come, he may the more patiently endure whatever elſe he may meet with in this world, though it were even the firſt death itſelf.

Concerning the Influence *that the Devil hath on ſome wicked Men's actions, and how he doth* carry *on the ſame.*

ONE thing may be further inquired here, viz. Concerning the devil's influence on men's actions: for, that this effect is attributed to the devil, (*The devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into priſon*) it holdeth forth a ſpecial hand that he hath in acting men to do evil, ſo that their deed is his. Concerning which, we may in general ſay, that the devil may have, and often hath great power on men, eſpecially wicked men, in making them ſubſervient to his deſigns. Thus he maketh men caſt ſome faithful miniſters in priſon here: he reigneth as having men at his command, in the next epiſtle; and leadeth them captive at his will, 2 Tim. ii. 26. he fighteth with Michael, and ſtirreth up hereſies as well as perſecution, chap. xii. he deceiveth the nations, chap. xx. And often his power is ſpoken of in this propheſy: and it is certain that it is very great, 1. Having effects upon the bodies of men, to carry them from one place to another, as he did to the body of Chriſt, Matth. iv. to afflict them by ſickneſs, pain and ſorrows, as he did Job and the woman, Luke xiii. 16. whom, *being a daughter of Abraham, Satan hath bound*, ſaith Chriſt, *lo theſe eighteen years*, &c. 2. Upon the external ſenſes: he can delude the ears, eyes, &c. either by miſrepreſenting external objects, or by inward diſturbing of the faculties and organs, whereby men and women may, and do often apprehend that they hear, ſee, &c. ſuch and ſuch things, which indeed they do not. 3. Inwardly he may have influence to diſturb the reaſon, and mar the judgment, as he did in theſe men whom he poſſeſſed, Matth. viii. 28. He hath influence on the underſtanding; and ſo he is ſaid *to blind men*, 2 Cor. iv. 4. 4. He may work on the memory and affections alſo, as by ſtealing away the word, Matth. xiii. 19. and alſo wakening hatred, luſt, envy, &c. Yea, ſome way he may work on the will, and ſo he is ſaid to put reſolutions in the heart, as it is ſaid of Ananias and Saphira, to *lie* to the Holy Ghoſt, Acts v. 3. and of Judas to *betray* Chriſt, John xiii. 27. So, 1 Chron. xxi. being compared with 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. it is ſaid that *he* that is Satan, did move and provoke David to number the people. All which, in the effects, are clear. Therefore is he ſaid both to reign in ſome at his pleaſure, and to deceive or delude others by wiles and ſubtilty, 2 Cor. ii. 11. which are his devices. Theſe are all certain: although we cannot fully ſhew how he affecteth them; yet, this we may ſay;

Firſt, He hath no abſolute independent power to do what he will; but is limited, ordered, and bounded by the Lord. And, *Secondly*, He hath no infallible, inſuperable way of acting by himſelf on men; but as men through their ſin yield unto him; for he is dependant, and can force none to ſin. *Thirdly*, He can have no immediate infallible acquaintance with what is in mens hearts; for that is God's property. *Fourthly*, He hath no immediate determinating influence on the will of men: ſo that although he may perſuade violently,

yet he cannot determine men to follow: that is the Lord's prerogative alone, to have hearts in his hand, Prov. xxi. 1. to turn them whitherſoever he will. And therefore, whatſoever way the devil prevaileth, it is but a mediate way of alluring or deceiving, by making uſe of means for that end. *Fifthly*, He can infuſe no new corruption, nor can he create any inward ſpecies or repreſentations, thereby to tempt; for that is a work of omnipotency: but he muſt work upon what is within the perſon that he acteth upon, for producing of theſe; yet, being permitted of God, he may uſe moſt powerful perſuaſive means, by his ſkill and agility to draw men, being now corrupt, inſenſibly to many groſs ſins; or, at leaſt, to tempt them. Which temptation meeting with corruption in us, and the Lord juſtly giving over ſome to it, Satan may prevail over them by ſuch and ſuch like means, as,

1. He may, by ſigns, know mens particular inclinations and predominants; (although he reach not to the underſtanding of the thoughts immediately:) and he may gather what ſnare may moſt readily prevail with men for the time, according as evidences may appear in their way, either by their not praying to God, or by what kythes in words and other carriage, wherein certainly he goeth beyond any man, viz. in taking up of mens inclinations. 2. He may ſuit and fit external temptations to their diſtemper, and tryſte them ſo, as there may be acceſs to the venting of ſuch luſts; thus he maketh Judas, his inclination to covetouſneſs, and the Phariſees envy, to tryſte together; David to behold Bathſheba in ſuch a poſture, when he is ſomewhat ſecure, &c. 3. He may jumble, confound, and put through other the inward frame, by working on what is natural in the humours of the body, for awakening luſt, paſſion, revenge, ſuſpicion, fears, &c. whereby men are ſome way diſpoſed to yield to the temptation offered, which he timeth with this. 4. He may caſt in repreſentations in the mind, of ſuch and ſuch things, diverting the imagination from objects which might mar his deſign; and ſo he may order what is within, as out of it, or by it, to form repreſentations in the imagination of ſuch and ſuch things: whereby, propoſing them, as it were, objectively to the underſtanding, he may mediately offer them to the will: and for that end alſo, for a time keep ſuch thoughts in the mind and in the memory. Thus, often the ſaints cannot be free of imaginations, by his abuſing of the fancy, which they hate, and at which they have horror: and therefore, theſe cannot be thought natively and narrowly to ariſe from themſelves, which are ſo ſtrange and uncouth to them. Thus, ſome things come unexpectedly, by Satan's furniſhing the thoughts with a ſinful mind for attaining of an end, that is deſired, and it may be is deſirable. Thus alſo he may darken ſcripture, offer diverſe ſenſes of it, or againſt the true meaning of it, obſtruct their taking up of the weight of any reaſon againſt their errors, &c. as he is ſaid *to blind*, 2 Cor. iv. 4. *the minds of them that believe not*, &c. *and to ſpue out a flood of error*, Rev. xii. 15. He may not only objectively thus preſent ſuch a thing; but he may continue to bear it in, and to uſe motives drawn from ſeeming reaſon to engage the will to yield to it, as he did to Adam and Eve at the firſt: and thus, he ſtirreth not only natural humours of the body, but natural corruptions, engaging all the luſts, as they may have influence to prevail with the will, for yielding to theſe temptations: ſo Judas, his covetouſneſs, is engaged to deal with him to ſell his Maſter: for, the devil, though he infuſe no covetous humour; yet he may act on what there is, and he ſtirreth the Phariſees envy to concur and make them accept of that offer. And in this doth ly a main part of the temptation, and the devil's wiles and devices, whereby he deceiveth, viz. in making ſeeming reaſons to have weight, as if there were force in them, and true grounds to be rejected as not for ſuch a time, &c. nor of ſuch weight. Thus he prevaileth with Eve, preſenting the temptation with its plauſible, though falſe reaſons. And this way, though indirectly, as the apoſtle ſaith, 2 Cor. xi. 3. he continueth to deal with Adam's ſucceſſors, to prevail with them as he did with Eve by his ſubtility: and thus he leadeth men at his pleaſure, by propoſing to them what he will: otherwiſe he could have no ſuch dominion over men in the world as he hath: and thus, many ſins are born in on men without any connection with their natural complexion: and if it were not thus, one man might prevail in ſome reſpect more with another (for he can deal by reaſon with him) than the devil could, if he had no objective influence on them: and the temptations being often unto particular deſigns, it ſheweth, that the devil hath a moral objective way of dealing with men: otherwiſe it were no more to

ſay that the devil put it in Judas' heart to betray his maſter, than to ſay he ſtirred him to love money; but this ſheweth, that to him who loved money formerly, the devil propoſeth this as a fit mean to gain ſomewhat of it. Alſo, Acts v. it is ſaid to Ananias, *why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie*, &c. ſo that, as it were, when it was objected within themſelves, what if it be aſked whether the lands were ſold at ſo much? the devil furniſheth the anſwer: Say, ſaith he, it was: and he maketh it probable that none ſhould know it, ſeeing both man and wife were to agree in their anſwers: and ſo he preſenteth that to them, by which their covetous and diſtruſtful humours prevailed with them, and they both yielded, therefore it is alſo ſaid, Acts v. 4. *Why haſt thou conceived this thing in thine heart?* And, ver. 9. *How is it that ye have agreed together?* The ſeed, as it were, cometh from the devil who hath injected it; the conceiving is from our corruption, which entertaineth the motions ſtirred up by him. And how can it be otherwiſe ſaid that he blindeth mens eyes that they ſhould not underſtand the goſpel? For if it were only by a natural ſtirring of humours, it would diſtemper them for every thing; but here lieth the temptation, that they are wiſe in all other things, but in ſpiritual things, the devil blindeth them, and maketh the goſpel ſeem fooliſhneſs to them. Thus, he ſetteth on Ahab by enticing him without by his prophets, and ſwaying him within out of pride; and he prevailed with the falſe prophets, by ſtirring them up to lie, and that in reference to that particular deſign, which no meer influence on the body could have done.

By all which we may ſee, that it is not without good reaſon ſaid, that the devil goeth about ſeeking whom he may devour, he is near the heart, and is often upon folks counſel when they are not aware. And this ſheweth what need there is of watchfulneſs, that we give no place to the devil, and that he get not occaſion to tempt: for, with much ſubtility can he make uſe of it; and act men in executing of his orders, when they know not what he is doing, as likely it was with theſe perſecutors whom he engaged thus to perſecute theſe miniſters; which way of his, being frequently mentioned in this book, we have once for all, ſaid this of it.

For this we may alſo gather, how little weight is to be laid upon the teſtimony of this devil, whoſe work is to ſuppreſs the truth of Chriſt, and to traduce his ſervants: for which cauſe our Lord and his apoſtles, would not ſuffer him to ſpeak, even when he pretended to confeſs him; becauſe he was a liar from the beginning, and the father thereof. It is therefore not unworthy the obſerving how contrary to our Lord's way the Jeſuites are in this; who to ſupply the defect of other teſtimonies for their way againſt the Calviniſts, as they call them, do carefully and induſtriouſly gather and heap up teſtimonies from the devil's mouth, and inſult therein as a proof incontrovertible: for this end, Lorinus, in cap. 5. Act 5. 16. having cited ſome pretended hiſtories holding forth the little weight the Lutherans had with the devil, doth ſubjoin this as an infallible confirmation of their compliance with him, *Sed et ex ore energumenae Laudunenſis tota Gallia, ac toto orbe Chriſtiano celebratiſſimae, Calvinianos daemon irridens, nihil ſibi ab illis timendum clamabat cunctis audientibus, Anno* 1566. *quoniam amici eſſent, et foederati, ſicut teſtantur acta, Gallice ſumma fide ſcripta*, &c. It is in ſum, this, that the devil, out of the mouth of one that was famous for being poſſeſſed by him, did mock the Calviniſts, crying out, and that openly before all, that there was nothing to be feared from them, for they were friends and confederates: and, for confirmation of this, he aſſerteth the thing to be with great faithfulneſs recorded: as if the weight did only ly in the matter of fact, and that there was no cauſe to queſtion his faithfulneſs who gave this teſtimony. But of this enough: we have reaſon to thank God, that our faith in the truths of God, and our clearneſs of the errors of their way, are built upon a more ſure foundation; and that our controverſy with them is not at the devil's deciſion, from whom indeed the Calviniſts might expect no favourable ſentence. But the Lord is Judge himſelf. To him be praiſe for ever.

LECTURE V.

Ver. 12. *And to the Angel of the church in Pergamos, write, Theſe things ſaith he, which hath the ſharp ſword with two edges.*

13. *I know thy works, and where thou dwelleſt, even where Satan's ſeat is, and thou holdeſt faſt my name, and haſt not denied my faith even in thoſe days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was ſlain among you, where Satan dwelleth.*

14. *But I have a few things againſt thee, becauſe thou haſt there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to caſt a ſtumbling-block before the children of Iſrael, to eat things ſacrificed unto Idols, and to commit fornication.*

15. *So haſt thou alſo them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.*

16. *Repent, or elſe I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight againſt them with the ſword of my mouth.*

17. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the churches, To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white ſtone, and in the ſtone a new name written, which no man knoweth, ſaving he that receiveth it.*

FOLLOWETH now the third epiſtle, directed by the Lord to the church of Pergamos; the eſtate of it is implied in the Body of the epiſtle, to be a ſuffering condition: and tho' having much integrity, honeſty, and conſtancy under her ſufferings; yet in ſome things reprovable and defective; eſpecially in her zeal againſt falſe teachers: for which cauſe, the Lord doth here, tho' with great tenderneſs, reprove her.

The diviſion of the epiſtle is common with all the reſt. The inſcription is in the 12 verſe. The body of the epiſtle, in the 13, 14, 15, 16 verſes. The concluſion in the 17 verſe.

The Direction, which is the firſt part of the inſcription, is, *To the angel of the church of Pergamos*, a famous city in Aſia the leſs, ſometimes the ſeat of Kings: and for that preſent time, a ſeat of the Roman governors: a place full of ſin, idolatry, and cruelty; yet hath our Lord a church here, to which he writes, when he taketh no notice of the governor, or of theſe who were moſt eminent: which doth ſhew, 1. The power and efficacy of the ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt, in teaching whom he pleaſeth, tho' in the moſt deſperate condition. 2. It ſheweth the freeneſs of grace, that condeſcends to gather a church here. 3. It ſheweth his tenderneſs to, and care of thoſe whom he hath gathered to be a church unto himſelf, beyond any other in the world.

The title he taketh to himſelf, is, *he who hath the ſword with two edges:* the ſword with the two edges, is the word of God, Eph. vi. 17. Heb. iv. 12. which we heard, chap. i. ver. 16. did proceed out of Chriſt's mouth. It ſheweth, that Chriſt hath the command of the word, to make it effectual for the good of his elect; and for the convincing, ſmiting, wounding and ſlaying of his enemies by ſpiritual plagues: and it is choſen in this place, becauſe he doth make uſe of this as his ſovereign privilege in the threatening for ſtirring up the angel to his duty.

In the body of the epiſtle, (beſides the common aſſertion of God's omniſcience) we have, *Firſt*, The commendation of this angel and church, verſe 13. *Secondly*, The reproof, verſe 14, 15. *Thirdly*, An exhortation to duty, with a ſharp threatening added as a motive to preſs the ſame, ver. 16.

In the commendation, we have, 1. The thing commended: 2. Some excellent aggravations, (to call them ſo) or commending qualifications of this commendation. The thing commended, is in two expreſſions to one purpoſe, *Thou holdeſt faſt my name, and haſt not denied my faith:* by *name*, we underſtand the doctrine of the goſpel, whereby Chriſt's name, that is, himſelf is held forth and manifeſted: for, in the goſpel, to preach Chriſt's name, and to declare it to the Gentiles, is all one with preaching himſelf, or his goſpel. By *faith*, is underſtood the doctrine of faith in him, which is the ſame thing. *The holding faſt of his name*, as a zealous adhering to the profeſſion of his truth, as it were, holding it by both hands; and *not denying his faith*, is an open avowing of the ſame by a public profeſſion, and honouring Chriſt by their

avouching of their faith in him, without fainting, or ſhifting in the ſame, notwithſtanding of any peril that might follow thereupon. For this negative, *not denying his faith*, doth import more than is expreſſed.

The commendation, is amplified by two ſpecial circumſtances, that ſerve to heighten the ſame: 1. From the place where: and, 2. From the time when; they expreſs this conſtancy. 1. For the Place: It is where *Satan's throne was.* It is not much to avow a profeſſion in ſome places; but to do it in ſuch a place as Pergamos, where Satan had a ſeat or throne, as the word is, is much. Satan's having a throne, implieth not only a ſinfulneſs in that place, common with other places; but it doth inſinuate ſuch an open avowed oppoſition to Chriſt and his followers, and ſuch an adhering to Satan, that, on the matter, it looked as if Satan had commanded expreſly there in chief: for, not only was wickedneſs tolerated; but carried on, and eſtabliſhed by a law: nor only had he a ſeat in hearts, as he hath in all men by nature; but in the magiſtracy and judicatories, whereby orders were given in public, in reference to perſecution and profanity; and men did ſo walk, as if directly orders had been given by Satan, and taken from him, in that place: he did ſo effectually without control, as it were, obtain his will, the Lord ſo permitting and ordering it in his wiſe and ſecret providence and juſtice.

From which, 1. We may ſee how tyrannouſly the devil would manage every thing, if he had things at his diſpoſal. 2. At what great height he may have his dominion, even beſide the goſpel, and in the place where it is. 3. How fully men naturally are ſlaves to the devil, he being *the prince of this world, that worketh in the children of diſobedience*, Eph. ii. 2. And, 4. We may ſee what need there is to pray that Chriſt's kingdom may come, and how thankful we ought to be, who are in any meaſure freed from this tyranny.

The ſecond circumſtance in this commendation, is, the time; that is, it was *even in thoſe days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was ſlain among you, where Satan dwelleth.* This is alſo an excellent part of the commendation, that it was not only in ſuch a place, that was wicked and profane; but at ſuch a time, when wickedneſs and profanity was exerciſed in its height, which is proven by the death of a faithful martyr, who was then violently ſlain amongſt them: at ſuch a time to hold faſt his name, was indeed commendable. Whereby we ſee how the Lord doth take notice of the commendable circumſtances of his peoples duties, as he doth of the aggravations of their ſins. What this Antipas was, there is no more mentioned in ſcripture concerning him: it is recorded in ſtory, that he was a miniſter in Pergamos; and it is not improbable, ſeeing theſe are moſt ordinarily the object of perſecutors malice and violence. However, the Lord putteth three great titles upon him: 1. He is *a martyr:* this ſignifieth a witneſs, and that not only ſuch a witneſs, as witneſſeth by word and profeſſion, but as ſealeth it with his blood: thus Paul ſpeaketh of Stephen, Acts xxii. 20. when *the blood of the martyr Stephen was ſhed.* And therefore in the primitive times, martyrs were diſtinguiſhed from confeſſors thus, martyrs were ſuch as ſuffered to death; confeſſors were ſuch as ſuffered impriſonment, mutilation of ſome member, whippings, or ſuch like, for the faith of Chriſt. 2. He calls him a *faithful martyr*: to ſhew, that not only the cauſe was honeſt, for which he ſuffered; but alſo, that he was honeſt in his ſuffering for the ſame. 3. He is *my* faithful witneſs: which ſetteth forth, 1. The end of Antipas' ſuffering, which was to bear witneſs for Chriſt. 2. It holdeth forth the Lord's owning of him in that teſtimony, and now by this, as it were, from heaven writing this kindly and honourable epitaph upon him, *He is my faithful martyr.* It may be, he was ſtoned in ſome tumult as a ſeditious perſon, or one not worthy to live, becauſe of ſome reproaches or other put upon him; yet thus doth the Lord own him, to wipe all theſe away, and to make his memory to be the more ſavoury; and witneſs-bearing for Chriſt, to be the leſs ſcared at; that ſo others may be animated and encouraged to be followers of him.

From all which we may gather, 1. That it is exceeding commendable to be zealous, and ſtedfaſt in ſuch a place, and at ſuch a time, as religion is hazardſome and dangerous. 2. That the death of any of the Lord's people, eſpecially when it is in witneſſing for him, is exceeding precious in his ſight. 3. That honeſt witneſſing for Chriſt, is a moſt honourable thing. Antipas is particularly named with theſe titles, for ſetting forth the honourableneſs of his ſuffering. 4. We may ſee alſo, that there is an implied diſtinction of martyrs, ſome are *faithful*, and, it may be, ſome dying the ſame

death, and before men for the ſame cauſe, may yet not be accounted faithful before the Lord. If it be aſked, *what is neceſſary to make one to be accounted a faithful martyr before God?* We ſuppoſe theſe four are neceſſary: 1. That the perſon ſuffer as a well-doer, ſo it muſt be for the truth of Chriſt, or righteouſneſs ſake, Matth. v. 10, 11. For, *non eſt mors, ſed cauſa mortis quæ facit martyrem.* 2. Not only would ſuffering be ſtated upon a particular account, wherein they have the ſide that is right comparatively; but they would be right ſimple in the main truths of Chriſt, as for inſtance, ſometimes Arians and Jews, after Chriſt's coming in the fleſh, and other heretics, did ſuffer by heathens, either becauſe they would not worſhip their idols, and diſclaim the true God; or, becauſe they would not ſimply deny themſelves to be Chriſtians: they had indeed the better, if we look to the queſtion as ſtated between them and heathens; yet they cannot be called *Chriſt's faithful witneſſes*, ſeeing they did not faithfully give teſtimony to him in his perſon, natures, and offices. 3. It is neceſſary that the perſon be, as to his ſtate, a believer, without which none can be a faithful martyr, altho' poſſibly his teſtimony may be a faithful teſtimony: for, *without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God*, eſpecially in ſuch a great thing as ſuffering for him 4. It would be gone about in the right manner, ſo as thereby the teſtimony given to Chriſt, may be made the more to ſhine, *viz.* there would be blameleſneſs in the man's converſation, ſingleneſs in his end, deniedneſs, zeal, humility and love-kything, and in exerciſe in his undertaking and undergoing thoſe ſufferings, as we may ſee in Stephen, Acts vii. 51. &c. And this is 'to ſuf-'fer as a Chriſtian, and not as an evil doer, and 'buſy body:' 1 Pet. iv. 15, 16. and *according to the will of God*, by which ſuch may be encouraged to 'commit the keeping of their ſouls to him in well-'doing,' v. 19. This is alſo confirmed from 1 Cor. xiii.

He doth again repeat 'where Satan dwelleth.' 1. To ſhew that the devil's dominion in that place, was not by ſtarts and fits; but that he had a ſettled, and, as it were, a conſtant reſidence there. 2. To commend their honeſty and ſtedfaſtneſs the more. 3. It is to ſhew the great evidence of the devil's dominion, viz. that faithful men were put to ſuffering for the cauſe of Chriſt.

The reproof followeth, ver. 14, 15. *Firſt*, generally, but 'I have a few things againſt thee: this is not to be underſtood as if the faults were little in themſelves; but it is thus expreſſed, 1. To ſhew how tender he was of them, when, as it were, he heightens their commendation, and extenuates their faults. 2. It is to encourage and hearten them to mend cheerfully that which he reproveth.

Hence *obſerve:* 1. There may be corruption and defects, where there are very many things commendable. 2. Where there is honeſty in the main, and a ſuffering condition for Chriſt, there he is no rigid or ſevere cenſurer; but a moſt tender conſtructer of his peoples infirmities.

Secondly, More particularly he ſetteth down by way of ſimilitude the ill reproved, ver. 14. 'Becauſe 'thou haſt there them that hold the doctrine of Ba-'laam, &c.' which he applieth ver. 15. It is not to be thought that there were any profeſſed followers of Balaam in that church; but the intent is, to ſhew, that, upon the matter, the doctrine of the Nicolaitans did agree therewith; and if Balaam's practice was hateful, theirs muſt alſo be ſuch. And ſo, by propoſing the hateful way of Balaam, he diſcovereth the odiouſneſs of the doctrine of the Nicolaitans; which will be found, upon the matter, to be the ſame. The hiſtory of Balaam is recorded, Num. 22, 23, 24, and 31. chap. In ſum this, he was a greedy covetous wretch, who greedily aimed at the wages of unrighteouſneſs; and being reſtrained from curſing the people of Iſrael by the Lord, he gave ſubtil advice to Balak, to draw the people of Iſrael into a ſnare, that thereby God might be provoked againſt them; and ſo, in the cloſe, they may be prevailed over. Joſephus, in the fourth book of the antiquities of the Jews, expreſſeth it thus, 'That he adviſed Balak to ſend 'ſome of the beautiful women of Midian to wan-'der about the camp of Iſrael;' who though they ſhould entertain the Iſraelites familiarly, yet that they ſhould not yield any thing to their luſt; but that they ſhould pretend to run from them, till they ſhould partake of their idol-feaſts with them: In reference to both which, they prevailed with the Iſraelites, and drew them both into bodily and ſpiritual fornication which were the two great faults of the Nicolaitans, viz. liberty in fornication, as if it were not ſinful; and indifferency in eating of things ſacrificed to idols, without reſpect to offence, as was ſhown on ver. 6. Therefore the Lord here ſpeaketh of the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, as being indeed the reviving of Balaam's old condemned

error: and ſo they became guilty before God of his practices, as if they had expreſly profeſſed the maintaining of the ſame. It is ſaid, *That Balaam taught Balak to caſt a ſtumbling-block before the children of Iſrael, &c.* His wicked advice getteth that name: becauſe it proved an occaſion of falling and ſtumbling to the Iſraelites, as if a ſtumbling-block had been caſt in the way of ſome man, to make him fall. Thus many ſinful practices have not only the conſideration of guiltineſs, in reſpect of the perſons themſelves, who commit the ſame; but have alſo the conſideration of offence, as they are apt to prove occaſions of falling, and ruin unto others. This alſo, viz. *of laying a ſtumbling-block before others*, will agree well in application to the Nicolaitans: who, as they were guilty in the ſin of uncleanneſs, ſo were they careleſs in reference to offence, not regarding how offenſive their way was unto others in the uſe of different things, ſuch as eating of things ſacrificed, &c. Which in theſe primitive times was to marry the occaſion of ſtumbling, when Chriſtian liberty was not rightly bounded, as we may gather, 1 Cor. viii. 9, 10. And theſe two alſo often go together, to be careleſs of guilt before God, and of offence before others.

From which we may gather, 1. That the moſt vile errors and deluſions may increaſe exceedingly: this of the Nicolaitans had ſpread in Epheſus, Pergamos, and ſeveral other churches, even in the days of John the apoſtle. 2. That new upſtart groſs abominations, are oftentimes indeed but the reviving of ſome old buried and condemned practices or doctrines. Thus the error of the Nicolaitans, is but indeed, on the matter, the putting of Balaam's practice in a doctrine, and maintaining the ſame under another name. 3. We may ſee that it is an allowed way of confuting new upſtart deluſions, to ſhew their agreement on the matter, with former old acknowledged and condemned hereſies, Thus the Lord doth here; and in the epiſtle following he compareth them to Jezebel: for, often men will more impartially judge of by-paſt errors, than of what ſeemeth to be new; and therefore the devil uſeth moſt cunningly to diſguiſe thoſe things, and to endeavour to have old errors vented under the notion of new lights, and depths, when indeed they are but old rotten deluſions.

If it be ſaid here, That ordinarily the moſt groſs men uſe to brand the moſt orthodox with this, as being revivers of old hereſies, whereof many inſtances may be given. For anſwer, we ſay, That a ſimple aſſerting of this, is not ſufficient to bear it out: we would therefore propoſe the qualifications; 1. That the thing eſteemed to be an error or hereſy, be indeed controvertibly ſuch, and that in ſome fundamental thing: indeed ſometimes, even the ancients, do put ſome things in the catalogue of hereſies, which will not be found to be of ſuch weight. It is not thoſe we ſpeak of, nor is it ſuch that are mentioned here. 2. The application alſo would be clear; and men would not charge others with hereſies of an odious name or nature upon prejudice, or upon miſtake of ſome expreſſion; nay, not upon ſome ſeeming conſequence, which the authors do deny, and, it may be, others cannot demonſtratively ſhew the inference thereof. Here it is not ſo, the practice and doctrine of the Nicolaitans is ſo clear, that they cannot deny it in particulars, tho' it may be, at firſt, they would refuſe it to be the doctrine of Balaam. 3. Such an application would be made in knowledge, and from thorough acquaintance with the alledged old hereſy upon the one ſide, and with particular tenents of others, who are ſuppoſed to maintain that error, upon the other ſide. Oftentimes men ſpeak in thoſe things what they know not, or with a too lightly paſſing view; or, upon ſome probable reſemblance, or appearance, are ready to ground ſuch an application. 4. This would be remembered, that the old condemned hereſy muſt be ſuch as is condemned in ſcripture, and that ſtill the word is to be acknowledged as the ſupreme rule. All which agree in this application; and where they agree, it is not a little prejudice to an opinion, to ſay, It is, on the matter, the ſame with ſuch and ſuch an old hereſy; that is, to men's conviction long ſince condemned upon grounds from the word of God.

This was a foul error; and it is not to be thought that this angel, who is here ſo commended, was guilty of any of theſe evils, by any poſitive acceſſion to them; but this is the fault charged upon him, *That thou haſt them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans;* that is, the angel had ſuch in the church, who continued to be members, and were not by diſcipline cut off. This is his fault; for, it was not the churches' fault that ſuch lived in Pergamos, becauſe they had no civil authority to impede that; yet it was their fault that they lived

church-members there, becauſe they had church-authority to remedy that, which yet was not put in exerciſe againſt them, as by Epheſus had been done.

From which we may gather; 1. That the church is inveſted with a power and authority for cutting off of corrupt members. 2. That it is a moſt horrible fault where there is defect in this. Our Lord Jeſus quarrelleth the want of this in Pergamos, where he commendeth much honeſty; and he commendeth it in Epheſus, where there wanted not inward defects; becauſe there is nothing that more occaſioneth the name of Chriſt to be reproached, his ordinances to be deſpiſed, his people to be offended and ſtumbled, than the ſuffering of corrupt members that are tainted with errors to continue in the church. Therefore much of the churches commendations or reproofs in theſe epiſtles is founded on this, as it is rightly, or partially exerciſed. 3. By this it appeareth, that our Lord Jeſus is no friend to toleration; and that the toleration of corrupt teachers, can no way be approven of him. It is true, this is directly ſpoken againſt church-men, their tolerating of corrupt teachers; but will any think, that that will be approven in civil powers, which is ſo hateful in the church-officers? Or, that Jeſus Chriſt will account toleration in the one to be hateful, and in the other to be approvable. 4. There is diverſity of tempers in church-officers, and diverſity of conditions in churches, even where there may be real honeſty in both: Epheſus had much coldneſs within, and yet much zeal againſt thoſe Nicolaitans: Pergamos again is much commended for their zeal and conſtancy in ſuffering; and yet reproved for want of zeal againſt theſe corrupt members. 5. Men may be very ſtraight and tender in the work of God, and bold in reference to ſuffering; and yet faint and be defective in the proſecuting of church-cenſures againſt erroneous men. This appeareth both from this epiſtle, and that which followeth, where their particular condition and public carriage in other things, is exceedingly commended; yet is there a *notwithſtanding* in both, in reference to this.

If it be aſked, *What can be the reaſon that honeſt, tender, and zealous men ſhould be ſo often defective in this, who yet may be zealous and fervent againſt ſcandalous practices?*

Anſw. Theſe reaſons may be given: 1. It is more difficult to get the impreſſion of the odiouſneſs of corrupt doctrine on the heart, than of groſs outward practices: becauſe groſs practices offend nature more directly, and are hateful even to natural man: and even ſome good men are ready to foſter ſuch an opinion, as if grace were more conſiſtent with error than with profanity. Upon this ground the Lord himſelf and the apoſtles do more frequently give people warning to mark and abſtain from them that cauſe offences contrary to the doctrine of the goſpel, than they do in matters of groſs practice. 2. Purſuing of perſons that are erroneous hath often little fruit with it as to the perſons themſelves, there being but few that are recovered out of that ſnare of the devil, and to whom God giveth repentance, who once deliberately oppoſe themſelves to the truth; but on the contrary, they ſeem to be more bold, and to make a greater ſtir, than if they had not been taken notice of, as we ſee in Corinth, and Galatia; the more that Paul preſſed them, the more they ſeemed to deſpiſe him, and they go on in their contradiction and blaſphemy, as in the hiſtory of the Acts, and inſtances of Hymeneus and Philetus, is clear. This maketh that even ſometimes good men, out of fear of the inconveniences that may follow, and the difficulties that accompany ſuch a work, may be too prone to overſee and forbear them. 3. Sometimes reſpect to the perſons of ſome who may be carried away may have influence on this, as ſuppoſe ſome perſons for a name of piety, ſometimes ſavoury, ſhould be ſeduced; prepoſterous tenderneſs to thoſe may make men cruelly to ſpare them to their prejudice. This fault the Lord ſeemeth to quarrel in Thyatira, that they *ſuffered his ſervants to be ſeduced.* 4. There may be alſo a deſign by more gentle means to reſtrain ſuch an error, and recover ſuch as are fallen, whereby they may come to exceed and turn to be defective in not uſing the means appointed, as if ſuch cenſures had been needleſly appointed; or, as if the Lord did not make uſe of mediate means for the reſtraining of error. 5. Such buſineſſes alſo have often their own miſtakes among many tender members of the church; ſome whereof may be too favourable conſtructers of the moſt groſs ſeducers, and ſo fear to offend them; and *love* to keep all in peace, oftentimes may ſteal in to have weight to the prejudice of the Lord's ordinance. It is written of the ſchiſm in Phrygia, which aroſe for Montanus, that

many did conſtruct too well of him, as not thinking it impoſſible but he might be a good man, who, therefore could not go alongſt in the thoughts that others had of him. There is readily ſomething of this amongſt the weakeſt ſort where deluders come, which getting way for a time, doth rather increaſe than diminiſh; and ſo leaveth this duty in a greater non-entry than at firſt.

We come now to the remedy, or duty exhorted to, which is laid down and preſſed, ver. 16. It is in ſhort, *Repent;* that ſame which was propoſed to Epheſus, ver. 5. The Lord hereby ſignifying, 1. That when ſins are fallen into it, it is not enough to forbear them, but there muſt be an exerciſing of repentance for them. 2. That there is no expectation to be keeped from wrath, where there hath been ſin without repentance. 3. That omiſſions are ſinful, and to be repented of, even as commiſſions are. And, 4. That ſinful omiſſions in a man's public ſtation, (ſuch as this is, which is reproved) are to be repented of, as groſs perſonal faults are.

The threatening annexed is in theſe words, 'Or 'elſe I will come unto thee quickly, and I will fight 'againſt them with the ſword of my mouth.' It hath two parts: the firſt, reſpecteth the church or angel of Pergamos, 'I will come unto thee quickly;' that is, if thou repent not, I will one way or another, come in judgment againſt thee. We conceive, it relateth to the angel eſpecially, it being in the ſingular number: becauſe this fault being a defect in diſcipline, is not ſo to be imputed to the people, as to him whoſe place it was to take order with ſuch corruptions: which will appear more clearly afterward. The ſecond part, reſpecteth theſe groſs members that were ſuffered to be in the church, viz. the Nicolaitans, *I will fight againſt them with the ſword of my mouth;* that is, ſeeing ye are guilty of defect here, if there be not repentance for it, I will come in an extraordinary way, and my ſelf puniſh thoſe whom ye have ſuffered. For clearing of this threatning, we may conſider; 1. Wherein it conſiſteth. 2. How it can be a threatning to the angel. 3. Wherefore he is ſo peculiarly threatned.

To the firſt, it is clear here, that the party immediately threatned, is the Nicolaitans, whom the Lord threatneth to fight againſt with the ſword of his mouth: which looketh not to any external, or corporal plague: for the ſword of his mouth is not the weapon that inflicteth ſuch: but it looketh eſpecially to theſe, 1. To a diſcovery of their wickedneſs, and of the hatefulneſs of their way, by his word. 2. To a cenſuring, threatning, and ſentencing of them by the ſame. 3. To a fruitleſneſs of ſuch diſcoveries, threatnings, and ſentences, as to any ſpiritual or ſaving work upon them; but that they ſhould be by ſuch clear convictions and ſentences, in God's ſecret wiſdom and juſtice, more hardned, convinced, irritated and affected with ſpiritual plagues, than if they had not been ſo dealt with: in this reſpect often in the ſcripture we have mentioned, 'Hewing by the prophets, and ſlaying 'by the words of the Lord's mouth,' as Hoſea vi. 5. and 'fighting with Antichriſt, and deſtroying 'him by the ſpirit of his mouth,' 2 Theſſ. ii. 8. and elſewhere the like expreſſions to that purpoſe. This is a ſad plague, when the table of the goſpel becometh a ſnare, and when through mens own corruption they become more drunk with their own deluſions, even under convincing light; and when the word of God, which is the only weapon whereby they may offend their enemies, is thro' their oppoſing the light thereof, turned to fight againſt them, as they have turned themſelves to fight againſt it; the event here, as to them, cannot but be deſperate.

For the ſecond, it may be queſtioned, how this can be a threatning to the church or angel, that the Lord would take ſuch courſe with theſe corrupt Nicolaitans? It might rather look like a favour to them? *Anſw.* If we conſider it more particularly, we will find it a threatning in theſe reſpects; 1. That it implies Chriſt to be angry at their neglecting of their duty; and that this extraordinary way doth inſinuate his eſteeming of them not to be worthy to have this employment: therefore, he taketh their duty off their hand, and provideth himſelf of ſome others, for the performing thereof. Thus, when Paul is threatning the Corinthians, firſt epiſtle, chap. 4. ver. 21. 'What ſhall I come 'unto you with a rod? &c.' whereby he ſheweth himſelf to be angry. In the beginning of the next chapter, he reproveth them, for ſuffering the inceſtuous perſon, and commandeth him to be excommunicated: which beareth out this, that Paul's coming over them to preſs ſuch a duty, was a ſtroke or note for their defect in the ſame. 2. It is a threatning in this reſpect: becauſe the taking of ſome extraordinary way and mean, as in reference to theſe Nicolaitans, hath ſtrange-like and uncouth effects oftentimes following upon it:

thereby the church is put through other, and revolutions follow; and often the wheat is trode upon, when the tares are a weeding; which cannot but be hurtful to the church. 3. It ſuppoſeth a laying by of this angel, and making uſe of ſome other, for this work of convincing, reproving, and confounding, &c. of thoſe wicked men, which ſhould be to his diſgrace, when he ſhould have no hand in ſo good a work: and ſo the meaning of the threatning, is, to the angel, If thou ſpare theſe wicked men, and do not thy duty in reference to them, I myſelf will come in another way, and lay thee by, and follow my purpoſe in ſentencing, and cenſuring of them by ſome other mean. And this is to give another his crown, which is ſo oft commended to the angels in thoſe epiſtles to be kept, Thus the threatning is not to remove a miniſtry or church eſtate from Pergamos, as was in the caſe of Epheſus; but it is the Lord's threatning to lay aſide ſuch particular miniſters, and notwithſtanding thereof to carry on his work.

Now, for the third, viz. Wherefore this threatning reſpecteth the angel more peculiarly than that of Epheſus did? *Anſw.* The reaſon was formerly hinted, viz. Epheſus' ſin and defect was in the practice of the power of godlineſs, common to miniſters and people: therefore doth that threatning extend almoſt equally to both: This ſin again, which is reproved here, doth peculiarly reflect upon the miniſters: and therefore the weight of the threatning doth peculiarly reſpect them.

From which we may learn; 1. That fainting and unfaithfulneſs in the work of the miniſtry, may procure an interruption by one mean or other in the exerciſe thereof, or a blaſting of a man in gifts and parts, who ſometimes hath been uſeful. 2. It ſheweth, that ſometimes God may keep his word in a place, and exerciſe it in reference to ſome perſons between whom and him there is a ſtanding or ſtated fight, they fighting againſt him, and not receiving the love of the truth, and he fighting againſt them by giving them up to hardneſs of heart and ſtrong deluſions; and, in his ſecret and holy juſtice, making his word and ordinances to promote the ſame. 3. It followeth alſo, that it is a moſt dreadful thing, when the Lord and his word become our party, and when he fighteth againſt a people with that ſword: it is here a more terrible threatning, to fight againſt thoſe with the ſword of his mouth, than if he had ſent the ſword, famine, or peſtilence upon them. 4. It implieth, that this is a plague, and a way of puniſhing, that the Lord in his juſtice often ſendeth and exerciſeth upon deluders and corrupt teachers, who have not received the love of the truth, and have perverted the word of God to their own deſtruction, viz. that it ſhould be a weapon of God's indignation, for the inflicting of ſpiritual plagues upon them.

The concluſion followeth, verſe 17. and hath two parts common with the reſt; 1. All that are ſpiritually affected, and have the ſenſe of right hearing, are exhorted 'to hear what God ſaith by 'his ſpirit to the churches,' as if particularly it were ſpoken to them. This is ſo far from ſuppoſing that men naturally have ears to hear, that it doth imply the contrary, viz. that it is not every one that hath ears to hear, but that he is a rare man that hath them; for, none can hear ſpiritually what the Lord ſaith to the churches, but ſuch as have gotten them as Moſes' word is, Deut. xxix. 4.

The ſecond part of the concluſion, containeth ſome encouragements to the wreſtling believer, as all the reſt of the concluſions do. The party to whom the promiſe is made, is the ſame, viz. *Him that overcometh;* or, he that is overcoming, as it may be read; which pointeth at the zealous, ſingle, conſtant, and faithful wreſtles, though he hath not yet obtained the victory. The encouragements given him are, on the matter, the ſame with the reſt, viz. the happineſs that may be expected in heaven, but are ſet down in three or four different expreſſions, for commending of the ſame. The firſt is, 'I will give him to eat of the hidden Man-'na' *Manna*, is called, Pſalm cv. *angels food;* and Job vi. *bread from heaven.* It is, in a word, the moſt excellent and refreſhing food; yea, Chriſt himſelf, who is called *the true bread from heaven*, John vi. *of whom whoſoever eateth ſhall not die.* It is *hidden manna*, poſſibly relating to that pot of manna that was kept within the ark of the teſtimony: and ſo it pointeth at ſuch food as is hid with Chriſt in God, and to be enjoyed with God in the heavens: which was typified by the *moſt holy.* However, it importeth,

Firſt, The excellency of this food, and the ſatisfaction which the overcomer may expect: It is inconceivable and inexpreſſible, 'The eye hath not 'ſeen, nor ear hath not heard of it, nor hath it entered 'in man's heart to conceive thereof, Iſa. lxiv. *Secondly*, It importeth its ſickerneſs: it is *hid*, it can-

not but be ſure to the overcomer, ſeeing it is kept in the ſecret place of the moſt high. *Thirdly*, It importeth the rarity and ſingularity of this excellency, being a thing altogether unknown to the world, as if it were hidden: in which reſpect, Col. iii. 3. our *life* is ſaid to be *hid with Chriſt in God*. The ſecond expreſſion is, *I will give him a white ſtone*: white *ſtones* were uſed in thoſe days, for two ends, as may be gathered from heathen writers. 1. In their wreſtlings and games, he that overcame and was victor, got a white ſtone, as a badge of honour put upon him. 2. It was uſed in civil courts (when men were accuſed and challenged of crimes) to be given as a ſign of abſolution: thus a man that was found innocent and abſolved, got a white ſtone, and he that was condemned got a black ſtone: both anſwer well here, where Chriſt promiſeth to give to the overcomer a *crown*, in pledge of his victory, and a full, public and open abſolution in the great day, before men and angels. 3. This *white ſtone* hath a *new name written upon it*: a *name* is ſome honourable thing; a *new name* is ſomething eminently honourable; it was the Lord's way to change the name of ſome, whom he eminently loved; and for confirmation of his favour to them, he gave them new names: ſo he did to Abraham, Jacob, &c. This ſaith that the believing overcomer ſhall be made by Jeſus Chriſt quite another thing, where he ſhall have ſuch glory and majeſty beſtowed upon him, as will need a new name to expreſs the ſame, and make him think himſelf another thing than ever he thought to have been. We take it, on the matter, to be the ſame which is expreſſed, chap. iii. ver. 12. by having the *name of God, and Chriſt's new name written upon them*. 4. It is a name *which no man knoweth ſaving he that receiveth it*. This muſt be an excellent motto that only the ſpiritual ſenſes of the receiver is able to diſcern the excellency thereof, ſo that no on-looker can tell what the ſatisfaction, dignity and honour of ſuch a perſon is; but he who is poſſeſſed with the ſame: and proportionally theſe who are made joint-heirs of the ſame glory. Theſe promiſes may, in ſome part, be applicable to the firſt fruits of the Spirit that the believers are partakers of here: which, in reſpect of carnal delights, are unſpeakable and glorious, and ſuch as paſs all underſtanding: yet the proper fulfilling of them, and the main ſcope of the place, is to be applied only to the enjoyments that believers have to expect in heaven: when they ſhall reap the full harveſt, and be brought to the poſſeſſion of the kingdom prepared for them; for all of them do preſuppoſe a full accompliſhed victory before they be attained: which cannot be expected in this life. O but heaven muſt be an excellent happineſs, ſeeing the ſatisfaction thereof is ſo inexpreſſible! Even the apoſtle Paul who was raviſhed to the third heaven, muſt give it over, and ſay, he heard what was impoſſible to be uttered, 2 Cor. xii.

LECTURE VI.

Verſe 18. *And unto the angel of the church of Thyatira, write, Theſe things ſaith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine braſs.*

19. *I know thy works, and charity, and ſervice, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works, and the laſt to be more than the firſt.*

20. *Notwithſtanding, I have a few things againſt thee, becauſe thou ſuffereſt that woman Jezebel, which calleth herſelf a propheteſs, to teach and to ſeduce my ſervants to commit fornication, and to eat things ſacrificed unto idols.*

21. *And I gave her ſpace to repent of her fornication, and ſhe repented not.*

22. *Behold, I will caſt her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.*

23. *And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches ſhall know that I am he which ſearcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.*

24. *But unto you I ſay, and unto the reſt in Thyatira, As many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they ſpeak, I will put upon you none other burden.*

25. *But that which ye have already, hold faſt till I come.*

26, *And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations.*

27. *(And he ſhall rule them with a rod of iron: as the veſſels of a potter ſhall they be broken to ſhivers) even as I received of my Father.*

28. *And I will give him the morning-ſtar.*

29. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the churches.*

THIS is the fourth epiſtle, directed to the church of Thyatira. The diviſion is common with the reſt of the epiſtles, viz. 1. An inſcription, verſe 18. 2. The body of the epiſtle, verſe 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25. The concluſion is in the reſt.

In the inſcription, Chriſt taketh three titles to himſelf; the firſt is, Thus ſaith *the Son of God.* This is (to ſay ſo) his royal Style, than which there can be none higher: for, 1. It beareth out his Godhead: for, Chriſt is not the Son of God by adoption, as believers are; but he is the Son of God by an eternal generation, being begotten of the Father in an inconceivable way: in which reſpect, he is frequently called the *only begotten of the Father*, John i. 18. and *the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon*, Heb. i. 3. 2. It points out the unity of the eſſence of the Godhead, which is common to the Father and the Son: For, this ſame that is the Son of God here, as being a diſtinct perſon from the Father, is the Firſt and the Laſt, 'who is, who was, and is to come, the 'Almighty,' chap. i. 8, 11. which are eſſential attributes of the Godhead. 3. This title being compared with the viſion in the former chapter, wherein Chriſt was ſpoken of as true man, doth point out the union of the two natures in one perſon: for, the Son of man, is the Son of God; and the ſame perſon who is the Son of God, is the Son of Man. All which, are conſiderations that bear forth excellency in him; and give ground of comfort to his people. The reaſon why he taketh this Style to himſelf in this place, is, Becauſe he is Sovereign to reprove faults in, and to give directions unto his church; and that with ſevere threatenings in reference to perſons that were guilty: therefore, to make all the more weighty, he taketh this ſtyle.

The other two titles, are taken out of the viſion, chap. i. 14, 15, viz. 'Who hath eyes as a 'flame of fire, and his feet as fine braſs.' The firſt of them, ſetteth forth his omniſciency, that is able to reach the ſecrets of hearts, and diſcover the hypocriſy of the moſt ſubtile hypocrite. Anſwerable to this title, verſe 23. he is ſaid to *ſearch the heart and the reins:* and his being manifeſted to be ſuch, is his being known to have eyes like unto a flame of fire. The laſt title, 'And his feet like 'unto fine braſs,' ſheweth the incorruptneſs and juſtneſs of his way in managing the affairs of his houſe, and his ſovereign irreſiſtible manner in promoting his deſigns, as having both abſolute authority to govern, and abſolute power to execute what he intendeth. Anſwerable to this, verſe 23. he is ſaid 'to render to every one according to 'their works.' He taketh the firſt of theſe two titles: becauſe he is to diſcover the hypocriſy of a counterfeit propheteſs. And he taketh the laſt: becauſe he is to threaten her and her followers.

In the body of the epiſtle, beſide the general aſſerting of his omniſcience, there are four main things: 1. There is a commendation, verſe 19. 2. There is a quarrel, with ſome aggravations thereof, verſe 20, and 21. 3. There is a threatening including a duty, or comprehending the way how the thing threatened might be prevented, verſe 22, and 23. This is in reference to them that were corrupted. 4. There is a mitigation of the threatening, or a conſolation laid down in reference to theſe that were kept free from theſe corruptions, ver. 24, 25.

The commendation is great, both as to the extent of the matter commended, and as to the qualification thereof. Beſide the general, *I know thy works*, the things commended in them, are ſet down in five words, exceeding comprehenſive. The *Firſt* is, their *charity*, or *love:* this ſetteth forth the inward frame of their heart in reference to God and the ſaints; and is, in effect, the ſum and fulfilling of both the tables of the law. This was defective in Epheſus. The *Second* is, their *ſervice*: this looketh to their miniſtring to the ſaints of their ſubſtance, and otherwiſe: and is a fruit and proof of the former. The *Third* is, their *Faith;* which reſpecteth not only the purity of their profeſſion, by their keeping themſelves from error; but mainly it looketh

to their exerciſing of faith in him, and dependence on him: for, it is faith, viz. the grace of faith, that is commended here, as it is the grace of love, patience, &c. The *Fourth* thing is, *Patience*: which is a fruit of faith, and importeth their ſubmitting to ſuffering for the goſpel of Chriſt without fainting or ſhifting in reſpect of the outward profeſſion before others, or fretting in reſpect of the inward frame of their ſpirit as to themſelves, notwithſtanding of all theſe ſufferings. The *Fifth* word is, *and thy works:* which generally looketh to the ſtrain of their carriage, which by this the Lord holdeth forth as commendable. All theſe being put together, they ſhew an excellent frame this church once had, and withal, give a copy unto us. Yet there is a circumſtance or qualification added, which doth exceedingly heighten the commendation; that is, *and the Laſt to be more than the Firſt.* The meaning whereof is, altho' thou haſt been in a good condition for *charity, patience, works*, &c. ſince the beginning, yet thy laſt works are for extent in practice, for livelineſs in the degree, and for a ſpiritual manner of performing of them, beyond what they were; ſo that her preſent condition is ſet forth to be a growing condition, which doth confirm her to have been really ſincere and in a moſt lively frame. The commendation was excellent; but this qualification putteth the crown upon it: for, where a decay cometh upon the graciouſneſs of a people's frame, as was in Epheſus, or where there is an upſitting without progreſs, theſe becometh as a dead flie, that maketh all the box of ointment to ſtink.

The challenge followeth, v. 20, and 21. 1. Generally propoſed. 2. Particularly expreſſed. 3. It is agreed. Who could have thought that the next word to ſuch an excellent commendation, ſhould be a *notwithſtanding?* But this ſheweth: 1. The deceitfulneſs and deſperateneſs of our corruption, that may have its influence beſide much grace, as hath been frequently marked. 2. It ſheweth the Lord's condeſcending and graciouſneſs, who giveth ſuch a teſtimony, even where there are faults. The general expreſſion is, *I have a few things againſt thee:* which is the ſame, upon the matter; and ſo to be underſtood, as was ſpoken to Pergamos, ver. 14. We ſhall therefore ſay no more of it.

More particularly, the quarrel is, *Becauſe thou ſuffereſt that woman Jezebel, which calleth herſelf a propheteſs*, &c. For clearing of which, we would: 1. Conſider Jezebel's fault, which the Lord charged upon her. 2. The angel's fault, for which he is charged, who yet was free of her groſs evils.

For the firſt: Jezebel is deſcribed by her name and practice. It is not to be thought that there was ſuch a woman bearing ſuch a name, or owning the practices of Jezebel queen of Iſrael, who is recorded, 1 Kings xvi. 31, &c. But it is like there hath been in this church ſome impudent woman, who for her furthering the abominable ſect of the Nicolaitans, getteth this name Jezebel, to make her and her tenets the more odious, even as in the former epiſtle, ſome were ſaid to hold the doctrine of Balaam, for this very end. For Jezebel's practice, 1 Kings xvi. &c. is recorded to be infamous for theſe two: 1. For groſs idolatry, and the ſpreading thereof. 2. For painting and fairding herſelf in an impudent way, which inſinuateth her being guilty of adultery and uncleanneſs. Which two being the faults whereof this counterfeit propheteſs was guilty, the Holy Ghoſt giveth her this name of Jezebel: thereby to ſcare his people the more from her, &c. For whatever ſhe intended, ſhe was, upon the matter, but a Jezebel. By this it appeareth alſo, that ſhe hath been ſome ſpecial promoter of the ſect of the Nicolaitans: for, we will find her practice and tenets to agree therewith 1. *She calleth herſelf a propheteſs;* that is, ſhe took on her, and ſo gave out herſelf, as if ſhe had been extraordinarily inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt, thereby to gain more credit to her opinions. It is marked in antient hiſtory, that there was never almoſt an eminent hereſy or heretic, but had ſome ſpecial women for the promoters thereof, who oftentimes took to themſelves the names of propheteſſes. Euſebius, lib. 5. cap. 16. (which is cited in the 2d century, cap. de Hereſ.) marketh it of many: Simon Magus had his Helena; Carpocrates his Marcellina; Apelles his Philumena; Montanus had two whom he called propheteſſes, viz. Priſcilla, and Maximilla, and Auguſtine frequently mentioneth one Lucilla, who was a great ring-leader of the Donatiſts: ſo it is like the Nicolaitans had ſuch a propheteſs, for furthering of their deſign.

If it be aſked, *Why the devil ſeeketh thus to engage women, and to put them on the top of ſuch deſigns?*

Anſw. Theſe reaſons may be given:

1. Becauſe often women are moſt eaſily engaged and carried furtheſt on in the deluſion; and it is not ſo eaſy to make a man give out himſelf for a prophet, as a woman to take on her the name of a pro-

pheteſs. This general we may gather from 2 Tim. iii. 6, 7.

2. Women are moſt eager, vehement, and diligent in purſuing what they are engaged in: even late times may teach how they may prevail and inſinuate on many by their diligence, if we conſider what is recorded of Mrs. Hutchinſon, and ſome others, mentioned in that little ſtory of the riſe, reign, and ruin of Familiſts, Libertines, &c. in New England.

3. Women are oftentimes leſs ſuſpected than men; and any ſeeming parts or abilities, which in the Lord's ſecret juſtice they may be furniſhed with, is uſually more admired and taking than in men, as if it looked like a thing above nature. This ſame conſideration, occaſioned a ſchiſm in Phrygia, becauſe ſome had more reſpect to Montanus his propheteſs, than was fit.

4. Women alſo have more ſecret, and private acceſs to tempt and infect others, than men can have: for, partly, they are leſs ſuſpected; partly, more ſlighted and deſpiſed by others: partly alſo, more forborn becauſe of their ſex than men would be: whereupon often they arrogate to themſelves a greater liberty and impudency in ſpeaking when they are corruptly principled, than would be ſuffered in men.

And, *Laſtly*, There is more acceſs for them to converſe with women, and to infuſe their venom in them than there is for men.

Euſebius, marketh this as a reaſon of ſuch heretics aſſociating with women, that thereby there might be the greater facility to ſeduce the ſimple of both ſexes.

Sometimes alſo they were helpful by their means and credit to further ſect-maſters in their deſigns, and to hold them on in them: ſometimes again, they were exceeding dexterous and diligent in venting and ſpreading falſe reports upon honeſt miniſters, and to beget a favourable opinion of theſe that were erroneous. All which tend exceedingly to the promoting of error, and to the hurting of the truth. And we will find Auguſtine often complaining of the malicious reports that this Lucilla uſed to ſpread upon them, whereby the calumnies of the Donatiſts were ſtrengthened. Upon which grounds, and the like, we may ſee what the devil's deſign is in ſeeking to engage ſuch in the head of ſuch a deſign This then is the firſt fault charged on her, that contrary to truth, and without warrant from God, ſhe did call herſelf a propheteſs; even though ſhe had not propoſed any error.

Her ſecond fault is, that ſhe *teacheth*. This was forbidden 1 Cor. xiv. 34. and 1 Tim. ii. 12. And it appeareth, that even theſe propheteſſes, who had an extraordinary gift from God, as Philip's daughters had, Acts xxi. Yet were not publicly and authoritatively to preach: for Paul commands them ſilence, 1 Cor. xiv. even when he is ſpeaking of extraordinary prophets. And we will not find in the New Teſtament, at leaſt, any ground for a woman publicly to officiate in the miniſtry of the goſpel, as an authorized office bearer.

The third part of her challenge is, that, by her teaching ſhe did *ſeduce*: which is a challenge to her, though ſhe had been guilty of none of the former two. This, viz. Seduction and leading of people out of the way of truth, doth ever almoſt follow upon perſons uſurping a calling to themſelves, or upon perſons ſtepping without their own bounds and ſtation to teach; and we will ſeldom find perſons to run unſent in any of the former reſpects; but itching after ſome new thing, hath had influence upon them, to carry them without their bounds, as we may ſee in Jezebel here, and ordinarily thro' the ſcripture and church hiſtory. The particulars wherein ſhe ſeduced her hearers, are two. The *Firſt* is, *to commit fornication*; that is, by her aſſerting fornication to be no ſin, ſhe occaſioned and ſtirred them up to take liberty therein, which poſſibly otherwiſe they would not have done. The *Second* is, *to eat things ſacrificed to idols*; that is, by propounding the indifferency of meats, and pretending to Chriſtian liberty, ſhe induced them without all reſpect to ſcandal, to eat of theſe things, to the ſtumbling, grieving and wounding of others that were weak and tender: which two are the very doctrines and practices of the Nicolaitans, as was ſhown in the epiſtles to Epheſus and Pergamos.

But it is a different quarrel from this which the Lord hath with the angel: it is expreſſed thus, *Becauſe thou ſuffereſt that woman Jezebel*, &c. That is not that they countenanced her in her errors, or did hear her in her teaching; but that they ſuffered her, and did not impede her. If it be aſked, *How they can be quarrelled for ſuffering her, ſeeing they were not magiſtrates, nor had civil authority to reſtrain her? Anſw.* That is not the quarrel; but this, that they being inveſted by Chriſt Jeſus with church power to cenſure corrupt miniſters, and cut off rotten members, did not exerciſe the ſame in cenſuring and excommunicating of this falſe propheteſs,

and theſe that adhered to her, as Epheſus had cenſured the falſe apoſtles, ver. 2. So, on the matter, it is the ſame fault which is condemned in Pergamos, ver. 15. who had ſuch corrupt members in their ſociety, and did not by excommunication cut them off: which ſheweth, that the church is inveſted with ſuch a power, (for, no civil power can be alledged here) and that the neglecting of the exerciſe thereof, is exceedingly diſpleaſing to Chriſt Jeſus.

If it be aſked, 1. 'How church cenſures, when 'backed with no civil authority, can impede one 'to teach? 2. Why the Lord is ſo diſpleaſed with 'church rulers, their ſuffering of corrupt teachers? '3. If this relate any way to civil powers, as well 'as eccleſiaſtic?'

To the firſt, we anſwer, Although church cenſures have no civil compulſion with them, or bodily violence or ſtrength to reſtrain any from corrupt teaching; yet they have a threefold weight, when rightly gone about: they have an authority and weight as to the conſcience of the gain-ſayer: becauſe cenſures, being the ordinance of Jeſus Chriſt, and, as it were, a ſeal put by his authority to a conditional threatening, they have a ſtamp of his majeſty upon them: and ſo they ſerve to humble men, or to revenge their diſobedience: and therefore theſe who ſeemingly profeſs to deſpiſe ſentences, want not an inward apprehenſion of the terror of excommunication, and would gladly not have that ſentence paſt upon them. 2. If men obſtinately ſuppreſs the weight of the cenſure upon the conſcience, as well as the word; yet, being a mean appointed of God for the reſtraining of ſuch evils, it is oftentimes countenanced by him, if not to the humbling, yet to the blaſting of ſuch perſons in their deſigns: whereby in his ſecret providence and juſtice it often cometh to paſs, that ſentences againſt ſuch perſons are eminently owned and countenanced by him, with ſome concurring diſpenſation, evidencing his ratifying of the ſame, as ſometimes, ſuch, are in juſtice, given up to more vile deluſions, ſometimes to groſs out-breakings in practice, ſometimes their very natural judgment and ſenſes are blaſted, their credit and reputation evaniſheth, and, it may be, ſome way he doth ſignally follow them with his own immediate hand by ſome ſtroke upon their eſtates, perſons, or families, even when they ſeem to be countenanced by civil power, as it is written in church ſtory he did to Simon Magus, and Arrius after he was excommunicated, by taking him away in the very height of his inſolency, who having again recovered court, and being in a ſolemn manner with many attendants coming to appear for his pretended vindication, was ſmitten, as he thought, with a deſire to eaſe himſelf, and for that end withdrawing to a retiring place in one of the ſtreets of Conſtantinople he did inſtantly expire; and having been waited for long by his attendants, was at laſt found dead in the ſeat, his inteſtines being diſſolved and voided. That little book, formerly cited, of the riſe, and reign of the Familiſts, &c. hath ſome dreadful inſtances of this. Thus the Lord hath often made ſuch a way to ſtink, by ſmitting the head thereof in ſome extraordinary manner. And though this be not the proper end of excommunication; yet when it meeteth with mens corruptions, it is often a juſt conſequent thereof. And theſe, or ſuch like ways of diſappointment, cannot be ſo warrantably expected, where this ordinance is not improven: becauſe it hath the promiſe, and is a mean appointed for this end, *That men may learn not to blaſpheme*, as the apoſtle ſpeaketh, 1 Tim. i. 20. 3. It hath weight as to others, to ſcar them from countenancing of ſuch; and is, as it were a mark or beacon ſet upon them, thereby to give warning to others for eſchewing of their company, as it is, Rom. xvi. 17, 18. and in many other places: and if it have this fruit, it cannot but in a great part blaſt their deſign. Now, the neglect of this ſentence made all theſe reſtraints void, as if no weight had been in Chriſt's ordinance: this was the angel's fault.

As to the ſecond, viz. Wherefore Chriſt is ſo diſpleaſed with the ſuffering of corrupt teachers, we may gather the reaſons thereof from what is ſaid: for, 1. It ſheweth little zeal to his glory, when his name is ſuffered to be blaſphemed. 2. It ſheweth little love to his people, when they are ſuffered to be ſeduced. 3. It ſheweth little reſpect to his ordinances, when they are not made uſe of for the end appointed, and when corrupt men are ſuffered to invert the order appointed by him: in a word, error and falſe teachers have brought more reproach upon the name of Chriſt and profeſſion of the goſpel, and have made religion more deſpicable to profane men, than any groſs outbreakings have done: alſo, more ſouls have been deſtroyed thereby, and that ſpeedily with ſwift deſtruction, 2 Pet. ii. and, as it were, carrying them away with a flood, as it is, chap. xii. *Laſtly,*

Other ſins are fallen into, by ſome more pretext at leaſt, of tentation and corruption prevailing; but this is done with a high hand, whereby men not only break the command themſelves, but teach others ſo to do, Matth. v. 19. And therefore it is called a teaching of *rebellion againſt the Lord*, Jer. xxviii. 16. and is fallen into, with more deliberation than other ſins: for which cauſe, an heretic is ſaid to be *condemned of himſelf*, Titus iii. 11. Which being put together, with many other aggravations of this ſin of corrupt teaching, and ills that follow thereupon, it is no marvel that the Lord Jeſus, who is jealous of his glory, and affected with the hazard of his people, be exceedingly diſpleaſed at the neglect of ſuch a duty, as is the uſing of the authority which he hath given to his church officers for edification, and particularly for the curbing of corrupt teachers, and the taking of the *foxes that ſpoil the vines*, Song ii. 15.

We ſuppoſe now, it is not difficult to anſwer to the third queſtion, viz. *If the ſuffering of corrupt teachers be reprovable in men, who have civil authority to reſtrain the ſame?* For, the ſame grounds that ought to awaken zeal in miniſters againſt this ill, ought alſo to ſtir up magiſtrates zealouſly in their places, to uſe their authority for vindicating of the name of Chriſt, and preventing of the hurt of his church and people, ſeeing the ſword is not delivered to them in vain, but for the terror of them that do evil, Rom. xiii. 3. Sure we are, in the old teſtament, magiſtrates were included within the command of reſtraining and puniſhing ſuch as did entice to falſe worſhip, as well as the prieſts were, Deut. xiii. 1, &c. And, in the new teſtament, we find no repeal of the ſame: and tho' there be no inſtance thereof in the goſpel, or acts of the apoſtles, becauſe magiſtrates were not then Chriſtian; yet, in the progreſs of this book of the revelation, we will find, that when magiſtrates became Chriſtian, it's looked upon as reprovable in them that countenanced Antichriſt; and it's highly commended in theſe, that out of zeal to God, ſhould withdraw from the whore, and burn her with fire, chap. xvii. ver. 16, 17. And ſeeing in the ſcripture, all ſect-maſters are accounted Antichriſt's, as Matt. xxiv. 1. John ii. 18. ſecond epiſtle, ver. 7, &c. can there be any better rule to try what is duty in reference to them, than by what is approven of God in reference to him, who is the prime Antichriſt? And this is clear, that the Lord hath not more clearly engaged himſelf to fight againſt any error by his word than this; yet, he will not have that a pretext to magiſtrates, for ſhunning to exerciſe their civil power againſt him. We ſee alſo in church hiſtory, that the moſt tender magiſtrates, when they were in the beſt frame, have ever been moſt zealous in this, as by the examples of Conſtantine, Gratianus, Theodoſius, &c. is clear: and the moſt untender friends, or greateſt enemies of the truth, have ſtriven to have all ſorts of religions equally tolerated; or, at leaſt, to have a ſort of harmony amongſt them, by the removing or burying of all laws civil and eccleſiaſtic, that did ſtrike againſt ſome errors. In reference to the firſt, it's obſerved by Amianus, a heathen writer, and a great friend to Julian, that amongſt other devices, that Julian uſed to root out Chriſtianity, this was one. That he gave toleration openly to all the different profeſſions that were amongſt Chriſtians, (which then after the council of Nice were very many) and required no more of them, but that they ſhould abſtain from civil diſcords; and ſo without fear follow any religion they pleaſed. The words are, as they are cited by Ludovicus Molineus, page 560. *ut conſopitis civilibus diſcordiis, ſuæ quiſque religioni ſerviret intrepidus.* And certainly, it can be no acceptable ſervice to Jeſus Chriſt, to follow that way, which this expert child of the devil made uſe of againſt him. And Anaſius alſo, is condemned for this, that he endeavoured ſuch an oblivion, or ἀμνηστίαν in the church, as tended to ſuppreſs all the former canons, decrees, or confeſſions, which had been enacted in the former famous general councils againſt groſs errors, as may be ſeen in the beginning of the ſixth century of the church hiſtory. *Laſtly*, This is alſo ſure, that the aſſerting that magiſtrates ought not *de jure*, or might *de facto*, meddle with reſtraining of heretics, was ever in the primitive times accounted a groſs error. Auguſtine profeſſeth himſelf ſometime to have been of that opinion; yet often in his writings doth he profeſs himſelf to have been convinced with the reaſons of his brethren, and with the experience that he had both of the neceſſity and advantage of the magiſtrates interpoſing in ſuch a thing; ſo that he became a moſt vehement preſſer of this, as in his epiſtles is clear: and he feareth not to account the oppoſers of this (viz. ſuch as pleaded for toleration from magiſtrates) amongſt heretics; and often nameth them under the title of Rogatiani, from one who it ſeemeth was ſome eminent pleader for this forbearance, and one of the Donatiſts party.

It is not intended that magiſtrates, or miniſters, ſhould account alike of all errors, or heretics; much leſs that indifferently the higheſt degrees of civil puniſhments, or church cenſures, ſhould be execute againſt them; but that according to ſpiritual prudence, both civil and church authority ſhould be exerciſed for the reſtraining of ſuch evil workers from and puniſhing of them, for hurting of the church of Chriſt, and diſhonouring of his name. In which Chriſtian prudence will make difference; 1. Between errors that deſtroy the foundation, and are called *damnable*, 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2, &c. and other errors, which are conſiſtent with the foundation, although they be as hay or ſtubble built thereon. 2. Difference is to be made between errors that are ſimply doctrinal, ſuch as theſe that are about the object of predeſtination, order of God's decrees, or ſuch like: wherein certainly there is a right and a wrong, yet are they not ſo intolerable as errors that imply a ſchiſm in practice, to the renting of the union of the church, as theſe errors of the Novations and Donatiſts were. 3. Difference alſo is to be made betwixt a man who entertaineth an erroneous opinion, and another who is an heretic; that is, who not only after admonition doth continue in the ſame opinion, but alſo doth perſiſt to vent and propagate the ſame to the hurt and offence of others. 4. Although he that is ſeduced is guilty, as the ſeducer is; yet reaſon would put a difference between him that actively teacheth and ſeduceth, and him that is out of weakneſs ſeduced, and is but a follower of ſuch a leader. 5. There may be a cenſuring in ſome degree, either by civil or church authority, when yet there is no procedure to any high degree in either: and thus the cenſuring in ſome caſes may be diſtinguiſhed, not only from forbearance and negligence, but alſo from ſuch cenſures as may appear rigid or unſeaſonable: thus Paul ſometimes reproveth and threateneth in the epiſtles to the Corinthians and Galatians, when yet he will neither altogether forbear them, nor paſs the higheſt ſentences upon them. Chriſtian prudence is to lay weight upon ſuch and ſuch conſiderations, in the managing of ſuch an authority: but ſtill ſo as nothing extinguiſh that zeal which magiſtrates and church officers ought to have for exerciſing of their reſpective authorities, in reſtraining of ſuch an evil. But we will inſiſt no more on this.

Followeth now, that we ſhould conſider the aggravations of the Lord's quarrel, both in reſpect to Jezebel, and to the angel. They are two, relating to both: 1. *She ſeduced Chriſt's ſervants*: and this is the greater guilt, both in reference to her practice, and alſo to their ſuffering of her. 2. It's aggreged from this ver. 21. *I gave her ſpace to repent of her fornication, and ſhe repented not*: whereby it appeareth, that ſhe had continued for a time in her practice, and, notwithſtanding of God's forbearance, had not amended: therefore her ſinful practice, and their neglective forbearance, became the more inexcuſable.

Concerning the firſt aggravation, we are to conſider: 1. Who are to be underſtood by this title, *Chriſt's ſervants*. 2. Why they get this title in this place. To the firſt we ſay, by *Chriſt's ſervants*, are not underſtood men indifferently: for, heathens, and thoſe that are without the church, get not this name; but it is peculiarly applied to the whole houſe of Iſrael, Lev. xxv. 55. And ſo here it is to be applied theſe two ways: 1. To Chriſtians and church members: ſo Jezebel aimed not to ſeduce pagans, and infect them with her errors, but Chriſtians and church members. 2. It may reſpect ſome more eminent in the church nor others for parts or profeſſion: and ſo amongſt church members, ſhe aimed moſt to ſeduce theſe that were ſound in the matter of doctrine, and infected with no error; and theſe that were clean in their converſation, and free of groſs ſcandals, rather than ſuch as were groſs and offenſive in their carriage. Both theſe are clear in matter of fact by experience: and by proportion it will follow, that as heretics, upon their own conſiderations, ſeek to infect church members, rather than theſe that are without; ſo among church members, they will ſeek rather to engage theſe who are eminent for parts, blameleſs in their carriage, or appearing to be gracious, than others, who are not of ſuch eſteem. For the ſecond, viz. why Chriſt giveth them this title in this place who are ſeduced? We may give theſe reaſons for it; 1. It is to aggrege the guilt of both, as hath been ſaid. 2. It is to give the alarm and warning unto theſe that are his own people, ſeeing even his ſervants may be ſeduced. 3. It is to ſhew his own reſentment of the ſucceſs of error in his church the more, that it draweth away theſe that ſtand in ſuch a relation to him, and, as it were, diminiſheth the number of his family and ſervants.

For further opening of this aggravation, theſe things may be enquired into, 1. If any truly gracious may be engaged by falſe teachers, and ſeduced to error? 2. What may be the reaſons that maketh the devil aim at the ſeduction of Chriſt's ſervants,

rather than others? 3. Why Chriſt doth ſo expreſly aggrege this guiltineſs upon this account?

In anſwer to the firſt queſtion, we ſay, *Firſt*, That theſe that are truly gracious, are not ſo readily and frequently ſeduced to error, at leaſt to be leaders therein and promoters thereof, as they are unto groſs practical offences: for, 1. We will not find in ſcripture ſo many examples of the one, as of the other. 2. It is a moſt rare thing for an oppoſer to get repentance, 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26. and therefore the believers, yea, even the elect before their converſion, cannot be ſaid frequently to fall in this evil. 3. It is an ill that is followed with more deliberation, and cometh not from the ſurpriſing of ſome particular tentation, as other groſs evils do: therefore cannot be ſo conſiſtent with gracious principles, and a ſpiritual walk, as particular outbreaking, wherein a perſon is captivated. 4. To be a teacher of error, is to be a teacher of rebellion againſt the Lord, Jer. xxviii. and to be a miniſter and promoter of Satan's kingdom, 2 Cor. xi. 14, 15. which at firſt appeareth to be abominable unto any of a gracious principle, and more than a ſin of infirmity. 5. Alſo the promiſes ſeem eſpecially to relate to God's guiding of his people in the way of truth, and keeping them from being ſeduced by falſe teachers: which tho' it be not to be extended ſimply to all; yet it appeareth it is to be extended further than in reference to practical ſcandals.

Yet, *Secondly*, We ſay, That it is poſſible, even for theſe that are truly gracious to be ſeduced to error: for, 1. There are promiſes indeed that they ſhall be kept from the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, and from total and final apoſtaſy and impenitency in reſpect of any ill, but there is no promiſe that a believer otherways ſhall be kept from any ill incident to one that is unrenewed. 2. Even believers have corruption, and ſo have much darkneſs and ignorance in their judgment, and much perverſeneſs in their inclination and affections. It cannot be thought ſtrange then, that they be capable to be carried away by a tentation to error, there being no ill but it hath a party in them to take part with it. 3. The many warnings that are given in ſcripture, even to believers to beware of the leaven of the phariſees and ſadducees, to beware of falſe prophets that come in ſheep's cloathing, &c. ſhew, that they are not without the reach of the hurt of ſuch a tentation. 4. Experience alſo doth confirm this: for, it ſeemeth that in ſome meaſure Solomon wanted not his acceſſion to this evil, if we conſider what is recorded, not only of his ſuffering of corrupt worſhip to be within his dominion; but alſo of his countenancing of the ſame, by building altars, and otherways, altho' we cannot particularly determine. Neither can it be denied, but that ſome of theſe that were ſeduced by falſe teachers in Corinth and Galatia, might be gracious: and in aftertimes alſo it hath been out of queſtion.

To the ſecond viz. wherefore Satan aimeth to ſeduce Chriſt's ſervants unto error, rather than others? We may anſwer in theſe reaſons; 1. He doth it, becauſe his hatred is moſt at ſuch; and it's their ruin, which eſpecially he hunteth for. 2. Becauſe men that are in error and profanity already, are his own; and it's no gain for him to take pains to ſeduce them into ſuch deluſions, ſo long, at leaſt, as they continue ſuch. 3. He hath other more ſuitable baits for other men that are given to groſs ills: therefore he reſerveth this for others. 4. In ſome reſpect, theſe who have a form of religion, or ſome inclination towards it, (eſpecially if weak in knowledge) are in ſome reſpect more obnoxious to this tentation than groſly profane men are; for they, like Gallio, care not what be truth and what be error: but one, who hath ſome tenderneſs, and withal weak, is more ready to debate, and enquire for truth; and ſo not being ſtrong enough to rid himſelf of difficulties, he is the more eaſily entangled. 5. Groſs tentations to profanity, are not ſo taking with them: therefore the devil aſſayeth them by this, that under the colour of ſome new diſcovery of truth, or ſome more perfect way of Chriſtianity, or ſuch like, he may draw them to error: and, by this more ſubtil tentation, whereby he transformeth himſelf to an angel of light, he doth often prevail when other tentations would not. 6. It is moſt advantageous to his way, to have ſome eminent for piety and parts engaged for it: for, by this, he gaineth credit to it, and maketh it the better digeſt with others, who often reſpect an opinion, as they reſpect theſe who own the ſame: thus he aimeth at this as a main engine whereby he may prevail with many; whereas the engaging of profane men bringeth no credit to ſuch a way; neither is it his advantage to divert them from their profanity. It was a great ſtumbling in old, eſpecially in the caſe of the Novations, that many confeſſors and eminent men were drawn away with that error: and this was often caſt up to the orthodox, as a matter of great weight: whereupon Cyprian, in his book *de unitate eccleſiae*

taketh occaſion particularly to anſwer this objection, that people be not prejudged at truth, becauſe of ſome mens names; eſpecially, conſidering that there were many more eminent of the contrary mind. And, by the way, this ſlight of the devil may be obſerved, that men will make more work, and greater noiſe in commending error by the name of one or two that favoureth the ſame, as if that were of ſo great weight, than they will allow to truth, though it have many more eminent names ſtanding for it. 7. When men are aiming to be ſerious in religion, the devil caſteth this ſtumbling in their way, that if he prevail not to draw them to error, he may at leaſt mar them or divert them, by putting them through other, in making them debate ſuch and ſuch needleſs queſtions: and ſo keep them from the more ſerious and profitable exerciſe of repentance, ſelf-examination, making of their calling and election ſure, &c. Hence it is, that while men ly in ſecurity or profanity, they are not much troubled with this tentation; but being once awakened, then he ſetteth upon them, if ſo be he may extinguiſh that wakening, or give them, a wrong ſet before they be fully formed and ſettled. And this is one reaſon why errors and deluſions do often accompany the firſt riſe of the goſpel among people. 8. By ſeducing of theſe that appear to be godly, the devil bringeth moſt reproach upon the name of Chriſt and religion, and maketh it the more to be ſtumbled at by theſe that are in nature, as being but ſome fancy and conceit, which would not follow upon the fall of many profane men: therefore he aimeth rather to ſeduce them that are Chriſt's ſervants, and appear to be godly.

To the third we may ſee, why the Lord eſpecially aggregeth his quarrel from this, 1. Becauſe his ſervants come more near to him than others. 2. He will have us knowing that error is not to be extenuated or commended, nor falſe teachers to be tolerated, even though many of his ſervants ſhould come to countenance the ſame: yea, on the contrary, it is the more aggreged, and to be abhorred. 3. He doth by this ſhew the church-officers, that the more that are engaged to love error, or follow falſe teachers, they ought to be the more ſtirred up with zeal in their duty againſt ſeducers, that they have prevailed with many of his ſervants. And by this, he ſheweth his tenderneſs to affectionate profeſſors, rather to cenſure for their ſake corrupt teachers whom they reſpect, than to forbear them. 4. This is alſo mentioned, to ſhew this woman, and all corrupt teachers, what they gain by having moſt ſucceſs againſt Chriſt's ſervants, viz. this, that they have the more guilt, and are the more obnoxious to Chriſt's quarrel. 5. The more advantages the devil hath to his kingdom by the ſeduction of Chriſt's ſervants concerneth him the more in that to oppoſe him, as in a thing, which in a ſpecial manner reflecteth upon his honour; which maketh him ſo to quarrel for Jezebel's practice, and the toleration of the ſame.

From all which what we have ſaid, is confirmed, viz. that corrupt teachers are not to be tolerated in a church, even when civil powers do take no notice of them: it is well known from the hiſtory of the primitive times, that ſeveral godly and zealous men have cenſured; yea, and even excommunicated many heretics, as Arians and others when they have been ſure to be inſtantly perſecuted for the ſame: and it is recorded of ſome, who though they were threatened before-hand, that yet having firſt provided their churches with well qualified ſucceſſors, they did afterwards proceed to pronounce ſentence: thereby ſhewing their readineſs to undergo whatever trouble might follow upon that ſame account, and withal their zeal and tender care of the church's edification.

We come now to the ſecond aggravation, which is in verſe 21. and it is made up of theſe two: 1. There is a forbearance upon the Lord's ſide, *I gave her ſpace to repent;* that is, I did not ſuddenly and at firſt execute judgment upon her; but did for a time forbear her, thereby giving her an opportunity to repent: and indeed his long-ſuffering and forbearance, doth of itſelf lead to repentance, according to what is ſaid, Rom. ii. 4.

The ſecond part, is, *But ſhe repented not:* which holdeth forth the abuſe of this mercy, upon her ſide, viz. that notwithſtanding of the Lord's forbearance ſhe continued in her former practice without repenting of, or turning from, the ſame: therefore ſhe is the more inexcuſable, and they alſo in ſuffering of her. This aggravation doth import theſe four, *Firſt*, That the Lord's forbearing of a ſinner, ought to be an inducement to them to repent, as is clear from that place, Rom. ii. 4. *Secondly*, It importeth that ſometimes God will give time and opportunity to repent, by his forbearance, unto moſt groſs ſinners; and ſuffer with much long ſuf-

fering the veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction, Rom. ix. 22. *Thirdly*, It importeth alſo, that ſuch opportunities are often abuſed; and particularly, that it is a rare thing for an oppoſer of the truth to repent. The apoſtle putteth a *peradventure* in it, 2 Tim. ii. 25. *in meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves, if* peradventure *God will give them repentance, &c.* We find alſo, chap. ix. 16. of this book, that on the back almoſt of every plague upon Antichriſt's kingdom, it is marked, that yet they repented not for all that.

If any ſhould aſk the reaſon, *Why repentance is ſo rare in reference to this ſin?*

We anſwer, 1. It is a ſin of a high nature, being deliberate and againſt ſufficient grounds of conviction: and therefore in God's juſtice, is plagued with impenitency beyond other ſins: and as in ſome reſpect, it cometh nearer to the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt than other ſins in its nature; ſo alſo in God's juſtice it cometh nearer to it in its puniſhment. 2. The nature of this ſin is ſuch, that men tainted with it, are thereby in a greater incapacity to repent than theſe who are guilty of groſs ills in practice: becauſe, 1. Nature doth not ſo challenge and convince for ſins againſt the truths of the goſpel, as for ſins againſt the moral law. 2. Becauſe men in errors and deluſions have their judgments ſo engaged, blinded and prejudged, that they think often ſuch errors are no errors: and therefore there is the greater difficulty to bring them to the acknowledgment of truth, and of their being wrong; and yet this muſt precede their repentance. 3. The Lord alſo by this doth ſet a mark upon this ſin, to ſcare all from the ſame: men oftentimes think little of this ill, he hath therefore put this mark of his diſpleaſure thereupon the more expreſly. Hence it is, that his threatnings are more clearly and expreſly annexed to the ſecond and third commandments than any other, that he may make men know he is jealous of his truth and ordinances, and will by no means acquit ſuch as take his name in vain, whatever men think of theſe ſins. In the *Fourth* place, this aggravation importeth, that when time and good opportunities are abuſed, guilt becometh the greater and the more inexcuſable, and the Lord's controverſy becometh the more ſharp.

There are two concluſions aimed to be drawn from theſe words, by ſome, which no way they will bear, 1. Some ſay, that Jezebel had an ability and power to repent, ſeeing ſhe hath time allotted to her for it, and God expecteth it of her. For *Anſwer*, To ſay nothing of this general, which is found to be an untruth from other clear ſcriptures, which hold out men to be dead in ſins, Eph. ii. 1. &c. and unable for any ſpiritual good, theſe things will vindicate this place, 1. If we conſider who this party is, viz. a moſt vile ſeducer and adultreſs: and even ſuch patrons of nature, will grant, that ſuch high and groſs ſins do juſtly deprive perſons of any ability to repent, and do incapacitate them for exerciſing of the ſame. 2. If we compare this with 2 Tim. ii. 25. We will find that patient waiting upon oppoſers, and thereby giving them opportunity to repent, is one thing; and to have repentance given them is another: for, many have time allowed them, when yet it is at *a peradventure* if God ſhall give them repentance: which ſheweth, that grace to exerciſe repentance, when an opportunity is, muſt be given of God as well as the opportunity itſelf; otherways no opportunity can be rightly improven: which ſheweth again, that men in ſuch a caſe have not this ability of themſelves to repent.

3. The words do not ſpeak out her ability; but what was her duty under ſuch a long-ſuffering diſpenſation, as the opening of the words cleareth.

If it be ſaid then, *How can ſhe be more inexcuſable?*

Anſw. 1. Becauſe this inability is of her own onbringing. 2. Becauſe it was not inability that ſwayed her to continue in her ſin, and reject repentance, but it was her poſitive inclination to theſe errors, and her averſeneſs from the truths of God. And whatever men may diſpute for the patronizing of nature againſt the juſtice of God, now; yet when he cometh to judge, and when the conſcience beareth witneſs of the vehement affection and delight which men had to do, and in their wickedneſs, there will be none who ſhall dare to enter a defence upon their inability, ſeeing in conſcience they will be convinced that that was not the thing which made them willingly chooſe ſuch and ſuch evils, and made them reject all means tending to recover them. 3. This alſo will make her, and ſuch as ſhe, inexcuſable, that they did not improve ſuch opportunities ſo as they might, and did not abſtain from the following and committing of ſuch groſs evils, which even many unrenewed men have done; who yet had not ability to repent of themſelves more than they; and thus none, in ſuch a caſe, will be able to ſay in judgment, that they did make ſuch uſe of the word, and other means, as they might have made, even in

ſuch a condition; or that they have come that length in outward reformation, that they might have done.

The ſecond concluſion pretended to be drawn from this, is, that the Lord hath an univerſal will to have all men ſaved, ſeeing he giveth her time to repent. This we ſay, doth not follow hence: for 1. Suppoſe it might be ſaid in ſome reſpect, that he willed the repentance of ſuch a particular perſon, who lived under his ordinances, it will not follow thereupon, that he willeth the ſalvation of all; even of ſuch who never heard of repentance. 2. It will not follow, God giveth ſome time, which ought to be improven to repentance, and doth not inſtantly execute his judgment, therefore he willeth ſuch a perſon's ſalvation: for, God for a time forbare Pharaoh, even after he had evidence his purpoſe in ſo doing, to be the exalting of his own glory in his deſtruction. 3. If it were ſo, what might be ſaid of ſuch as the Lord doth not forbear, not giving time to repent; but taketh away in their ſin, as he did Zimri and Cozbi? It cannot be ſaid on this ground, that he willeth their ſalvation? and ſo not the ſalvation of all. 4. It will not follow, Chriſt willeth perſons to repent; therefore he willeth their ſalvation: becauſe he may be ſaid to will them to repent, when he requireth it of them as their duty; and thus, their duty of repenting is the immediate object of his revealed and preceptive will: but a perſon's ſalvation is the proper object of his will of good-pleaſure, or of his decreeing and purpoſing will. And no otherwiſe can he be ſaid, to will ſuch perſons ſalvation (becauſe he commanded them to repent) than this, viz. that in his word he hath ſignified repentance to be ſuch a perſon's duty, and that he hath appointed a connection between repentance and ſalvation; which ſtill relateth to his revealed will: even as when God made the firſt covenant with Adam, it might be ſaid, that he willed Adam to be holy, and that by that covenant he had made a connection between holineſs and life; yet it is not proper to ſay, that the Lord willed life to Adam upon that condition: becauſe that looketh to the event, and reſpecteth the Lord's will of purpoſe: which cannot but be effectual. And if the Lord's willing of men, at leaſt ſuch as are under his ordinances, to be ſaved, be thus underſtood, as including only the duty which God layeth upon men, and the connection that he hath made between it and ſalvation in his word, it may be admitted: but if it be extended to any antecedent will in God himſelf, diſtinct from that which is called his revealed will, this place, and ſuch like, will give no ground for ſuch an aſſertion. If it be aſked then, why did he give her ſpace to repent, if he intended not her ſalvation? *Anſw.* To forbear deciding of what might be his purpoſe to this particular perſon, (who haply may be an elect,) becauſe nothing is decided of her final condition in the word; theſe reaſons may be given: 1. Thereby the Lord commendeth his grace that doth ſo condeſcend to ſuch a perſon. 2. The aggravation of her guilt and inexcuſableneſs, are the more clear, as hath been ſaid; and thereupon he hath the more acceſs to manifeſt the ſpotleſsneſs of his juſtice, as is in the threatning, verſe 23. 3. It doth the more comfort and encourage a penitent ſinner, to ſtep forward in the hope of mercy, ſeeing even ſuch a perſon as Jezebel hath had ſuch an offer; and that ſhe, if penitent and believing, would have been accepted.

The third thing in the body of the epiſtle, is, the threatning, ver. 22, and 23. whereby he again wonderfully preſſeth her, and theſe who were ſeduced by her, to the exerciſe of that much ſlighted duty of repentance. The threatning hath three parts, 1. Something is threatned. 2. An exception is put in, leaving a door open to mercy. 3. The ſcope or effect of the Lord's executing this threatning, is ſet down. The thing threatned, is threefold, according to the ſeveral parties that he threatneth: 1. For *Jezebel*, *Behold, I will caſt her upon a bed:* which pointeth out ſome remarkable ſtroke or plague threatned to be inflicted upon her, whereby ſhe ſhould become a ſpectacle to others, and yet not be inſtantly removed. 2. *For them that commit adultery with her, I will caſt them into great tribulation;* that is, I will bring upon them that partake of her ſin, whether in reſpect of ſpiritual or bodily adultery (for ſhe was guilty of both) grivous and public temporal ſtrokes. And, 3. *I will kill her children with death:* for her children, it is like, were children begotten in their unclean converſing together: them the Lord threatens to remove, and thereby to give an evidence of his diſpleaſure at their way, as he did David's child for his adultery. For, we conceive, the children of her ſpiritual whoredom are underſtood under that expreſſion, *theſe that commit adultery with her.* From which we may ſee, that groſs errors may procure many temporal and bodily croſſes, as was formerly ſaid.

Yet, Secondly, as is ſaid, Even this threat-

ing hath a door open in, and is not absolute, but conditional, *except they repent*, &c. Which doth indeed exceedingly set forth and commend the grace of God.

The third thing is, the Lord's end, which is the manifesting of himself in two or three of his attributes, viz. his omniscience, justice, and power as was hinted in the entry. When the Lord forbeareth wicked men, he is either thought not to see, or know such things; or not to be just, and powerful to redress and avenge the same: and when he severely and publicly inflicteth judgment upon such, then he is known not only to be omniscient, but also just and powerful; and this is that which he aimeth at, especially in his churches.

The last thing is, the mitigation of this threatning, v. 24, 25. wherein we may consider these two, First, To whom it is directed. Secondly, What is the mitigation itself. 1. It is directed, to *you*; to *you* in the plural number; that is, to the company of ministers, who were designed by the title *angel*, at the entry. *And to the rest in Thyatira*; that is, the members of the church, contradistinguished from the ministers. It is added, *that have not this doctrine, and have not known the depths of Satan*, &c. This is to distinguish the church-members that were pure and clean, from these that were corrupted with Jezebel's doctrine. So there are three parties implied here. 1. The ministers. 2. The pure members. To both these this consolation is directed. 3. There are some led away with these corruptions, which are not included. The pure members are qualified and distinguished by these two: 1. *They have not this doctrine*; that is, they own not, nor maintain, nor approve this corrupt doctrine. 2. *They have not known the depths of Satan*; that is, they have not loved nor approven the same, nor in their practice experimentally meddled therewith. *They*, that is, corrupt teachers, counted such doctrines and practices depths, and high mysteries, and attainments in religion: therefore they gave them this name of *depths*. And it is not to be thought that they called them *depths of Satan*; but the Lord addeth this, to shew indeed what kind of depths they were: they are, saith he, depths indeed, as they speak; but they are the devil's depths, or depths of Satan. Which expressions holdeth out these two: 1. The great subtilty of the adversary of man's salvation, the devil, he hath depths in his way; all his designs are not obvious; he can vail and cover things, and make them appear far otherwise than they are; and he exerciseth his subtilty most especially and deeply, in the carrying on of error, and drawing of souls from the truth: these are his *depths* here; and his *subtilty* is spoken of, 2 Cor. xi. 3. *his wiles and cunning craftiness* and special slight, Eph. iv. 14. whereby it cometh to pass that he intangleth, and, as it were, *bewitcheth*, Gal. iii. 1. Many with the most gross delusions. 2. It holdeth out what influence delusion will have upon poor creatures; it will even make them cry up the most absurd errors for mysteries and depths, as if there were nothing in religion so excellent as these.

The mitigation itself, is in two expressions: the first is negative, ver. 24. *I will put upon you none other burden*; that is, in sum, I will not give you any other direction, nor prescribe to you any new duty, beside what formerly ye have had given unto you, and to which ye have submitted: for, though burden sometimes signify some weighty threatning, or denunciation, or judgment, as may be gathered from Jer. i. 23. Yet, in this place, it cannot be so understood; but must be understood as it implieth some new duty beside what formerly was imposed upon them, as the exposition in next verse doth clear. And so sometimes in scripture, duty is compared to a burden and yoke: not because of its burdensomeness and troublesomeness, in respect of itself; but because every duty hath some obligation with it, which in respect of our corruptions and infirmities are burdens, though by Christ Jesus they become light.

The second part of the mitigation, is positive, ver. 25. and will help to expound the former, *But that which ye have already, hold fast till I come*: Which doth imply, *First*, That they had some duties prescribed unto them already: whereby it appeareth, that *another burden* did signify some other duty: for that was the thing they had already. *Secondly*. It sheweth, That by having of such duties (to speak so) is not only understood the having of them prescribed unto them; but their being a great length in the obedience thereof, as may be gathered from the like phrase, chap. iii. 11. where *hold that fast which thou hast* doth signify their endeavour to keep what they had attained to. And thus the meaning of this mitigation here is, I have prescribed to you that are pure in Thyatira, no other duty or direction; but that with all sincerity and zeal ye keep the directions prescribed unto you, and continue to

walk in the way which hitherto ye have followed, unto the end. This is preſſed by Chriſt's ſecond coming: 1. To let them know he was to come again. 2. To let them know that at his ſecond coming, he will reckon with his churches according as they obey or diſobey his directions. 3. To teach all to walk ſo in making uſe of the word, eſpecially in corrupt times, as they may with confidence appear and reckon for the ſame before Jeſus Chriſt at his ſecond coming. 4. To ſhew, that believers ought to ſet no other term to their perſevering in duty, but Chriſt's ſecond coming.

From what is paſt we may *obſerve:* 1. That in theſe epiſtles, expreſs difference is made between miniſters and people: *To you I ſay*, relateth to the miniſters, and, *to the reſt*, relateth to the members of that church. And therefore in the application of things contained in them, we would diſtinguiſh them alſo.

2. That by *angel*, in the inſcription, is underſtood miniſters collectively: *To you*, is in the plural number; and yet it is to theſe that the epiſtle was directed under the name of *angel*, in the ſingular: and therefore are they contradiſtinguiſhed from the *reſt*, which looketh to the members of that church, *you* and the *reſt* being the ſame thing here upon the matter, that *angel* and *church* were in the inſcription; ſave, that the *reſt*, even as many, &c. diſtinguiſheth the pure members from the impure, the church comprehending both.

3. That a miniſter's guilt, or the guilt of officers in not ſecluding ſcandalous perſons from church-communion, doth not ly on the people, as upon the miniſters: therefore the duty common to the miniſters and people, is commended to both, whereas that reproof was peculiar to the miniſters: and, the *reſt* are taken in only in the mitigation or conſolation: but it was, *Thou ſuffereſt*, in the reproof.

4. Chriſt thinketh much of zealous executing of diſcipline, and would not have miniſters ſparing it againſt heretics or corrupt teachers, more than other ſcandalous perſons: yea, the reaſons from the hazard of infecting the flock, and the examples of it in ſcripture, are moſt preſſing in reference to them.

5. Here alſo we may ſee, that there is a church-power and authority, diſtinct from what is civil; and cenſures to be inflicted by church-officers on ſcandalous perſons, even where magiſtrates are heathen.

6. That deluſion may come to a great height: as, 1. That a woman preacheth. 2. That ſhe calleth herſelf a propheteſs. 3. That ſhe ſeduceth Chriſt's ſervants, and they are ſeduced by her. 4. That this is immediately after Chriſt, while John the beloved diſciple liveth. 5. That all theſe errors and abominations are covered with the title of myſteries and depths: what may we expect in our times, when ſuch was the lot of thoſe who lived at that time?

7. The writings even of the apoſtle John could not prevail ſo far as to make them renounce and abandon them.

8. See here, how Chriſt accounteth of members of a viſible church: he ſtyleth ſuch as were ſeduced to adultery and error, *his ſervants:* and they were ſervants ſtill, who were ſeduced; and are afterward threatened, as Jezebel is. Whereby it appeareth, that theſe titles go more upon the relation, that church-members ſtand in, and the obligation that lieth on them, than upon the qualifications that are alway to be found in them.

9. Our Lord Jeſus is no approver nor countenancer of ſeparation from a true church, for the faults of ſome members in it: neither do faults in ſome members, and defects in miniſters and officers in executing diſcipline, pollute the ordinances in themſelves, or to others, who are free of that guilt: and ſo do not neceſſitate a ſeparation from ſuch a church, or any ordinance thereof: for this, and the former epiſtle, being compared together, theſe things are clear; 1. That there were groſs members in the church, *adulterers*, *Nicolaitans*, *ſeducers*, &c. 2. That they were continued in church-communion; *Thou haſt them, and ſuffereſt them*, clearly import this: for, that angel no otherwiſe had them, but as church-members under his charge. 3. That this angel ſinfully permitted them to continue church-members: and therefore is reproved.

Yet, we conceive alſo, it is clear in matter of fact; 1. That many who were free, continued in church-fellowſhip with this angel, in that church notwithſtanding thereof; ſo, the words *to you*, and *to the reſt*, as of that ſame membership, import, it being but one church. And, 2. That our Lord did not reprove them for their ſo continuing, even when he reproveth the angel for his fault of being defective as to his cenſuring of Jezebel. Yea, 3. That he approveth their not ſeparating, in his approving the general ſtrain of their carriage, which could not otherwiſe be approven, this being ſo obvious to view, if it had been a fault, or if they had by it partaken

with them in their ſin. 4. That our Lord warranteth them to continue ſo; and layeth no burden of ſeparating from them, on theſe who were honeſt: only ſaith he, *Hold faſt that which ye have already, till I come;* that is, keep yourſelves according to the rule given unto you, and according to your preſent practice.

Hence may be argued, 1. If where church-members are polluted, and ſuffered notwithſtanding by church-officers to remain in church-communion, Chriſt doth not only, not condemn the clean for keeping fellowſhip with them; but expreſly requireth them to continue, as they did, then he alloweth not ſeparation on that account: but the firſt is truth: he condemneth them not, but requireth them *to hold faſt till he come. Ergo*, &c. 2. If Chriſt lay upon members no other burden, but to keep themſelves from perſonal pollution, then he layeth not on them ſeparation: (and it muſt be a burden not of his laying on) but the former is true; *Hold faſt that which ye have already. Ergo*, &c. 3. If ſeparation thwart with Chriſt's direction to a church in that condition, then it is not a duty: but if the honeſt members in Thyatira had ſeparated, they had not held faſt what they had already, but would have gripped to ſome new thing, and ſo have thwarted with the directions laid on them. *Ergo*, &c. 4. If this direction containeth all their duty in reference to that defection, or theſe polluted members, then ſeparation is not a duty in ſuch a caſe: for, it is inconſiſtent with it. But this containeth all: 1. Otherwiſe it would not befit their caſe: which to do, is Chriſt's ſcope. 2. It is not only negative, not condemning them for not ſeparating; nor only poſitive, giving them other directions inconſiſtent with it; but it is excluſive, *I lay on you no other burden;* this, and *no other*. And though other particular duties may be alledged to be comprehended under this general; yet ſeparation cannot be comprehended: becauſe it is inconſiſtent with it, as appeareth: for, if the thing that Chriſt calleth for from theſe who were honeſt in Thyatira, be ſuch a thing as was conſiſtent with their former practice of keeping church-fellowſhip with ſuch, then ſeparation muſt be inconſiſtent with it; but the former is truth, and appears thus: if Chriſt's direction to them be, to hold as they were, and not to alter, then certainly it is conſiſtent with their own former practice: but the words are plain, *I lay on you*, viz. that are clean, *no other burden*, but abſtain from their way, and *hold faſt*. And certainly it would look very ſtrange, to ſay, that ſeparation from them were commanded under that word, *hold faſt*, &c. And that ſo, *hold faſt*, were to be expounded, *ſeparate from that ſociety;* and yet that muſt be comprehended under this, or it is not a duty for ſuch a caſe.

Beſide, this duty which Chriſt commends to them, is a duty which every one of them ought perſonally to go about, though others did not. And if ſeparation were included here, according to that ground, it would infer many abſurdities, as, *1ſt*, Suppoſe the miniſter to continue defective in his duty, are all the pure members to ſeparate from him? Or, *2dly*, Suppoſe none but two or three did lay that duty to heart, were thoſe two or three to ſeparate from all fellowſhip with the reſt, and quit all public ordinances? yet, no queſtion, in ſuch a caſe they were to hold faſt what they had already. *3dly*, Suppoſe the pure members to continue in fellowſhip with their officers that were thus defective as formerly they have done; yet keeping themſelves clean in their own ſtations, can it be thought that they diſobeyed this direction of Chriſt, *That which thou haſt already, hold faſt till I come?* Or, is it not rather to be thought that they did more nearly conform to Chriſt's direction by ſo doing, than if they had withdrawn and ſeparated?

We may alſo argue againſt ſeparation in ſuch a caſe from this ſcripture, thus: If ſeparation be an other burden to Chriſt's church than what he laid upon Thyatira, Pergamos, &c. In ſuch a caſe when their officers were defective in executing diſcipline, then it is not to be allowed in the church of Chriſt afterward in ſuch like caſes; but the former is true. Therefore, &c. If theſe two things be clear, this argument will be clear, 1. That though theſe churches were in ſuch a caſe, yet there was not ſeparation from the ordinances in practice or exerciſe amongſt them upon that account; this, we ſuppoſe, is clear from what is ſaid. 2. If this alſo be clear that the preſſing of ſeparation upon ſuch a ground, will prove a burden unto the people of God: then it will follow, that Chriſt doth not lay it on upon theſe churches, ſeeing he expreſly ſignifieth that he intends to lay no other burden upon them, but to hold faſt what they have already. It muſt therefore be an untender thing to burden honeſt ſouls with the apprehenſion of being polluted from the perſonal faults of joint worſhippers or communicants: for, *Firſt*, This putteth them to try all that they ſo keep

fellowſhip with: and they cannot have peace, except they have ſome confidence that others, by their joynt communicating, do not pollute the ordinances; and this confidence cannot be, till ſufficient trial be made thereof; and yet believers find it ſufficiently difficult to try themſelves. 2. It putteth them to an utter uncertainty, in reſpect of any comfortable fruit of ordinances: becauſe ſo, it hangs not only upon their own frame and good condition; but alſo upon their good frame and diſpoſition of theſe that communicate joyntly with them. And ſo, ſuppoſing that a believer may be out of the preſent exerciſe of grace, and a joynt communicater with them; in that caſe, the ordinance is polluted unto them, becauſe they are polluted even to that believer that is in ſuch a caſe, And, can any have confidence that no natural perſon, or indiſpoſed believer hath communicated with them? Neither will it remove this difficulty, to ſay, that men may have peace, if the offences or indiſpoſitions of others be not known unto them: for, 1. What if it be ſaid, if trial had been made, they might have been known? 2. Suppoſe it were not poſſible to know them; yet if the communicating of corrupt men did not only pollute the ordinance to themſelves, but alſo pollute it in itſelf, that is, make it want the nature of ſuch an ordinance as to others; then, whether it were known or not, the ordinance were no ordinance, becauſe of its being polluted in ſomething eſſential to the being thereof: otherwiſe, the ſame ordinance might be an ordinance to one who knew not of ſuch ſcandals; and not be an ordinance of Chriſt to another, who knew ſuch things, though it may be, in his own particular caſe, no leſs gracious and lively than the other: for, it cannot be our knowing that ſuch a perſon is ſcandalous that communicates with us, that can pollute the ordinance to us, except upon ſuppoſition that the being of ſuch a thing did pollute the ordinance in itſelf before we knew the ſame. 3. If this ground were laid, it might be a ſcruple to a tender believer to communicate with himſelf, to ſay ſo: for he hath corruption in him, and it will be hard to ſay, that the corruption of others will have more influence to pollute an ordinance to him, than his own can have: eſpecially, conſidering that he is moſt thoroughly acquainted therewith: and it will be as hard to ſay, that Chriſt's call doth warrant a believer to communicate with peace, notwithſtanding of his own ſeen corruptions; and yet that ſame call will not warrant him to communicate with peace, if he be in his own duty and frame approvable, notwithſtanding of the corruptions of others. All which, being grievous burdens, cannot be ſuppoſed to agree with our Lord's ſcope in this place.

Hence alſo we may ſee, that Chriſt doth not rigidly caſt off churches, for defects in diſcipline, and groſſneſs of particular members, when in the main, the foundation is kept; and though the Lord never look on theſe but as faults, and as reprovable where they are, as we may ſee in many of theſe epiſtles; yet, to allow ſeparation from a church, becauſe of theſe, and to account it no church, is with him all one, as when he calleth his people from Babel, chap. 18.

We come now to the concluſion of the epiſtle, which is contained in the 26, 27, 28, and 29, verſes. Wherein, 1. Some promiſes are laid down, in the firſt three verſes; and the common advertiſement, is repeated in the laſt verſe, as is uſual in the reſt of the epiſtles. The object of the promiſes is the ſame, viz. the *overcomer*: only here he is deſcribed by another property, which interpreteth that general, viz. *He keepeth my works unto the end*, that is, one who in the ſincere practice of religion hath ceaſed from his own works, (as it is Heb. iv. 10.) and hath given up himſelf to live to me, as it is, 2 Cor. v. 15. that is, to have my glory for his end, and my will for his rule; and doth continue to proſecute that end according to that rule, notwithſtanding of all difficulties to the end. This is the *overcomer*, and the perſon to whom all theſe promiſes of being admitted to heaven are made, and who may expect the ſame.

There are two excellent promiſes made to ſuch a perſon in theſe words. 1. *To him I will give power over the nations*: which doth indeed ſpeak out an excellent dominion, but no earthly dominion: for, 1. This promiſe is to be performed after the full victory. 2. All overcomers are not capable of temporal power over the nations. It imports then theſe two. *Firſt*, An excellent dominion that the believer may expect. *Secondly*, A joynt ſharing in Chriſt's conqueſt over the nations: in which reſpect it is ſaid, 1 Cor. vi. *They ſhall judge angels, and all the wicked in the day of judgment.* This dominion is two ways amplified, ver. 27. *Firſt*, in reſpect of the abſoluteneſs thereof over all the wicked, *they ſhall be bruiſed with a rod of iron, as the veſſels of a potter ſhall they be broken to ſhivers;*

this is a figurative expreſſion, tending to ſet forth this, that though often believers are now oppreſſed by the wicked of the world, yet the day is coming, when it ſhall be otherwiſe: believers ſhall not only be free from their oppreſſions, but ſhall be as abſolute kings, having dominion over them in the morning, as it is, Pſal. xlix. 14. When the condition of the wicked in God's juſtice ſhall be moſt miſerable. The *Second* way how it is amplified, is, *even as I received of my Father:* which reſpecteth, 1. The thing given, they are made joint partakers of that which Chriſt receiveth. 2. It reſpecteth the ſecurity whereby it is given; and ſo I will give him power, even as I received of my Father, imports that the believers dominion ſhall be no leſs ſure unto him by Chriſt's gift, than Chriſt's dominion is ſure unto him by his Father's conferring the ſame upon him.

The ſecond promiſe is, *And I will give him the Morning-ſtar.* By the *Morning-ſtar*, is underſtood Chriſt himſelf, as he himſelf expounds it, chap. xxii. ver. 16. *I am the bright and Morning-ſtar*, ſo it is I will give him myſelf. The firſt promiſe was much, but this is more: and though heaven be much when it is promiſed; yet this promiſe containeth more: for he that built the houſe, is of more worth than the houſe. Chriſt is called the *Morning-ſtar*, for theſe reaſons; 1. Becauſe the morning-ſtar is moſt eminent among the ſtars; ſo is Chriſt among the ſons, Cant. ii. 3. He hath an eminency beyond all other conſolations whatſoever. 2. He is called the morning-ſtar, becauſe when he is beſtowed upon any, the dark night of their former miſerable and diſconſolate condition is put to an end, as the day-ſtar putteth an end to the preceding night. 3. Chriſt brings in the day-ſpring from on high unto the ſoul who receiveth him: and never was the day-ſtar ſo refreſhful to a traveller, wearied with the darkneſs of the night, as Chriſt will be to the wreſtler, who is longing to have the day-ſtar ariſing in his heart, 2 Pet. i. 19. And although theſe be hints, to ſhadow out the excellency of Chriſt, yet the truth is, neither day-ſtar, nor ſun, nor moon, nor all the ſtars put together, can ſufficiently reſemble his worth and lovely beauty, and refreſhful ſeaſonableneſs to a ſoul, when he manifeſteth himſelf to it.

If it be aſked, why Chriſt promiſeth to give himſelf to the *overcomer*, and under that name? *Anſw.* It is for theſe reaſons, 1. Becauſe there is no other thing that can be abſolutely ſatisfying to the believer, but Chriſt himſelf: and ſeeing Chriſt aimeth at the ſatisfaction of the believer, this glorifieth his grace and love, that he will for that end beſtow himſelf upon them. 2. It is to teach them where to expect their happineſs when this life is ended, and ſo where to ſeek it while they are here: this is not to be had in, and amongſt creatures, but is to be ſought and looked for in Chriſt Jeſus himſelf. 3. It is done to comfort and encourage the believer: for when Chriſt beſtoweth himſelf upon him, what will he not elſe communicate to him that may be for his good? As the apoſtle reaſoneth to this purpoſe, Rom. viii. 32. Believers may be encouraged to wreſtle a while; this night will have an end, and the day-ſtar will ariſe: after which, there ſhall be no more night, nor darkneſs, nor ſun to give light, but the Lord God ſhall enlighten them, and the Lamb himſelf ſhall be a light unto them; for holding forth of this conſolation, is Chriſt expreſſed by this name in this promiſe.

In the 29. verſe, the epiſtle cloſeth with the common advertiſement, *He that hath an ear to hear*, &c. Which is not done for the faſhion, but is the Lord's commending of what hath been ſaid unto the conſciences of the hearers: becauſe what is ſaid, is ſaid by the Spirit to the churches; and it becometh well theſe who have ears to hear, to hear what is ſaid by him.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *And unto the angel of the church in Sardis, write, Theſe things ſaith he that hath the ſeven ſpirits of God, and the ſeven ſtars; I know thy works, that thou haſt a name that thou liveſt, and art dead.*

2. *Be watchful, and ſtrenghten the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.*

3. *Remember therefore how thou haſt received, and heard, and hold faſt, and repent. If therefore*

thou ſhalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou ſhalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

4. *Thou haſt a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments, and they ſhall walk with me in white, for they are worthy.*

5. *He that overcometh, the ſame ſhall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confeſs his name before my Father, and before his angels.*

6. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the churches.*

THIS is the fifth epiſtle, directed to the church in Sardis. It hath the diviſion that is common to the reſt, viz. there is? *Firſt*, An inſcription, ver. 1. *Secondly*, The body of the epiſtle, ver. 2, 3, and 4. And, *Thirdly*, A concluſion, ver. 5, and 6.

The party unto whom it is directed, is the *angel of the church of Sardis:* this was ſpoken of, chap. 1. ver. 11. It was once the ſeat of the rich king Crœſus, abounding in much wealth, and alſo in much ſin, and profanity; yet Chriſt, by his goſpel, begetteth a church in this place. Although it be directed in common to miniſters and people, and for that end doth contain what reſpecteth the church in common; yet we conceive it doth eſpecially and principally relate to the caſe of the miniſter, and to the people, as joined and agreeing with him in that dead condition, as the expoſition thereof will clear.

The perſon from whom the epiſtle is ſent, is ſet forth by two titles, *Firſt, he hath the ſeven Spirits of God:* this was expounded, chap. i. 4. and is repeated, chap. iv. 5, 6. By the *ſeven Spirits* are underſtood the Holy Ghoſt, in his ſeveral gifts, graces, and operations. Chriſt is ſaid *to have* theſe: becauſe he hath committed unto him the diſpenſing of theſe gifts and graces of the Spirit to the church, and doth jointly with the Father, ſend the Holy Ghoſt the Comforter for the good of his people, as is clear from John xiv. 16, 17. and chap. xvi. 7, 8. &c. and many other places. He taketh this title in this place: becauſe having to do with a dead miniſter and people, he would both make them know what muſt quicken them, viz. the Spirit; and how they may attain the ſame, viz. by him. It is no little part of Chriſt's glory, nor of the believer's conſolation, that Chriſt hath the diſpenſing of life, and livelineſs unto his people. The ſecond title is, *which hath the ſeven ſtars*: this is in part taken out of chap. i. ver. 16. where Chriſt is deſcribed, as having in his hand ſeven ſtars.

By *ſtars* are here underſtood miniſters, as chap. i. ver. 20. is clear. Chriſt is here ſaid *to have* them as he hath the ſeven ſpirits; which doth import, 1. His ſpecial intereſt in, and title to miniſters: he hath a peculiar right to the church, beſide what he hath to the world; yet hath he a more peculiar right to the miniſters, as having their commiſſion from him, and dependance on him, in a more ſpecial manner. Therefore Pſal. lxviii. 18. he is ſaid, after his aſcenſion peculiarly, to have received gifts for men, or in the man: and yet theſe gifts are no other but the gifts of apoſtles, paſtors, and teachers, &c. which he again giveth to his church, as is clear from Epheſ. iv. 8. and 11. *Secondly*, This title importeth Chriſt's abſolute ſovereignty over his miniſters, in a ſpecial manner; for, *he hath* them: and ſo they being his, he may diſpoſe of them at his pleaſure, for furthering of them in his work, if they be faithful; and for blaſting of them, if it be otherwiſe. *Thirdly*, It points at Chriſt's care of his miniſters, who doth, in a ſpecial manner, keep and preſerve theſe ſtars, as ſomething that is much eſteemed of by him. Chriſt taketh this title unto himſelf in this epiſtle, 1. That he may provoke this lifeleſs angel, to ſeek life in him, ſeeing he who had the ſeven ſtars, had alſo the ſeven ſpirits; and ſo eſpecially they, viz. his miniſters might expect to be made lively by him, if he were improven by them, and ſo this title doth back the directions that follow. 2. It is alſo to let them know that are miniſters, that though they be in an eminent place; yet are they ſubject to Chriſt who is their ſovereign, and ſo ought to be dependent on him, otherwiſe they are liable to his trial and cenſure, who can diſpoſe of them as he will: and ſo this title addeth weight to the threatening, which is contained, ver. 3.

The body of the epiſtle followeth in the cloſe of the firſt verſe, with the 2, 3, & 4. We may take it up in theſe four, *Firſt*, The Lord diſcovereth the hypocriſy and deadneſs of this miniſter and church, ver. 1. *Secondly*, He propoſeth many directions as remedies fit for their recovery. *Thirdly*, He preſſeth the practice of theſe directions by ſeveral weighty reaſons and threatenings; and theſe two are in-

termixed, ver. 2, 3. *Fourthly*, There is a qualification of this charge, and a conſolation in reference to ſome members that were free from this challenge; and this is held forth, ver. 4.

The caſe of this miniſter and church, is, in two expreſſions, 1. Setting out what they were thought of by others. 2. Expreſſing what indeed they were before God. Before others they had a name *that they were living*, that is, they were thought to be in ſome good and lively condition more than ordinary, and were thought by others about them to be a church, in better condition than other churches: for, *to have a name*, doth import the eſteem of ſomewhat in her, which was not ordinary; yet ſaith the Lord, notwithſtanding of that name *they were dead*, that is very unſuitable to that they were eſteemed to be; and in reſpect thereof, indeed but ſpiritually dead. By this deadneſs we underſtand.

First, A ſimple deadneſs in hypocriſy, and ſo it is to be underſtood, there are but many of you meer hypocrites, although ye have a fair ſhew. *Secondly*, Deadneſs may be underſtood comparatively, that is, either in reſpect of what they ſeemed to be, and were thought to be by others, or what ſometimes they had been. And ſo even believers may be thus charged, who having ſome life, yet in theſe reſpects were defective. And by conſidering what is ſaid ver. 2. where ſome things *ready to die*, are ſpoken of, it will appear that this charge is ſo to be applied in reference to declining believers in part, as to others who were altogether hypocrites. It is like, this church hath been free of groſs errors, for there is no mention of the Nicolaitans in the ſame, as in other churches: it is like alſo, there hath been no inward diviſion amongſt themſelves, or groſs profanity of practice, or ſuch like: for there is no mention of ſuch in the reproof, nor would ſuch have ſtood with an eminent name; but on the contrary, it is like they had ordinances in frequency and purity, the miniſter had gifts in ſome eminency, external ſubjection was given to the ordinances, and they were waited upon: and it may be, there was zeal in outward reformation, as was in Epheſus. Upon theſe, and the like grounds, they came to be eſteemed of by others, as being in an excellent frame: the preachers were thought excellent preachers, and no church thought more happy than the church of Sardis: and it is like, it was counted a bleſſed thing to live in ſuch a place; and it may be, that the miniſter and people had their own too great eſteem of themſelves, as being priviledged beyond others, becauſe they were free both of the errors in doctrine, defects in diſcipline, and alſo of the croſſes and trials, which we find other churches lying under: whereupon they are ſaid to have *a name*; and yet they were indeed, and before the Lord, in the reſpects formerly mentioned, *dead* and unanſwerable to that name: which is indeed a ſad charge, and a moſt dangerous condition. Whence we may obſerve, that a church or miniſter, or a particular perſon may have a great eſteem from others, and alſo have much eſteem of themſelves, and have ſome ſeeming grounds for the ſame; and yet either totally, or in part, and comparatively, be but dead and lifeleſs; and in no ſuch eſtimation before God. This may make all, both miniſters and people, to tremble, and to beware of being pleaſed with frothy and empty names, which oftentimes are found to be exceeding light before God.

It may be inquired on this occaſion, 1. As to a private perſon, what grounds one may have to account himſelf living, when yet indeed he may be dead? For anſwer, We conceive that the Lord, in his wiſdom, hath made a peremptory deciſion of this queſtion to be impoſſible, viz. how great length an hypocrite may go, and yet be ſtill in the ſtate of hypocriſy; as alſo, of that other, viz. how far a believer may decline in the eſtate of grace, and yet continue to be a believer? Becauſe the deciding of theſe, as to the *maximum* or *minimum quod ſic*, doth not tend to edification: and he would have his people keeping a diſtance, even from the borders and marches of theſe things in their practices. Yet we conceive, that it is clear from ſcripture, that a hypocrite may have very many things that may be the occaſion of a name to him; and yet really he may be ſtill unſound. We may, for example, inſtance them in theſe particulars; 1. If we look to negatives, they may be juſtly chargeable with nothing before men, either as to ommiſſions or commiſſions: and in this reſpect Paul was *blameleſs*, even while a phariſee, Phil. iii. 6. 2. If we look to the common gifts of the Spirit, which come under that name of *gratia gratis data*, they may come a great length here, as to ſpeak with tongues, to underſtand all myſteries, to have all knowledge, 1 Cor. xiii. 2. And in this reſpect they may preach well, write well, diſpute well; yea, even to the edification of others: And as to the exerciſing of a gift, pray well

alſo. And, no queſtion, Judas and others, whom the Lord will not own for his in the day of judgment, were eminent in all theſe, as they were for caſting out of devils and the working of miracles. 3. If we will look to the performance of external duties, it will be found they may come a great length in this reſpect. That Phariſee, Luke xvii. 11, 12. prayed and faſted often, and gave tithes of all: and that man, Matth. xix. 20. ſaid *all theſe things did I keep from my youth:* which might be true, as to the outward performance of duties, and ſo as they underſtood them; which alſo is confirmed from the example of Paul. 4. If we look in to the ſpiritual meaning of the law, as it doth oblige the inward man to a conformity thereto, we will find that hypocrites may go a length even in that: thus we find a diſcreet ſcribe (Mark xii. 32, 33.) acknowledging, that to *love the Lord with all the heart, with all the underſtanding, with all the ſoul, with all the ſtrength, and to love his neighbour as himſelf, is more than all whole burnt-offerings and ſacrifices.* This is indeed much, to prefer internal moral duties to external ceremonial performances; and is more than uſually was acknowledged amongſt them: for which cauſe, the Lord ſaith in the next word, *Thou art not far from the kingdom of God;* yet he inſinuated he was not in the kingdom of God, and ſo not really ſound notwithſtanding. 5. They will ſometimes have ſeeming fruits, even as to ſuffering, although no hypocrite can have a ſincere end therein; yet it is clear, that many of them may ſuffer many things materially for the truth of Chriſt. The apoſtle, 1 Cor. xiii. ſuppoſeth that one may give his body to be burnt, and yet want love: and Gal. iii. 4. he ſuppoſeth that there may be much ſuffering in vain. And certainly experience in all ages of the church, had made this appear to be truth. 6. If we look further in reference to goſpel duties, there may be fair flouriſhing in this reſpect alſo; as *Firſt*, Convictions of ſin may be carried on a great length: Saul was often brought to ſay, *I have ſinned;* Felix trembleth while Paul preacheth to him, Acts xxiv. 25. And even Simon Magus is brought to deſire the help of Peter's prayers, as being convinced of his hazard, Acts viii. 24. *Secondly*, This conviction may be followed with ſomething like repentance and ſorrow for the committing of ſin; thus, even Ahab humbleth himſelf, 1 Kings xxi. 27, 29. and theſe that are mentioned, Pſal. lxxxviii. 34. &c. did *ſeek and inquire after him who ſlew them.* And certainly there wants not ſorrow and bitterneſs in Judas' repentance, Mat. xxvi. 3. &c. when he did really rue what he had done. *Thirdly*, There may be alſo ſomething like faith; whereby one may, in part, be brought to believe the general truths of the goſpel concerning Chriſt, &c. and to his own apprehenſion be perſuaded in himſelf, that he hath received him; and ſo carry within himſelf, as if indeed there were ground to expect, what is promiſed in him. This is clear alſo, from the many inſtances of hiſtorical and temporal faith, that are recorded in ſcripture: and in this reſpect, it is ſaid of the temporary believer, *That anon he receiveth the word with joy, and goeth forth as if all were well.* Thus Agrippa, is by the force of the word, *almoſt perſuaded to be a Chriſtian*, Acts xxvi. 28. and Iſa. xlviii. 1, 2. ſome are ſaid to call *themſelves of the holy city; and ſtay themſelves on the Lord God of Iſrael* (which ſuppoſeth an exerciſe of faith, at leaſt in their account) and yet, it was not done in truth and in righteouſneſs. In the ſeventh place, we may inſtance it in the common operations of the Spirit, on the affection within: we have already hinted ſomething of convictions for ſin, of fear, of wrath, and deſtruction of the ſoul, which certainly may ſometimes affect many hypocrites; alſo of grief and worldly ſorrow, which may ſeize upon ſuch, and in an high degree; who yet may have nothing of God in them: upon the other ſide, there may be much of it alſo in reſpect of the flaſhes of joy, tenderneſs and meltings of heart, which hypocrites may have at one time either in ſome public ordinances, or poſſibly in ſecret, or otherwiſe, more than at other times; and yet there be nothing but the common operations of the Spirit, ſuch as was in many of John's hearers, who *for a ſeaſon rejoiced in his light*, John v. 35. And in the temporary believer, as was formerly cited: for, the Lord that diſpenſeth the common gifts of the Spirit as he pleaſeth, doth alſo diſpenſe of theſe common effects of the Spirit's operation, ſuch as liberty, fear, joy, ſorrow, and the like, according to his ſovereign pleaſure, without reſpect to the eternal ſtate, good or bad of the perſon on whom he beſtoweth them. Now ſeeing theſe things, and ſuch like, may be where yet ſincerity is not; what wonder is there that a perſon be ſaid to have a name by others, or be thought to have reality by himſelf, when yet indeed there is nothing but deadneſs? Oftentimes men (that are ordinarily admirers of themſelves and what is in themſelves) are

brought to think highly of themſelves, and of the ſincerity of their own ſtate, and that with great perſuaſion, upon leſs grounds than theſe that are laid down, as we will find in the epiſtle to Laodicea.

If it be aſked, (ſuppoſing ſuch things to be) *What can further be defective to reality?*

Anſ. To ſay no more, all theſe things may be, and yet there may be defect in theſe three, which are ſimply neceſſary for the differencing of a ſincere perſon from an hypocrite. *Firſt*, There may be a want of the new nature, and the perſon not yet be born again, as it is, John iii. 3. *Secondly*, All theſe may be, and yet the perſon not be brought really to deny his own righteouſneſs, and poſitively to receive Chriſt offered in the goſpel, and to reſt upon him, for the attaining of life thro' his righteouſneſs and ſatisfaction although they may be convinced it is good to do it, and altho' they may think they have done it, (being blinded by their own pride) and altho' they may ſome way comfort themſelves as if they had done it in this their preſumptuous dream; yet, really it is never done: for ſo they could not but be ſaved, becauſe of the immutable terms of God's covenant, which ſay, *Whoſoever believeth in him ſhall not periſh, but have eternal life.* *Thirdly*, All theſe things may be, when yet there is defect in the nature of the inward duties (to ſay ſo) and in the manner of performing what is outward, that is, they may be both without the qualifications required to the conſtituting of ſincerity and ſincere acts ſpoken to, chap. ii. So that ſtill theſe fruits, are but fruits of the old tree and fleſh, and are not brought forth by faith in Jeſus Chriſt, without which nothing can be pleaſing to God; neither is his glory ſingly aimed at in them, &c. without which the moſt glancing fruits, will be but rotten before the Lord.

Again, *Secondly*, Conſidering this, *Thou haſt a name that thou liveſt, and art dead*, with reſpect to the miniſter: it may be inquired, 1. What kind of miniſter this is, who may be ſaid to have a name that he liveth, and is dead, 2. What may be the reaſons that make even miniſters to reſt ſatisfied in the applauſe of others, and in ſuch things as may gain an approbation before men, without that which may make him approveable before God?

To the firſt, we ſay, that in the deſcribing of ſuch a miniſter, we muſt, 1. Look to ſome things which he hath, that give the ground of his having a name. And, 2. To ſomething which he hath not, the want thereof, proveth him to have no more but a name. *Firſt*, then a miniſter may be in his particular condition ſuch an one as was formerly deſcribed with many commendable things in his outward carriage. *Secondly*, He may have ſome good meaſure of gifts, and a pleaſing quickneſs and dexterity in preaching and managing of other duties that belong to his calling. This gift it ſeemeth, was in many church-officers at Corinth, which made them appear exceeding eminent. *Thirdly*, He may have a frequency, and accurate formality in the diſcharge of all duties, as bearing forth much diligence and faithfulneſs in the diſcharge of them, with a ſeeming fervour and earneſtneſs. It is like, that theſe who preached Chriſt out of envy, Phil. i. 15. wanted not a good meaſure of this. *Fourthly*, He may have a great plauſibleneſs and a familiar kind of humanity, and diſcretion (to ſpeak ſo) in his converſation with others, which often tendeth to gain applauſe from them, as if it were a ſpecial ſign of humility, and an evidence of love and reſpect, whereby men oftentimes are engaged to eſteem of ſuch a miniſter, more upon ſuch an account, viz. as being particularly friendly to them, than *for their work's ſake*, as the word is, 1 Theſſ. v. 13. It is like, that theſe falſe teachers that got ſuch a name, as, *who but they*, in Corinth and Galatia, had much of this way of inſinuation: and alſo theſe mentioned, Phil. i. cannot well be thought to be free in this reſpect, ſeeing they preached Chriſt out of envy and ſtrife, ver. 15. as minding to gain a name thereby beyond Paul. *Fifthly*, Such a miniſter may alſo have ſeeming countenance in his miniſtry with authority and reſpect amongſt his people, and ſeeming countenance and fruit in outward things, as in the bearing down of error, the ſuppreſſing of groſs ſcandals and outbreakings, and the bringing of his people to ſome conformity in public and private duties: in which reſpects, his congregation may be more formal than many others. Upon theſe, and ſuch like conſiderations, a miniſter may have a name of a very eminent and excellent miniſter; and yet there may be much unſoundneſs in two reſpects: 1. As to his own perſonal condition, he may be without life, or at the beſt without livelineſs in any ſuitable degree. 2. As to his public miniſtry, he may be in many things defective, as to the ſincerity of his practice before God, even when he appeareth to be found and diligent before men, as it is here, ver. 2. *I have not found thy works perfect before God.* Where we ſhall

conſider this more particularly: and do therefore now leave this firſt queſtion.

The ſecond queſtion is, *What may make a miniſter ſo ready to pleaſe himſelf in the having of gifts, and a name before others, when yet he may be ſo faulty before God?*

Anſw. The deceits of mens hearts are very deep: and although it be exceedingly to be regretted, that miniſters ſhould fall in this evil of reſting in the applauſe of others, when in the mean time they want God's approbation, in a great part at leaſt; yet it cannot be denied to be a truth: and what is written to the angels of Epheſus, Sardis, and Laodicea, doth abundantly confirm the ſame: and theſe reaſons may be given thereof: 1. Becauſe oftentimes miniſters, eſpecially ſuch miniſters aim too much at the pleaſing of men, and at the gaining of reſpect and applauſe amongſt them: this may be a temptation to the moſt ſincere, but it is really that which unſound men are ſwayed with, as it is clear, Philip. ii. 21. And therefore when what they principally deſigned, is attained, it is no wonder that they reſt therein. 2. Of all men in the world, miniſters are moſt obnoxious to this temptation of vanity, and ſeeking approbation from others; becauſe moſt of their appearances are in public before others, and that in the exerciſe of ſome gift of the mind, which is ſuppoſed to hold forth the inward worth of a perſon more than any other thing. Now, when this meeteth with applauſe, it holdeth out a people's eſtimation of ſuch a perſon's worth, which hath a great ſubtilty in its pleaſing and tickling of him, and ſo is ready to incline him to reſt ſatisfied therein. 3. Many miniſters are not travelling in birth to beget ſouls, and to have ſucceſs as to the ſalvation of many, as well as outward fruits; but are at beſt ſtudying to exoner themſelves, as having been diligent in their duty. Now, when ſuch meet with applauſe from others, it is interpreted by them, as ſome confirmation of their diligence, and ſeal of their exoneration in their miniſtry: for, men being naturally willing to abſolve themſelves, are eaſily induced to admit of any teſtimony, which may ſeem to confirm their own integrity. 4. Oftentimes miniſters take more pains in external duties of their miniſtry that are obvious to the view of others, than they do in the inward ſecret duties of Chriſtianity upon their own hearts, ſuch as ſelf-examination, the making of their own calling and election ſure, the keeping of themſelves in the love of God, the exerciſing of faith, repentance, &c. whereby it cometh to paſs, that often that may be their regret which is ſpoken, Song i. 6. *They made me the keeper of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept.* And from this it is, that though their condition be exceeding defective before God; yet, they being unacquainted therewith, cannot be affected with the ſame. And no queſtion, many miniſters have much carnal quietneſs in their miniſtry, who could not entertain the ſame, if they knew how things were with them before God. 5. This evil alſo is incident to miniſters, and hath great influence upon the other, that their having ſuch gifts, ſeeing fruits and approbation before others, is oftentimes made uſe of to counterbalance, and bear down any challenge that may ariſe concerning their own unſoundneſs, as if all theſe were teſtimonies to the contrary: and ſo, as oftentimes outward proſperity doth, through mens corruption, bear down challenges in ſome private perſons, which adverſity doth waken up in others; ſo an outward proſperous miniſtry, to ſay ſo, doth often ſmother many challenges of a man's inward unſoundneſs, which readily had been more taken notice of, had there not been ſuch gifts, outward countenance in external duties, and approbation from others. Hence we ſee, that as often the moſt tender Chriſtian is under the croſs, ſo it is the moſt lively miniſter who laboureth moſt under the ſenſe of his own inſufficiency and ſhort-coming in gifts, who hath moſt groſs out-breakings in errors, and profanity weighting him amongſt his people; who meeteth with moſt diſreſpect, and manifeſt diſappointments among the people, and ſuch like; theſe are often bleſſed of God, to keep ſuch a perſon lively, when others, without theſe, do ſit up and forget themſelves. O but miniſters that have a name, and ſome ſeeming countenance in the exerciſe of their gifts, great applauſe and acceptation amongſt the people, had need to be humble and watchful, leſt they be liable to this charge, *Thou haſt a name that thou liveſt, but art dead?* And, no queſtion, many inadvertently are ſlain by ſuch things themſelves, when they preach to others.

We come now to the ſecond thing in the body of the epiſtle, which is the directions that the Lord giveth both to miniſter and people, for the recovering of them out of that condition, ver. 2, 3. And becauſe the reaſons whereby he preſſeth theſe directions, are intermixed, we ſhall ſpeak to both in order as they ly. The directions are of two ſorts. The

firſt reſpecteth their preſent duty, and their carriage for the time to come, in reference to what might occur; the other reſpecteth what was paſt, and their carriage in reference to that. The firſt is in ver. 2. comprehended in two directions: both which imply their former guiltineſs. The firſt is, *Be watchful:* which looketh both to watchfulneſs in the private duties of Chriſtianity, and alſo to a more watchful ſympathizing manner of going about the duties of the miniſtry: which implieth, that whatever name they had before others, that yet really there was much deadneſs and ſecurity, unwatchfulneſs, and untenderneſs in both theſe reſpects before God. The ſecond direction is, *And ſtrengthen the things that remain, which are ready to die: by things that remain, and are ready to die*, may be underſtood, 1. Some remainders of the work of God in ſome that were honeſt, which being through careleſneſs and ſecurity, exceedingly weakened and brought very low, were in hazard to die out, if not prevented: this reſpecteth eſpecially theſe members who had declined from ſomewhat which once they had been at. And although no queſtion, there were many in that church who never had any thing; yet it is no marvel that the Lord mould his directions with a ſpecial reference to ſuch as had ſome honeſty in them. 2. Theſe words may be underſtood as peculiarly ſpoken to the miniſter; and ſo the *things that remain*, &c. are ſome little ſtirrings amongſt the people, as the fruits of his miniſtry, which now are like to die out, becauſe of his formal way of carrying of himſelf in his duty: or, it may look to the few honeſt ones, which were among them, who were not fed and nouriſhed by him in their ſpiritual conditions, and ſo were like to ſtarve, even when he was flouriſhing in the exerciſe of his gifts to the admiration of others. The direction, *And ſtrengthen the things that remain*, muſt be expounded with reſpect to both theſe: and ſo with reſpect to the firſt, it ſaith, They that ever had any thing of God, and now have taken a ſtand, had need warmly and tenderly to nouriſh and confirm that which is behind; that by the exerciſe of tenderneſs, prayer, repentance, and other things that belong to the life of religion, that ſpunk may be kept from dying out. With reſpect to the ſecond, viz. The miniſter, it putteth him to a more careful, painful, and ſympathizing way of looking to the flock, and feeding them according to their ſeveral tempers, with what might be ſolid and nouriſhing to them; leſt the bloſſoms of fruits, which he had in his miniſtry, ſhould evaniſh, and be blaſted. And thus he is reproved for taking pains poſſibly in fitting his ſermons to the fancies of ſome curious and vain hearers, by the bringing forth of high notions and great words, whereby himſelf might be accounted a great man; and that yet in the mean time, there was no care had to provide food, or phyſic, for hungry and ſick ſouls.

This part of the directions is backed by two arguments. The firſt is implied in theſe words, *That are ready to die:* which is in ſum, if ye that are Chriſtians, be not diligent and ſerious; and ye that are miniſters, be not watchful and faithful; ye that are private Chriſtians, are in hazard to have any beginnings that are in you extinguiſhed: which may be underſtood reſpectively, both of ſaving and common ſtirrings; and ye that are miniſters, may have your miniſtry blaſted, if theſe directions be not followed. This doth not imply any uncertainty of the perſevering of the truly godly, but doth ſet out *Firſt*, The connection which God hath made betwixt livelineſs and diligence. And, *Secondly*, It ſheweth how God ſometimes uſeth to ſtir up ſecure believers, viz. by giving and bleſſing to them ſome ſharp warnings.

The ſecond way by which he preſſeth theſe directions, is more expreſly ſet down in the end of ver. 2. *For I have not found thy works perfect before God:* which is, in a word, whatever men think of them as before them; yet I, having tried them according as they are before God, and in his ſight, who ſeeth further than men, have not found them to be perfect before him. This word in the Greek is πεπληρωμενα, a word that is moſt ordinarily uſed in reference to miniſters, and ſetteth forth integrity and ſincerity in their miniſtry, when they *fulfil* or *make full proof of* their miniſtry, as it is, 2 Tim. iv. 5. or when they *fully preach the goſpel* of Chriſt as it is rendered, Rom. xv. 19. and in other places. Therefore here it would ſeem eſpecially to relate to the defects of the miniſter, even when he went about his miniſterial duties. And it importeth: *Firſt*, That miniſters miniſterial duties ought to be perfect before God. *Secondly*, That the Lord Jeſus will eſpecially take notice of them, and their miniſterial duties. *Thirdly*, It importeth this, That there are many miniſters, who are very fair in their outward miniſte-

rial carriage before others, and cannot be liable to any charge before men; that yet, when Chriſt cometh to try them, and reckon with them, will be found exceeding defective before God. And on this occaſion it is fit to conſider; 1. What is neceſſarily requiſite, according to this form of ſpeech, That a miniſter's *works may be perfect before God.* 2. What maketh a miniſter, that may be abounding in external labours, yet to be liable to this charge, That his *works are not perfect before God.* And this will clear a queſtion, which we left imperfect in the firſt verſe, and not ſo particularly anſwered.

To the firſt, That a miniſter's works may be perfect before God: beſide the frequency of them, and what may alſo be in his other perſonal carriage, theſe things will be found to be required by virtue of this expreſſion; 1. That in public miniſterial duties, a man may be acted out of zeal to the glory of God, and affection to the ſouls of theſe he preacheth to: this was Paul's practice in his fulfilling of his miniſtry, Col. i. 25. (where the ſame word is) being compared with what goeth immediately before, and what followeth after. And this is the great commendation of Timothy beyond others, Philip. ii. 20. that he naturally cared for the ſtate of the people; that is, he purſued their edification, as a mother will ſeek the ſafety and good of her own child. This is a qualification of an high price before God, without which, no diligence will be eſteemed of. 2. That a miniſter's miniſterial duties be thus perfect, it is requiſite that in them he extend himſelf according to his ability to the utmoſt for the people's edification: that is, *to make full proof of the miniſtry*, 2 Tim. iv. 5. when nothing is left uneſſayed, which may put a man's gifts, time, ability, &c. to the utmoſt, for the peoples good; ſo that his deſign is ſeriouſly to improve all for that end. 3. There muſt not only be diligence and faithfulneſs in external duties; but there muſt alſo be a ſuitableneſs to God's mind, in the end, motives, and manner of performing theſe duties; and alſo tenderneſs and faithfulneſs in the performing of ſuch duties as are not obvious to men, viz. praying for the people, ſympathizing with them in ſtraits, grieving when they are wounded, and the like, which we will find frequent in the practice of Paul. Now, when a miniſter contenteth himſelf with the performing of ſuch duties as are before men, and maketh no conſcience of theſe, it looketh as if he aimed rather to be approven of men than of God: and therefore his works cannot be ſaid to be perfect before him. And to this belongeth a miniſter's carrying of himſelf in preaching admonition, and every duty as in the ſight of God, 2 Cor. ii. 17. *For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God; but as of ſincerity, but as of God, in the ſight of God ſpeak we in Chriſt.* 4. This perfection taketh in an earneſtneſs and univerſality in all the duties of the miniſtry, and that in reference to all times and perſons: ſo the miniſter muſt reprove, threaten, and carry diſpleaſing meſſages, as well as inſtruct, comfort, and preach that which may be more pleaſing. He muſt do this alſo in reference to great men, as well as to theſe who are mean, as well to theſe whom he loveth, and who loveth him, as to others: and ſo he is to be ſearching the ſecret faults of profeſſors, viz. their ſecurity, pride, hypocriſy, &c. as well as the groſs outbreakings of others. It is like, that this angel was defective in this reſpect, and ſearched not in his doctrine, ſo as to make diſcovery of the hidden hypocriſy and corruption of hearts; and that he did not faithfully rip up their wounds, poſſibly fearing to diſpleaſe them: for, oftentimes he that ſeeketh to heal the wounds moſt ſmoothly, gaineth moſt applauſe from others. Now, where there is defect in theſe, no miniſterial duties can ever be accounted perfect before God. When Paul is putting Timothy to make perfect, or full proof of his miniſtry, 2 Tim. iv. he thus proceedeth, ver. 2. *Preach the word, be inſtant in ſeaſon, out of ſeaſon; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-ſuffering, and doctrine.* And ſo he deſcribeth himſelf to the ſame purpoſe, Col. i. 28, 29. *Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wiſdom; that we may preſent every man perfect in Chriſt Jeſus: whereunto I alſo labour, ſtriving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.*

From this now it will be eaſy to anſwer to the ſecond, viz. What defects in miniſterial duties may make them not to be accounted perfect before God: for, if the former four be neceſſary to make ſuch works perfect, then when there is defect in theſe, or any of theſe, a miniſters works cannot but be found imperfect: and therefore we ſhall ſay no more of it.

The ſecond ſort of directions that ſome way relate to their former carriage, as well as to their preſent duty, are ſet down, verſe 3. In them the Lord

draweth them back to conſider the time of their eſpouſals, as it were, and the terms upon which they contracted together; what he propoſed to them and what they received of his hand, when the word came amongſt them; that now themſelves may ſee, if they have been anſwerable to ſuch engagements and reſolutions; and if there be not reaſon to repent of their declining. In general, this direction putteth them to a back-ſearch of themſelves: which is an excellent mean of recovery, either of miniſter or of people, who have declined, as was cleared from the epiſtle to Epheſus, chap. ii. 5. But more particularly, there are four words holding forth their duty. 1. Remember how thou received: this importeth, *Firſt*, That there was an offer made to them of the goſpel. *Secondly*, That they had in profeſſion received the ſame. *Thirdy*, When it is ſaid, *How thou haſt*, &c. it importeth ſome more than ordinary conviction, or warmneſs in that their profeſſed ſubjection to the propoſed goſpel. It is like, ſome of them were as John Baptiſt's hearers were, John v. 35. *Rejoicing in that light for a ſeaſon;* but afterward becoming carnal and ſecure. And if there was any honeſty, it was then more lively in exerciſe, than it continued to be thereafter: therefore, ſaith the Lord, conſider what hath become of that now, and if the preſent deadneſs be anſwerable to that tenderneſs; and ſo, upon that conſideration, be provoked to ſtudy more livelineſs. The ſecond word is, *How thou haſt heard*: this is almoſt, the ſame with the former, and looketh to the terms which God propoſed to them, when he took them to be a church, and what was their purpoſe when they ſubmitted thereunto: as if the Lord had ſaid, *Did I propoſe to you only to take on a name without reality? Or did ye engage only to be profeſſors in ſhew, and not to be thoroughly ſincere?* See then how this condition of yours anſwereth my propoſal, and your engagement. The third word is, *And hold faſt:* which is not to be underſtood, as if he were well pleaſed with their preſent condition, as in the epiſtles to Thyatira and Philadelphia: becauſe here he giveth them many directions and burdens (to ſay ſo) beſides this, which he doth not in the other two epiſtles: but it doth imply theſe two, 1. A neceſſity of holding faſt the little thing that was, leſt they ſhould run to the extremity of declining ere long. 2. It reſpecteth what they had received and heard: and ſo, the meaning is, that they would grip faſter to hold that, than formerly they had done. Under theſe directions we may gather what hath been their guiltineſs, and the ſteps by which they have come to ſuch an height in this hypocriſy and declining. The laſt word is, *Repent:* which is a general cure for all evils, and is of ſpecial Uſe for the preventing and removing of ſuch inward evils, as declining from any good condition, ſecurity, preſumption, and hypocriſy, as we may ſee through all theſe epiſtles. For readily it cannot be evil with the ſpiritual frame of a Chriſtian, when repentance is in exerciſe, and it cannot be well known when it is otherwiſe. But of this we ſhall no more now.

The third thing in the body of this epiſtle, viz. the way how the Lord preſſeth theſe exhortations in this verſe, is by ſubjoining a ſharp threatening, *If therefore thou ſhalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou ſhalt not know:* this threatening is general; but it is the more comprehenſive and ſharp if we conſider theſe two, 1. That when he ſaith, *He will come*, he doth not ſignify any particular ſtroke he will bring on them, whereby they may gather, that there is no particular threatening; but it may be comprehended under this general: and ſo it may be, I will come unto thee, and remove thy candleſtick, or fight againſt thee with the ſword of my mouth, or call thee and thy people ſome extraordinary way to a reckoning and ſuch like. The ſin of hypocriſy, eſpecially in a miniſter, is a moſt dreadful ſin, and they who are guilty thereof, are in a moſt dreadful condition: for their doom is black, and God may fill therein all the threatenings that are in this book, as it is in Deut. xxix. 20. and Rev. xxii. 18. And they themſelves cannot tell how many evils they are liable unto at Chriſt's coming upon them. 2. If we conſider, that this coming of Chriſt's is no friendly coming to them; but as the coming of an enemy upon them, and that in ſome terrible manner, ſuddenly and unexpectedly ſurpriſing them. And ſo it preſſeth them to the preſent exerciſe of repentance, becauſe the coming of the Lord would be dreadful unto them in that condition; and yet it was hard to know how ſuddenly they might be ſurprized by the ſame.

The fourth thing in the body of the epiſtle is, The conſolation laid down in reference to the handful that had ſome life: for, if they were but as two or three on the tops of the uttermoſt branches, the Lord will not neglect them. This conſolation, ver. 4. hath three parts. 1. The perſons are deſcribed to whom it is ſent. 2. The conſolation is laid down in a promiſe. 3. The reaſon is given,

why the Lord putteth this difference betwixt them and others. The perſons are ſeveral ways deſcribed, 1. They are ſaid to be *ſome names*: This is according to the ſcripture phraſe, to ſhew their eminency and excellency beyond others, who by their integrity had, as it were, procured themſelves a name in Chriſt's account: ſo this phraſe is underſtood, Acts i. 15. viz. not only it ſignifieth ſome perſons ſimply but ſome perſons that are eminent. 2. They are *even in Sardis*: and this commends their honeſty, that had keeped ſomewhat lively, even where miniſter and people were dead. 3. They are *a few names*: which ſheweth, that in compariſon with the multitude of this church, there were but few ſincere believers, at leaſt, in a lively condition, altho' outward things looked exceeding fair, which alſo heightens their commendation. 4. In the deſcription, it is ſaid, *Thou haſt*, relating to the angel: which ſaith, That a lifeleſs miniſter may have ſome lively perſons under his charge; and yet he is little to be thanked for it. We conceive, that this doth not only reſpect the title which he hath to all that are members; but it ſeemeth to relate to a peculiar intereſt to theſe few beſide others; and ſo they might be ſaid to be *his*, as being begotten by his miniſtry: in which reſpect, he could not be ſaid to have theſe who had no ſincerity at all. 5. They are deſcribed by this, *That they have not defiled their garments*: which relateth not only to purity in outward practice, (for it is like, that was not ſo rare a thing in Sardis) but eſpecially it relateth to their inward livelineſs and freedom from theſe evils, eſpecially of ſecurity, formality, declining, hypocriſy, and ſuch like, that were common in the place. And thus, *to keep the garments*, is often taken univerſally, as reſpecting man's inward condition, as well as that that is outward, and particularly, chap. xvi. ver. 15.

The conſolation itſelf, is in this promiſe, *They ſhall walk with me in white*: which hath a twofold conſolation in it; 1. That they ſhall walk with Chriſt, and ſo enjoy his company, and be made happy objectively by the poſſeſſing of his preſence. 2. That in the enjoying of Chriſt's company, they ſhall be cloathed with white: which we take to hold forth the unconceivable glory which ſhall be put upon the ſouls, and even the bodies alſo of believers, when they ſhall be raiſed in glory, and bear the image of the heavenly, &c. 1 Cor. xv. and ſhall be conformed to Chriſt's glorious body, Phil. iii. 21. and ſhall ſhine as the ſun in the firmament, Matt. xiii. 43. It is called *White*, 1. Becauſe then *there ſhall be no ſpot amongſt all the congregation of the firſt-born*. 2. When Chriſt is on his conqueſt, chap. xix. he appeareth in white: and in this place, it is to ſhew forth the believer's abſolute victory over all difficulties and enemies. 3. When Chriſt was transfigured, his garments did ſhine; ſo ſaith he here, That the believer who keepeth himſelf pure, ſhall walk in Chriſt's livery, and, as it were, he ſhall give them new cloaths like to his own; thus ſhall they be ſubjectively happy.

The reaſon ſubjoined is in theſe words, *For they are worthy*: we may take up worthineſs under ſeveral conſiderations; as, *Firſt*, When there is ſuppoſed to be in proper juſtice a condignity between the deſerving of the perſon, and the thing that is beſtowed upon him: as when a workman is ſaid to be worthy of his wages, ſpeaking as amongſt men: in this reſpect, Scotus, and many of the ſchoolmen that follow him, deny that men can merit any thing before God: becauſe there is ſuch a diſtance between God and creatures, that no creature can make God his debtor, without reſpect to his own free egagement and promiſe: and alſo, becauſe there is no due proportionableneſs between the great happineſs of eternal life, and what men can do to procure the ſame. This doctrine is much oppoſed by the generality of the ſchoolmen, and latter Jeſuites, as having theſe abſurdities with it; 1. That it deſtroyeth all proper merit. 2. That it ſaith, there is no condignity in good works themſelves, without reſpect to God's promiſe; whereas they ſay, ſuch and ſuch works had been condignly meritorious, although there had never been ſuch a promiſe. 3. They ſay, It is all one with the heretics opinion, and ſuch like: of which, poſſibly, we may ſay a word ſome otherwhere, if the Lord will, yet, this firſt acception of worthineſs or merit, cannot be admitted here: becauſe, 1. It contrairs the end of Chriſt's giving this promiſe, which is to expreſs the freeneſs of his grace in taking notice of ſuch, and beſtowing ſuch an excellent priviledge on them beyond their deſerving. 2. It is contrary to what is implied in the promiſe: for, if they had abſolute perfection for the time, ſo as to merit to be thus dealt with, then it would ſuppoſe that they did already walk in white, and were ſimply free of all blots; whereas Chriſt doth difference their future happy condition from what they had for the time in this reſpect, that although then they wanted not their own infirmities, albeit they were ſincere, and free of the faults that others

were lying under; yet wanted they not all ſpots: but at that time, when this promiſe ſhould be fulfilled theſe ſpots ſhould be wiped away, and they ſhould walk fully in white. *Secondly*, *Worth*, or *merit*, is ſometimes taken as it reſpecteth God's gracious acceptation of a ſinner thro' Chriſt Jeſus; and thus, a believing ſinner may be ſaid to be worthy, and to have heaven beſtowed upon him in God's righteouſneſs and faithfulneſs. 1. Becauſe in Chriſt he is accepted as worthy: and ſo they may be ſaid to be worthy in him, as they are juſt and righteous in him, that is, through the imputation of Chriſt's worth and righteouſneſs unto them: for though it be ſaid here, that *they are worthy;* yet it is not ſaid that they are worthy in themſelves. 2. In this reſpect, believers may be ſaid to be worthy; becauſe God hath freely condeſcended to promiſe ſuch things unto them: and therefore (to ſpeak ſo) according to the terms of the law of grace, they may expect and claim the performance of ſuch promiſes from the righteous Judge, who cannot in his juſtice, but perform what he hath promiſed, as if there were a tye of ſtrict juſtice by merit put upon him. And this agreeth with the apoſtles reaſoning, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. In the third place, often this word which is rendered *worthy* here, is to be underſtood of a meetneſs and ſuitableneſs which is in ſuch a thing, without reſpect to any merit or proper juſtice: thus it is rendered, Matth. iii. 8. *Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.* The word rendered *meet* there, is the ſame that is rendered *worthy* here, and importeth only that there ought to be a ſuitableneſs in their fruits to true repentance. This will agree well to this place, as the ſcope cleareth: the Lord ſaith, they kept themſelves clean, when others were defiled: therefore they ſhall walk with me in *white*, when others ſhall be polluted: and the reaſon is ſubjoined, it is ſuitable and meet it ſhould be ſo, that theſe that difference themſelves in keeping clean from the ſins of others, ſhould be by me brought to a condition where they ſhall have eternal and abſolute whiteneſs. And at the firſt view, it is clear, that the promiſe is conceived in theſe terms, ſo as it may carry in it a ſuitableneſs to their preſent honeſt condition. And the Lord often uſeth this expreſſion, both in his promiſes and threatnings, when he intendeth not to ſhew what is due in ſtrict juſtice; but only that there is, and will be, a ſuitableneſs and proportionableneſs between mens carriages, and his dealing with them, as we will after find, chap. xvi. 15, 16. And this we reſt in, as the meaning of the place, and as moſt clear from the ſcope thereof.

The concluſion followeth: wherein, 1. There are ſome encouragement given to the overcomer, ver. 5. And then the common advertiſement ver. 6. which is in all the other epiſtles. There are three promiſes made to the overcomer. The firſt is, *the ſame ſhall be clothed in white raiment:* which is, upon the matter that ſame which was promiſed to theſe few ſincere members that were in Sardis. And is here propoſed, to ſhew, that not only theſe in Sardis, but all that ſhall faithfully wreſtle and overcome, ſhall be made partakers of that excellent privilege formerly mentioned: and yet, I ſuppoſe, none can ſay that all that ſhall be cloathed in white, and admitted to heaven, are in ſtrict and proper juſtice worthy of the ſame; yet, upon the former popiſh principles, this will follow, if ſo be the proper worthineſs of theſe in Sardis, had been the thing that procured this privilege to them, viz. *to walk in white.*

The ſecond promiſe is, *And I will not blot out his name out of the book of life.* The book of life is frequently mentioned in this prophecy: and (God willing) we may take occaſion to ſpeak ſomewhat of it, chap. xx. Only now we ſay, there are four books figuratively attributed to God (to mention no more) for, God hath neither need nor uſe of books; but after the manner of men, for helping us to take up his mind, he thus expreſſeth himſelf. *Firſt*, There is a book that is more general, and comprehendeth his decrees: which, in his ordinary providence he executeth in the world from time to time. In this reſpect, all his works are ſaid to be known to him from the beginning, as if he had had a particular roll of them all: and it is with reſpect to this, that David (Pſal. cxxxix. 16.) ſaith, *Thine eyes did ſee my ſubſtance yet being imperfect, and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were faſhioned, when as yet there was none of them.* A ſecond book is, of God's omniſcience: which taketh in all things paſt, preſent, and to come, as if he had keeped a diary of every event, and had written up every word and action of men. In reference to this, the books are ſaid to be opened in the day of judgment, Rev. xx. 12. A third book is, of God's ſpecial care of his church: whereby, as it were, he hath ſet forth himſelf to have a peculiar care and overſight of her, and what concerneth her. This is mentioned, chap. v. 1. &c. A fourth book is called the book of life: which relateth

only to the names of ſuch as our Lord hath ordained to glory, and doth import, that they are as definitely and diſtinctly determined and known by him, as if they were by name and ſurname particularly recorded in a book. It is this book, that is here called *the book of life:* becauſe, 1. The end thereof is to ordain ſo many to life. And, 2. Becauſe there is an immutable connection betwixt being written in this book of life, and obtaining eternal life; and ſo, being the firſt and ſure door that maketh entrance unto life poſſible and feaſible, and gives the right to, and is the foundation of all that followeth; therefore deſervedly it getteth this name to be called *the book of life.*

It reſts then to conſider, what it is *not to blot out his name out of the book of life:* it is not to be underſtood as if there were a ſcraping out, and putting in into that book, poſterior to God's eternal and immutable decree: becauſe, *Firſt*, In that reſpect, it could not be called the book of life; for ſo, many might die who once were in it. *Secondly*, It is contrary alſo expreſly to the end and uſe thereof in the day of judgment, where, chap. xx. 12. expreſs mention is made of the opening of this book, for this end, that whoever were found from the beginning written therein, might be keeped from the lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone, as is ſaid in the 15. verſe of that chapter. And if the connection of being written in this book, and the obtaining of life, were not peremptory, there could be no ſuch reaſon of opening this book in the day of judgment *Thirdly*, Whatever this be, it is ſomething to be performed after this life: and ſeeing it cannot be imagined that one can die with his name in this book, and afterward have it blotted out: therefore ſuch a gloſs cannot be put upon this place. And who would have further confirmation of this, may have it in the learned Gomarus' digreſſion on this very text. The words then are to be underſtood thus, as importing more than they expreſs, viz. that in the day of judgment Chriſt will own the overcomer, and preſent him before God, as one that was inrolled in the book of life, and given to him in the bargain of redemption, for this very end, that he might raiſe him up in the laſt day, and give unto him eternal life, as it is, John vi. 39, 40.

That this is the meaning, will appear by conſidering the third promiſe, *but I will confeſs his name before my Father, and before his angels*: which doth expreſly hold forth what we aſſert of Chriſt's ſolemn, and honourable owing of them as his, and giving to him in the great day, when all the holy angels ſhall be preſent: We ſhall ſay nothing of the other part of the concluſion, which is ſo often, but never needleſly repeated. Now, we may take ſome few obſervations from the ſeveral parts of the epiſtle, beſides theſe that are already hinted.

Obſerve, 1. To have a name without reality, is an exceeding great evil; yet an evil incident both to miniſters and people. 2. Theſe that have had once ſomething, may through unwatchfulneſs be brought to a very low poſture, as it were, to be ready inſtantly to expire. 3. Folks may have ſome extraordinary motions at ſometimes, and yet afterwards fall from theſe, and forget them, as if they had never had ſuch purpoſes and reſolutions. 4. There may be ſome honeſt, where there is much deadneſs, even in the public ordinances; and God may keep ſome lively, even in ſuch a place as Sardis, when the generality are dead, and this tendeth exceedingly to their commendation. 5. A church may have a great name for many profeſſors, and yet the number of the truly ſincere may be very few. 6. Godlineſs is of great value wherever it is, if it were amongſt never ſo few: it is like, religion in power was not much thought of in Sardis; yet what advantage will theſe few have, beyond others that were of the greateſt name, when Chriſt ſhall come to judgment? It will never be well underſtood what advantage there is in true holineſs beyond profanity and hypocriſy, till by Chriſt's ſecond coming this be manifeſted

Beſide theſe obſervations, and what hath been ſaid, there are yet ſome few queſtions tending to the further clearing of this epiſtle; as, *Firſt*, If an unſound hypocritical man may be a ſent miniſter of Chriſt? *Secondly*, If ſuch a man may have gifts in exerciſe; or, if even a believer may have gifts in exerciſe when his grace is in no good condition? *Thirdly*, If ſuch a miniſter may have fruits? *Fourthly*, If uſually ſuch a miniſter with his gifts hath many, or rather but few fruits? And *Laſtly*, If by his deadneſs, the ordinances be ſo polluted to others, as they cannot without ſin partake of the ſame with him? To which, we ſhall anſwer ſhortly in order, by laying down ſome doctrines from the text.

And to the firſt we ſay, that men that are unſound, as to heart-honeſty, may be *de facto* miniſters in the church of Chriſt, and while continuing ſuch, ought to be ſo accounted: what this angel was,

ſimply in reſpect of his ſtate, we ſhall not determine; yet this is certain, that altho' *he had a name to be living, he was dead;* and his works were not perfect before God, whatever they were before men. And comparing this with the condition of the angel of Laodicea following, we conceive there is ground to ſay, that men that are for their own caſe unſound, may yet be miniſters in Chriſt's houſe; and are to be eſteemed ſuch, while they continue in that room, ſeeing our Lord Jeſus doth ſo here. And this is not to plead for profane miniſters, as if by this they themſelves might have peace in their diſcharge of miniſterial duties: or, as if others whoſe place giveth them a hand in the admitting unto, or keeping in the miniſtry, ſuch as are, or may be diſcovered legally to be ſo, might from this have any defence; there will no ſuch thing follow hence: but it is to plead for the ordinance of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that ought not to ſuffer derogation in whatſoever hands it be. Hence doth the Lord, Mat. xxiii. 3, &c. recommend to his hearers to give due miniſterial reſpect to the Scribes and Phariſees, even when he is to diſcover their rottenneſs, that thereby the peoples derogating from the Lord's word in their mouth, while they ſat in Moſes' chair, and ſpake truth, might be prevented. Our Lord's calling of Judas to be an apoſtle, doth evince this (for he knew what ſimply was neceſſary to a miniſter) who, no queſtion, in his preaching, was to be accounted an ambaſſador of Chriſt with the reſt: the reaſon is, becauſe it is not grace that intitleth one to that charge, but Chriſt his call and commiſſion: and ſeeing it is certain that theſe may be ſeparated, a call from grace, as grace from a call: it will follow therefore, that according to his ſovereignty he may make uſe of whom he will, who as he hath not choſen holy ſinleſs angels, but ſinful earthen veſſels, to commit that treaſure of the goſpel unto, *that it might be known that the excellency of the power is not of men, but of God;* ſo may he make uſe of ſinful men, even more ſinful than others, that it may be known that the edification of ſouls doth not neceſſarily depend on the holineſs of the inſtrument, as Acts iii. 12. Therefore we will find, that many who have been untender, have had hand at this work, as Matth. vii. 23. *Many ſhall ſay, we have propheſied in thy name*, &c. and Phil. i. 15. *Some preach Chriſt out of envy;* and ſaith Paul, chap. ii. 21. almoſt of all, *they ſeek their own things.* This ought to make both miniſters and people to tremble, and to ſtrive to be in at the ſtrait gate of holineſs, ſeeing no place nor ſtation, nor ſhining gift can change our nature, and exempt from the ſentence of Chriſt's curſe in the laſt day: which uſe is made of it, Matth. vii. 22, 23.

In anſwer to the ſecond queſtion, we may ſee, that gifts may be in exerciſe, where there is little or none of inward grace, or a great decay thereof. This angel hath a name, and is thought of, even while dead: this may be in unregenerate men, as in the former inſtances; and alſo may be in good men reſpectively. It is like, Job's friends, for as excellently as they ſpoke, yet had much defect as to the inward life. And Solomon remarketh of himſelf, Eccl. ii. that his wiſdom remained with him, even when his heart was bent upon vanity: gifts are deceitful and deceiving both to men, themſelves, and to others: grace is another thing; and although ſometimes God will ſtrike the idol ſhepherd in his right eye, and make even his gifts to wither, thereby to ſhew the neceſſity of nearneſs with him; yet ſometimes will he continue the exerciſe of them, that thereby his ſovereignty may appear, and that men may not lay too much weight on a common gift, and alſo that the edification of others may be furthered.

To the third, we ſay, That a man whoſe particular conditions is not approvable before God, may not only have gifts, and be called to be a miniſter, but alſo he may have fruits, and ſome ſucceſs in his miniſtry: this angel hath a few names, even in Sardis: and no queſtion, Judas in his miniſtry, wanted not fruit, ſeeing one report is made of all indifferently, Mark vi. 30. And the preaching of Chriſt by the *enviers*, Philip i. 4. ſeemeth to have had ſucceſs: otherwiſe, their preaching had been no great ground of rejoicing to Paul. This alſo is to ſhew the Lord's ſovereignty, who will make uſe of whom he will in his work: and although ſaving grace do not always accompany common gifts of the Spirit; yet are they given *to profit withal*, 1 Cor. xii. 7. And ſeeing they do not always nor often profit theſe to whom they are given, and yet are not ſimply unprofitable when they are ſome way improven, they muſt therefore profit others for whom they are given.

To the fourth, we ſay, That although ſuch a miniſter may not be altogether always without fruit; yet often great gifts, with an unſound frame of heart, have but little fruit, and few converts: he hath here names, but a few names, though

he himſelf had a great name: and certainly in part it is imputed to his unſoundneſs, whoſe works were not perfect before God; ſo that although men could not cenſure him; yet before God he was not kindly and natively driving the deſign of that people's edification, whereof this, of having a few names, is a conſequent, as the real honeſty, though with a little meaſure of gifts of the angel of Philadelphia, did not want its own influence upon the ſucceſs of his miniſtry: this therefore ſheweth the danger of an unſound lifeleſs miniſtry, that often the fruits are exceeding few, where there are any at all. Hence theſe Scribes and Phariſees are, in Chriſt's account, as to fruit, and to ſaving of ſouls, Matth. ix. as almoſt none at all, although he gave not people way at their own hand to caſt at them. And conſidering, that turning of men from their evil way, and ſtanding in God's counſel, Jer. xxiii. 22. and walking with God in equity, and turning many from their iniquity, Mal. ii. 6. go together. It is no marvel that theſe who are negligent in the one, be alſo leſs bleſſed with the other. Theſe, we conceive, God hath wiſely linked together, that the more a man have of him, the more fruit his commiſſion in his mouth ſhould have. And although this be not peremptory in all caſes, eſpecially in the comparative degree amongſt honeſt men; yet, 1. This connection is more ſuitable in itſelf, verſe 12. that one who tenderly and ſingly aimeth at fruit, ſhould attain more, than one who indeed intendeth but the feeding of himſelf. 2. The one hath a promiſe, and may claim it, 1 Tim. iv. 16. the other is judicially ſmitten in this: for, as fruits are in part ſome reward of grace to a faithful miniſter; ſo fruitleſneſs is a juſt ſtroke upon the other. 3. There is a connection alſo in reſpect of means: tenderneſs in a miniſter diſpoſeth to faithfulneſs, ſympathy, &c. And the want of it, unfitteth a miniſter to conceive experimentally of many things; and ſo he is indiſpoſed to ſpeak them ſeaſonably: and it marreth that holy boldneſs, which immediate eying of God giveth; and by it, a miniſter is incapacitated to deal in ſecret with God for the people, and is apt to lay ſtumbling-blocks before them: and ſo partly by wanting what he ſhould have, and partly by being prone to foſter their ſecurity, or riſle their wounds untenderly, or ſtumble them by his carriage, he, in theſe and many other reſpects, looketh as one not ſuited and fitted in an ordinary, at leaſt a kindly way, for the begetting of many: ſo that whatever in ſome extraordinary caſes the Lord may do: yet this is moſt uſual: which ſhould make people deſire lively miniſters, and pray that they may be kept ſo; and alſo ſhould make miniſters conſcionably ſee to their own particular conditions, and that in reference to their miniſtry, leſt by their declining in their own ſpiritual eſtate, and their neglecting thereof, they have no leſs influence on the fruitleſneſs of their miniſtry, than by the direct neglecting of proper miniſterial duties.

From this alſo we may gather, in anſwer to the laſt queſtion, That no perſonal corruption, in joint worſhippers, doth pollute any of the Lord's ordinances to another; or, on that account, neceſſitate a ſeparation from them: for, if the corruption of any had ſuch influence, then it were eſpecially the corruption of miniſters; and if the corruption of miniſters did ſo, then it were not to be thought that the Lord would have ſuch; even after their diſcovery, to be acknowledged ſtill to be miniſters, which yet here, and in the former inſtances, is clear. The word and ſacraments adminiſtred by ſuch, if rightly received and improven, are owned by him as his word and ſacraments, as well as when adminiſtred by the moſt holy, as from the conſidering of the fore-mentioned inſtances may appear.

There are yet two particular queſtions, which poſſibly may be deſiderated by ſome, to which we ſhall ſpeak a word before we leave this epiſtle. The *Firſt* is, By what ſymptoms a miniſter may diſcern his own deadneſs, while things ſeem to go well with him in public? Or, what may give him occaſion to ſuſpect himſelf to be under ſuch a charge, as is given againſt this angel here? The *Second* is, What may be the means of a miniſter's preventing of ſuch a condition, or, of recovering himſelf therefrom when fallen into it?

To the *Firſt*, We ſay, that even when things go well in public before others, a miniſter's works may yet be liable to this charge of not being perfect before God: and, we conceive, upon ſearch within, and reflection upon himſelf, may be diſcerned by theſe or ſuch like ſymptoms: 1. When there is a decay or lifeleſneſs in his own particular condition; that is, when there is no exerciſe of repentance in himſelf as a Chriſtian, nor freſhneſs

and tenderneſs in communion with God in ſecret prayer and other Chriſtian duties: if in ſuch a caſe he ſhould preach as an angel, yet cannot that be ſaid to be perfect before God. 2. In ſuch a frame, a miniſter ordinarily is not kindly affected with the diſcharge of miniſterial duties, nor with ſympathy towards the people; but he goeth lightly under the burden of theſe, almoſt indifferent what come of the fruit, if fairly, and without any palpable diſcovery of his infirmity, ſuch duties be put by. 3. Upon this it followeth, that if there be acceptation of the thing amongſt the people, there is but too much quietneſs in the miniſter, without reflecting upon his own indiſpoſition and unſoundneſs, and without being taken up with the deſire of fruitfulneſs among the people. This is ſuſpicious-like, when a miniſter ſo acteth in miniſterial duties, as if there were no more called for, than the throughing of what is public before men. 4. Something of this may be gathered from the ſcope and ſtrain of his doctrine, that is, if there be any ſecret aiming to commend himſelf by ſuch doctrine, or, if of its own nature it ſeem to tend more to that, than to edify and feed the ſouls of hearers. 5. If his own gift and preſent acceptation among the people be well ſatisfying to him, ſo he be under little fear of ſiting up, and if he be unfrequent and cold in addreſſes to God for livelineſs and ſucceſs: theſe and ſuch like things look not well. 6. Somewhat may be perceived by miniſters inclination to converſe with unſerious untender men though they be civil; and to keep up general diſcourſes and queſtions with them, rather than to converſe with ſuch as are tender, and love to have their exerciſes and practical caſes for the matter of their diſcourſe: it cannot be well when it is ſo. 7. It is not right with a miniſter, however it be in the exerciſe of his gift, when he is not walking under the impreſſion of ſinful defects, and unſingleneſs and want of zeal as to his end and manner of carrying on the moſt commendable-like duties: for as it is no good token in a private Chriſtian to be without the impreſſion of his own corruptions and ſinful infirmities; ſo it cannot be right with a miniſter, when his miniſterial defects are not ſenſible to him: and when there is not an actual exerciſe with the ſelfiſhneſs, carnalneſs, vanity, &c. that are in him, it is too like, theſe have too much ſway with him.

Now, to the ſecond, viz. what a miniſter ought to do in ſuch a caſe for recovering of himſelf?

Anſw. The reading of this epiſtle ſeriouſly will indeed ſatisfy this: which we may draw out in theſe directions, 1. It is neceſſary that a miniſter obſerve his own condition, and take notice of the ſinfulneſs and hazard thereof: this is implied in the word *remember*, ver. 3. And indeed who cometh to ponder and conſider rightly their own condition, are in a fair way of recovery. 2. There will be a putting of every thing right that belongeth to a Chriſtian: oftentimes decaying in Chriſtianity, bringeth on this deadneſs in the miniſter; and therefore, there can be no better mean of recovery than once to put the ſoul in a right poſture in this reſpect. 3. It will further this much, that he begin with the ſerious exerciſe of repentance of what is paſt, and that as to the defects that cleave to him, both as a Chriſtian and as a miniſter: this maketh the beginning of a recovery to be ſolid. Therefore it is commanded, ver. 3, 4. There ſhould be a ſpecial care had in the doing of miniſterial duties, that not only they be done, but that they be done in a right manner: that ſo every thing be done as in the ſight of God, with an eye to this, that it may be found perfect before him. This is in the word *be watchful*, and implied under this angel's charge of not having his works perfect before God. 5. There ſhould be zeal and carefulneſs in the begetting and keeping of life and livelineſs among the people, as in himſelf: and for that cauſe, a doing of every thing with reſpect to that end. This was the angel's fault in his deadneſs, viz. the neglecting of this, and it is commanded to him, to ſtrengthen what was ready to die, as a thing befitting his recovery. This is in a condeſcending way to ſeek to feed the people with what is profitable, though thereby a miniſter ſhould ſeem to ſome to loſe his name and reputation. 6. There is need in all things to be denied, and to exerciſe faith in him that hath the ſeven Spirits of God, and the ſeven ſtars alſo, without which there is no attaining to livelineſs: and for this end doth the Lord ſo deſcribe himſelf in the inſcription of this epiſtle. Much dependence on him, walking with him, ſtanding in his counſel, &c. and that in the meaneſt particular ſteps of any miniſterial duty, as not daring to undertake any thing without him, and ſo an acknowledging of him in his grace, as to the fruit of every thing. This is a very fountain of the life of a miniſter.

LECTURE II.

Ver. 7. *And unto the angel of the church of Philadelphia, write, These things ſaith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man ſhutteth, and ſhutteth and no man openeth.*

8. *I know thy works: behold, I have ſet before thee an open door, and no man can ſhut it: for thou haſt a little ſtrength, and haſt kept my word, and haſt not denied my name.*

9. *Behold, I will make them of the ſynagogue of Satan (which ſay they are Jews, and are not, but do lie) behold, I will make them to come and worſhip before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.*

10. *Becauſe thou haſt kept the word of my patience, I alſo will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which ſhall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.*

11. *Behold, I come quickly, hold that faſt which thou haſt, that no man take thy crown.*

12. *Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he ſhall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is the new Jeruſalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.*

13. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the churches.*

THIS ſixth epiſtle, directed to Philadelphia, hath the ſame diviſion with the reſt, viz. the inſcription, ver. 7. the body of the epiſtle, ver. 8, 9, 10, 11. and the concluſion, ver. 13.

In the inſcription, the Lord, the director of this epiſtle, doth ſet forth himſelf in theſe three, 1. *He that is holy.* 2. *He that is true:* Theſe are two eſſential attributes of the God-head, and ſhew that our Lord Jeſus is God. And he taketh theſe ſtiles to himſelf in this place, that, 1. He may ſhew unto this honeſt church, that their honeſty could not but be approven of him, who was holineſs itſelf. And, 2. To ſtrengthen their faith in the expectation of the performance of his promiſes, however they looked improbable-like, becauſe he who made them is true, and *Truth itſelf.* The third title is, *He that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man ſhutteth; and ſhutteth, and no man openeth:* this reſpecteth his office, and holdeth him forth as the great ſteward of the houſe of God, who is intruſted with the management of what concerneth the ſame, and is inveſted with power and authority ſuitable thereto. It alludeth to Iſa. xxii. 20, 21, 22, &c. where the Lord, ſpeaking of his preferring Eliakim unto the government of Jeruſalem and Judah, doth expreſs it thus. 'And the key 'of the houſe of David will I lay upon his ſhoulders: 'ſo he ſhall open, and none ſhall ſhut, and he ſhall 'ſhut, and none ſhall open.' Now this, as attributed here to Chriſt, is not to be underſtood principally of his eſſential and abſolute dominion as God; for that cannot be called the key of the houſe of David; but it is to be underſtood of his mediatory kingdom, whereby he, as mediator, is inveſted with power and authority for ordering the affairs of the houſe of God. And as it ſtandeth in this verſe it doth hold forth. 1. That Chriſt Jeſus, as mediator, hath a peculiar overſight and government of the church. 2. That in this dominion of Chriſt's is fulfilled the promiſe of perpetuating the power of the houſe of David: therefore it is called *the key of the houſe of David*, which is committed to him. 3. Here is held forth the ſovereignty and abſoluteneſs of Chriſt's dominion: therefore *He ſhutteth, and no man openeth: and openeth, and no man ſhutteth:* there is no marring of any of his orders: for, he having obtained this name above every name by God's exalting of him thereunto, Phil. ii. 9. There can be no imaginable competition with him in the exerciſe of this power. 4. This being compared with the former two titles, doth ſhow that he who is intruſted with the ſupreme government of the church, is God: He is holy and true, and therefore can do no wrong to any, nor fail in the performance of what he promiſeth: which is of great conſolation to his people. This, laſtly, is here mentioned, to encourage and ſtrengthen this honeſt weak angel and church againſt the many difficulties which they had to wreſtle with, as we will find in the body of the epiſtle.

This angel and church, it is like, have been before others, far from that eſtimation that Sardis was in: for, they have but *a little ſtrength*, and many

enemies; yet were they much more honeſt and commendable before God, and fruitful under the ordinances they had: therefore the Lord indites a moſt comfortable epiſtle unto them.

In the body of the epiſtle, we have theſe three things, 1. Their preſent condition is in ſeveral reſpects deſcribed. 2. Their commendation is laid down. 3. Some excellent encouragements and directions are given them for the time to come. Theſe three being interwoven, we muſt open them as they ly.

Beſide this general, *I know thy works:* which tho' common to all the reſt of the epiſtles in ſome reſpect, yet may be taken here as holding forth his particular approbation of this church, becauſe there is nothing quarrelled in her. This will not indeed prove that ſhe was altogether free; but that, being honeſt and free of groſs faults, the Lord doth not rigidly reckon with her. Beſides this, I ſay, in the 8th ver. this church's good condition is ſet forth in theſe four; 1. *Behold, I have ſet before thee an open door, and no man can ſhut it*: This is the fountain of all that is commendable in her, and from which it doth flow. viz. Chriſt's conferring ſuch a mercy upon her: and this is a main encouragement permitted for the ſtrengthening of the honeſt angel of this church. For underſtanding of it, we muſt conſider, 1. What is meant by an *open door*. 2. What by Chriſt's ſetting of it before the angel, ſo as no man can ſhut it. By an *open door* uſually is underſtood in the ſcripture, the Lord's making way for profitable preaching of the goſpel, which ſtandeth not mainly in having acceſs and liberty, without any external reſtraint, to preach the goſpel, but eſpecially it ſtands in God's giving inward liberty to the preacher, and in his countenancing of the word, and making it effectual and ſucceſsful upon the hearts of hearers. This is called, Col. iv. 3. *A door of utterance*, when a miniſter is not ſtraitened in preaching the goſpel, but, as it were, the door is caſten open to him. And, 2 Cor. ii. 12. *When I came to Troas to preach Chriſt's goſpel, and* a door *was opened unto me of the Lord*: which is ſome ſpecial ſignification of God's ſending him, and removing of difficultis out of the way, and making his miniſtry ſucceſsful there. And, 1 Cor. xvi. 9. it is ſaid, *a great* door *and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adverſaries;* ſo that there may be an effectual door opened, even where there is much oppoſition. In ſum, it imports theſe two or three: 1. That there is a ſtraitenedneſs in miniſters who cannot bring forth the goſpel as it ought to be brought forth, and will, when the Lord ſendeth forth the Spirit, and enlargeth a man with boldneſs to ſpeak the ſame: in this reſpect, a door of utterance is opened unto him, as in that place, Col. iv. 3. is clear. 2. That there is a further let beſide this, viz. when the ears and hearts of hearers are ſo locked up, that the word hath no entrance, but is repelled. The Lord openeth this door, when by the work of his Spirit upon hearts, as upon the heart of Lydia, he doth make the word to be received and admitted: in which reſpect, 2 Theſſ. iii. 1. Paul deſireth them to pray, that the word may have *free courſe;* that is, that there be no ſhut doors to mar the progreſs of the ſame. Both theſe are underſtood here, viz. Liberty for the miniſter to ſpeak, and that with countenance and ſucceſs among the people. We conceive alſo, that this phraſe of *an open door*, doth take in a concurring of God's providence, for the keeping of the word miniſtred, and ordinances in ſuch a place in both the reſpects that are mentioned, notwithſtanding of the numerouſneſs and maliciouſneſs of oppoſers: and this agreeth well with that word, in this verſe, *and no man ſhall ſhut it.* And this may be a third thing imported in this expreſſion, though it be not of the ſame kind with the former two every way.

By Chriſt's ſetting open of this door before the angel, ſo *that none can ſhut it*, it holdeth forth. 1. Chriſt's ſupremacy and ſovereignty in giving gifts to men, liberty and inward freedom to improve them, and alſo a bleſſing upon them in making of them ſucceſsful. It is not gifts, by which a man will be able to preach, if the Lord give not a door of utterance; yea, even the great apoſtle Paul hath need of this, Col. iv. 3. nor is it the having of utterance that will obtain fruits among the people, if the Lord do not open an effectual door, and give the word free courſe among them. Hence it is, that ſometimes where there is moſt utterance given, there may be leſs ſucceſs than where there are fewer gifts; becauſe he, whoſe privilege it is to ſet open doors, doth open more fully the door of utterance to the one, and the effectual door to the other, and doth not open both equally to all. 2. This importeth the neceſſity and inevitableneſs of ſucceſs. When Chriſt thus openeth the door, ſucceſs cannot but follow: and no man or devil can ſhut out or impede the ſame, when he pleaſeth to coun-

tenance his miniſters, and to commend the word to the hearts of hearers. Now, it may appear what the meaning of this part of the verſe is, which relateth eſpecially to the angel, viz. I have called thee to this miniſtry, and have given thee ſome meaſure of utterance, though thou haſt not much ability, and eſpecially, I have ordered matters, ſo as the word from thee ſhall have free courſe and ſucceſs. And, rage who will, this ſhall not be obſtructed. By which alſo we may ſee why the Lord took the title to himſelf, that doth immediately go before this.

The ſecond thing in the verſe, is, *For thou haſt a little ſtrength:* by *little ſtrength* here, is not to be underſtood weakneſs in grace; (for, that is eminently commended) nor yet little countenance in the diſcharge of miniſterial duties, but it looketh to his parts and abilities, which it is like, were not many and great in compariſon of what others had; that is it may be he was not able to ſpeak of, nor ſearch into ſo many profound myſteries, and follow doubtful diſputations, as others were in capacity to do. This is not mentioned here as any ground of commendation, being conſidered ſimply and in itſelf; but it is mentioned for theſe two reaſons, which being put together, will clear the ſcope: 1. It is given as a ground of Chriſt's opening the door before him, and as an evidence that what ſucceſs he had, was to be attributed to his countenancing of him, becauſe thou t yſelf haſt but a little ſtrength. And this ſheweth, that as oftentimes Chriſt is moſt tender to the weak believers; ſo alſo to the weak miniſters, that are yet ſent by him, and honeſt in the diſcharge of their commiſſion. 2. It is mentioned here to heighten the commendation that followeth viz. that though thou haſt a little ſtrength, yet *thou haſt kept my word.* It is the joining of theſe two together, that ſheweth wherefore this is here taken notice of.

The third and fourth expreſſions, which moſt expreſly hold forth the commendation, are, *Thou haſt kept my word, and haſt not denied my name:* by *keeping of the word* here, is not only underſtood the keeping of purity in doctrine; but eſpecially theſe two: 1. A keeping it in practice, by being conform thereto in their walk. 2. An avowed preaching of the truth by the miniſter, and his adhering to and owning of the ſame in his ſtation, notwithſtanding of all the reproaches which he met with: for the ſcope, relating eſpecially to the miniſter, this keeping of the word muſt imply alſo ſomething peculiar to him, which is commonly expreſſed in the Old Teſtament by this word, *of keeping the Lord's charge.* The laſt word, *thou haſt not denied my name,* is to the ſame purpoſe; but doth import more than is aſſerted, viz. that notwithſtanding of the many trials thou haſt met with, yet thou not only haſt not faintly denied my name; but haſt openly and confidently avowed and confeſſed the ſame. And theſe two, being compared with a little ſtrength which this angel had, do make the evidences and commendation of his honeſty the more wonderful. In the 9th and 10th verſes, the Lord giveth two ſpecial encouragements unto them, having alſo ſome teſtimony of their bygone integrity included in them. It is like, this honeſt church hath been under a twofold perſecution, (as we have ſeen in ſome of the former epiſtles:) 1. From the corrupt and unbelieving Jews, who having ſynagogues in many places, did prove great perſecutors and reproachers of the name of Chriſt, and his worſhippers: this the Lord doth encourage them againſt in the 9th verſe. 2. From heathens: in reference to which, he comforteth them, ver. 10.

The conſolation, which is laid down, ver. 9. doth expreſs theſe three: 1. There is a diſcription of theſe corrupt Jews; they are ſaid to be *of the ſynagogue of Satan, who ſay they are Jews, and are not, but do lie;* that is, they indeed call themſelves Jews, and children of Abraham, and God's covenanted people, &c. but they do lie; it is not ſo; for now they being broken off by their unbelief, are truly of the ſynagogue of Satan, and followers of him, as we expounded it, chap. ii. ver. 9.

2. There is the promiſe which the Lord maketh to this church; *I will make them to come and worſhip before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.* In ſum, it is this, theſe corrupt Jews do now calumniate thee; as if thou were not of my church, nor beloved by me; but ſaith he, by my inward power, I will ſo move and incline them, as they ſhall willingly come and worſhip before thy feet, and know indeed that I have loved thee.

The words of the promiſe may be two ways underſtood; and, we conceive, that both come well in here: 1. They may be underſtood of ſincere converſion; and ſo the meaning is, I will convert many of theſe blaſphemers, and as an evidence thereof, make them come and worſhip before thy feet; that is, really worſhip God in the aſſembly with thee,

like that word, Isa. lx. 14. *The sons also of them that afflicted thee, shall come bending unto thee, and they that despise thee, shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet, and they shall call thee the city of the Lord, the holy one of Israel*, And, in this expression, the prophet's scope is to foretel the conversion of the Gentiles in the days of the gospel. The word in the first language is, *I will give them*, &c. which doth express more significantly both the nature of this work as to the angel; (it is a very excellent and singular gift to him to have blasphemers made converts) and also it sheweth the freeness thereof, it being a gift of Christ's grace. This, we conceive, is to be taken as a part of the meaning: and is clear, 1. From the scope, which is to shew the fruit of Christ's keeping the door open before this minister for his encouragement, viz. his making the word powerful for the captivating of gainsayers unto the obedience of Christ. 2. The word added, *And they shall know that I have loved thee*, seemeth to import something of a kindly principle acting them in this.

Again, 2. The words may be understood as holding forth a feigned submission of many unto the ordinances of Christ; who, from Christ's clear owning of his church, shall be made, being, as it were, astonished to acknowledge the same, and to say, *Doubtless, God is among such a people of a truth*, as it is, 1 Cor. xiv. 25. And this being a promise made to the church, as a piece of her splendor and happiness, that her enemies shall lie, or give feigned obedience unto her, Deut. xxxii. 29. and a thing also that doth tend to the evidencing of the Lord's respect to his church, we take it in under this promise likewise. So the meaning will be, I will give some of these Jews as real converts unto thee, and others of them shall be so far convinced of my respect to thee, as shall make them counterfeit their profession, and give thee some reverence also: for, if there were not some converts, the promise would not be so great as it is; yet, it cannot be expected, that this reality should be universal amongst these corrupt Jews. And, according to the former exposition, these words which follow, *And to know that I have loved thee*, are two ways also to be understood, viz. either of such a spiritual discerning of the saving effects of God's love to such a people, which begetteth a charitable persuasion in him of the sincerity of such and such persons; or it is to be understood of some common and general conviction, flowing from some outward evidences of God's favour, which often is in many hypocrites.

The third thing in the verse is, The Lord's making this promise so observable, both by doubling and repeating the same; and also by prefixing a *behold* at every time thereunto: which sheweth, 1. That the things is most rare which is here promised, viz. To have blasphemers made converts. 2. That it is a most excellent favour to a minister or church, when such a mercy is bestowed. And, 3. That altho' it be difficult-like; yet, in this case, it is sure, seeing, for the confirmation of the faith of this church, the Lord hath repeated the same.

The encouragement, in reference to the other persecution, followeth, ver. 10. wherein, 1. There is a common trial foretold. 2. There is a promise made to them in reference to the same. And, 3. Some ground, as it were a reason of this promise, is permitted, ver. 10.

The trial which is foretold, is several ways set forth: 1. It is called a *Temptation*. It is usual in scripture to style affliction by the name of *Temptation*, as James i. 2. *Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;* and so also, ver. 11. The reason is, because such afflictions want never many circumstances waiting on them, which do indeed make them to be temptations: and so other men are tried by them, or, through their own corruption, snared upon such occasions. 2. It is an *hour of temptation*: to signify both the definiteness and shortness thereof: which doth carry an encouragement in the bosom of it. 3. It is a trial *which shall come upon all the world*. By *World* here, is not to be understood the heathen world, as contradistinct from the church: for, that world is not the object of such trials; but it is instrumental therein: it is then the church spread up and down throughout the world, *They shall be tried*. And usually it was so, when persecution was moved by the heathen emperors, it spread through all the corners of the world, where any part of the church was. 4. The end thereof, is, *To try them that dwell upon the earth;* that is, the saints that live upon the earth: and so *earth* here, is not contradistinguished from the church simply; but thereby the church militant is contradistinguished from the church triumphant. For, the privilege of Philadelphia is not, that she shall be kept from ills that are common to the men of the world; but this, that when the church should be under persecution generally, the Lord

ſhould ſecretly and tenderly preſerve her from the weight of that trial, that others were to meet with: which is the ſecond thing to be conſidered in the verſe.

The promiſe, in reference to this trial, which is made to Philadelphia, is in theſe words, *I will alſo keep thee from the hour of temptation*, &c. It may two ways be underſtood, 1. As being a promiſe to keep her from any prejudice by that trial, though ſhe might meet with the ſame: this is indeed truth; but cannot be ſaid to be a peculiar privilege to Philadelphia: for all the Lord's people might plead and expect that, and yet ſome peculiar thing ſeemeth to be holden out as to Philadelphia in this promiſe. Therefore, 2. We underſtand it thus, when others ſhall be under perſecution, thou ſhalt either be altogether free from that particular trial, which is to come; or, at leaſt, in a great meaſure, ſhall be kept from the extremities that others thereby ſhall be put unto. And, in this reſpect, the promiſe beareth ſomething peculiar to Philadelphia: and therefore cannot be made uſe of by others, as a ground to expect freedom from temporal croſſes, except there be the like warrant to apply the ſame.

The laſt thing in the verſe, though it be firſt in order, is the ground to which the Lord doth knit this promiſe, *Becauſe thou haſt kept the word of my patience, I alſo will keep thee*, &c. The *word of Chriſt's patience*, is the goſpel: called ſo, 1. Becauſe uſually the croſs followeth it, and the profeſſors thereof have need of patience. 2. Becauſe it is the great ſchool-maſter that teacheth the exerciſe of patience: for which reaſons, it is alſo called *the kingdom and patience of Jeſus Chriſt*, chap. i. ver. 9. Their *keeping* of this word of his patience, doth import their owning of, and adhering to, this goſpel with much patience under many croſſes and much perſecution: and ſo this connection doth not imply any merit in them procuring this peculiar privilege; but doth expreſs Chriſt's tenderneſs, and, to ſay ſo, his condeſcending equity in his proceeding, who, ſeeing this church had little ſtrength, and yet had born out more ſtedfaſtly and patiently under many former trials, than others who might be of greater abilities. Therefore, out of his tenderneſs, he now promiſeth to keep them free in a particular manner from a coming ſtorm.

The laſt thing in the body of the epiſtle, is the advertiſement, ver. 11. which hath theſe three, 1. An aſſertion of Chriſt's coming, and that quickly, *Behold, I come quickly:* which ſheweth, that though he ſeem now to be abſent, and to delay his coming; yet it will be found otherwiſe. It is ſaid to be *quickly;* 1. Becauſe it is not long in compariſon with eternity. 2. Becauſe it will be ſudden to enemies. 3. It will be ſeaſonable to friends. It will not be one hour behind the due time: and therefore may be ſaid to be quickly. 4. He is for the preſent haſting, and, to ſay ſo, making diſpatch of what is to proceed his coming; and ſo may be ſaid to be coming quickly. This is here mentioned as a ground of encouragement to the angel to continue ſtedfaſt upon the one ſide, and as a watch-word to ſcare them from declining on the other, ſeeing Chriſt was to come to judgment, and that ſhortly. The ſecond word is a direction, *Hold that faſt which thou haſt:* which is in ſum, ye are in a good condition now, be diligent to retain the ſame, as the like expreſſion was expounded, chap. ii. 25. The third thing, is a warning added to this direction, *Hold faſt*, &c. *that no man take thy crown:* in ſum it is this, thou art now in a royal condition, thy honeſty is thy crown before me and others, and it hath a promiſe of a crown after this: therefore be diligent and ſtedfaſt, leſt by your declining ye be prejudged of your crown. It alludeth to running amongſt men, where they that ſit up in the way, tho' having for a time run well, yet obtain not the crown, becauſe ſome other outſtrips them, and obtaineth the ſame: here the ſcope only is, to ſhew that theſe who ſit up in the practice of Chriſtianity, ſhall as ſurely be deprived of the crown of glory: and it is here added, to ſhew how the Lord addeth ſpurs to his moſt faithful ſervants for preventing of their falling.

The firſt part of the concluſion, for we ſhall ſay nothing of the ſecond, is, ver. 12. comprehending five privileges to the overcomer. The firſt is, *I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God:* by the *temple of my God*, muſt be here underſtood heaven, and ſo, to be *made a pillar*, is to be fixed there in heaven, as a trophy of the victory of Jeſus Chriſt, and as ſingularly and eminently fitted for, furniſhed with, and fixed in the glory that is there: for, 1. The properties that follow, will ſhew that this can only be underſtood of heaven. 2. Thus alſo it can only agree with all the other promiſes that are made to the overcomer, which principal relate to heaven. 3. There is no other thing that can be expected by every overcomer but heaven.

The second thing is, *He shall go no more out:* The access that believers have to God's company and temple here, hath interruptions; and the believer is again soon down from any mount, where Christ may be transfigured before him: but (saith the Lord) when I shall *make him a pillar in the temple of my God*, and settle him in heaven, there shall no more be any interruption of communion, either by God's hiding of himself upon the one side, or from the believer's whoring from him upon the other; but he shall be by the powerful grace of God established there, and shall *go no more out*. And this is added, as a special consolation to the believer that is weary of his own gadding and whoring from God; that there is a time coming, when that shall be broken off, and he shall *go no more out*.

The third step is, *And I will write upon him the name of my God:* pillars that were erected as monuments of honour, were honourable, according to the name or inscription that was written upon them: now, there can be none more honourable than to have the name of God written upon them, and to be devoted to him. We conceive also, it implieth a sharing and partaking of the glory of God in some measure, as a poor creature is able to partake of the same.

The fourth thing is, *And the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God.* We must understand, 1. What is meaned by this new Jerusalem, before it can be understood what it is to bear its name. By the new Jerusalem, *and city of my God*, we understand one of two, either, 1. Heaven, which is the seat of the church triumphant, called here *the new Jerusalem*, because it so far doth exceed the splendor and beauty of the church, or Jerusalem, here upon earth: and it is said to *come down from heaven*, because by the preaching of the gospel, the kingdom of God is brought near, even to the door. Or, 2. The congregation of the first-born, that are already perfected in heaven, called *the new Jerusalem*, because tho' they be of that same church of Christ, yet are they in respect of their glorious qualifications and perfections, as it were, a new church. And thus it is said to *come down from heaven*, not so much to signify any local mutation, as to shew where it is for the time: and that their original, as such, is from God. Both these turn to one, and shew, that by this promise is understood, that the overcomer shall be admitted as a free burgess and citizen to glory amongst the rest of the congregation of the first-born. And thus to have the name thereof written upon the overcomer, is to have him, as it were, declared a free burgess and citizen of that glorious incorporation. That it is thus to be understood of heaven, and not of any state of the church upon earth, the reasons before-mentioned do evince. Beside, it is a promise that is to be performed to every overcomer, and that after his full victory here; and so consequently after his death; and therefore can be understood of no other thing but in heaven.

The last thing is, *And I will write upon him my new name:* the Mediator's *new name* is, the exaltation which he hath received after his resurrection and compleat victory, as is clear, Philip. ii. 9. The *writing of this upon the overcomer*, is, the making of him a joint sharer of that his glory; and so to sit upon one throne with himself, and eat and drink at one table with him, and to behold his glory, as himself doth pray, John xvii. 22, 23, 24. the due and proportionable difference being always kept betwixt the head and members. Now, put these together, and so the overcomer shall be glorious in himself: for, so, 1. He shall be a pillar. 2. He shall partake of the glory of God, and have his name upon him. 3. He shall partake of the glory of heaven, and the saints that are there already. 4. He shall partake of the Mediator's glory, and bear his new name: and what more can be imagined? Thus the Lord shall be admired in all that believe, 2 Thess. i. 10. in that day when every believer shall be as a trophy erected to the glory of the grace of God, and for a memorial of the love that our blessed Lord Jesus had unto, and of the victory he obtained for elect sinners by his redeeming of them.

It rests now that we observe some things further from this epistle, beside what is already hinted: wherein it is not our purpose to insist.

Obs. 1. There is difference betwixt gifts requisite to the being of a minister, and success by the exercise of these in the ministry. There is here a *little strength*, that respecteth the first; and *an open door*, which respecteth the second: and these two are distinguished one from another. And thus we will find throughout Paul's epistles, that difference is made betwixt his liberty to preach upon the one side, and God's opening an effectual door to him upon the other. 2. We see that Christ is the giver of both, viz. of gifts to ministers, and of success among the people. 3. We see that he distributeth

not to all alike; but an open door is ſet before ſome, more than before others, and when not at all before others, as by comparing this and other epiſtles together is clear.

It may be aſked here, 1. What way a miniſter may know if an effectual door be opened to him amongſt the people, ſeeing Paul ſometimes aſſerteth the ſame? 2. How a miniſter, having ſuch an opportunity, ought to carry in the improving thereof?

To the firſt we ſay, That this cannot be diſcerned allenarly from a man's gift: for, it may be ſhut where great gifts are, as we will ſee hereafter. Beſide, it is like, Paul had not alway this door open to him, at leaſt, it was more in one place than another. Nor is it meerly to be gathered from a man's freedom from external croſſes in a place, nor yet from the great following he may have: for, there may be many adverſaries where this effectual door is opened, 1 Cor. xvi. 4. and there may be no ſuch thing, where there is great peace and applauſe. Yet, we conceive by theſe and ſuch like characters, this may be ſomewhat diſcernable, 1. When a miniſter getteth the door of utterance upon the one ſide opened to him, and there is an opening of ears among the people to welcome the ſame upon the other: which is not to be underſtood of carnal itching after, or being tickled with a gift; but of love to edification, and ſimplicity and diligence amongſt them: which ſheweth, that ſuch a man and his gift is commended to them: and ſo that they are in the greater capacity to get good of him. 2. Where this is, it hath real changes following, and much ſolid work: for by it people are not made light and notional; but are made humble, ſerious, tender, fruitful, &c. 3. Where ſuch a door is opened, the devil often rageth, and ſetteth himſelf to oppoſe, traduce, or ſome way to blaſt the miniſtry of ſuch a perſon more than of many others. This poor angel hath much affliction, when the miniſters in Sardis and Laodicea are free. And ſo when an effectual door is opened to Paul at Epheſus, this is added, that *there are many adverſaries*, 1 Cor. xvi. 9. Yet, even under ſuch afflictions, there are many tryſts of providence to be marked in the Lord's way, for countenancing that miniſtry, and many evidences of reſpect to the ſame from ſuch as are tender. 4. It is a good token of an open door, when ſome way obſervably the Lord defeateth the devil and profanity in a place, and is making him fall like lightning from heaven by the preaching of the word. 5. The experimental proof that is moſt ſure, is an actual gaining of ground upon the kingdom of the devil, and a bringing off of priſoners unto Jeſus Chriſt: which is the proof given here, where God promiſeth new converts; and is ever ſuppoſed by Paul, when he mentioneth this door.

Now to the ſecond, viz. How a miniſter ought to uſe ſuch an opportunity? We ſay, 1. It is to be improven with all diligence in his duty, as a man that is to reap corn that is already ripe. 2. It is to be made uſe of with all humility and ſelf-denial, leſt by being tickled therewith, he prejudge the maſter of his glory, and ſo procure ſtraitning to himſelf. 3. It would be with much fear and watchfulneſs: with *Fear*, leſt he miſcarry: or any ſoul miſcarry in the birth, becauſe of his unſkilfulneſs: with *Watchfulneſs*, leſt the devil ſow tares while he is ſleeping: and the conception prove falſe without reality, as to many hearers. This is Paul's word, 1 Cor. ii. 3. *I was among you in much weakneſs, and in much fear and trembling;* which ſheweth the kindly impreſſion which he had, both of his own and the people's infirmities. 4. It would be improven *zealouſly;* that is, ſo as the authority of Chriſt may appear upon his ordinances, both to adverſaries and friends. 5. It would be made uſe of (to ſay ſo) *ſolidly*, by making the foundation ſure, by propoſing ſolid food to ſouls, as the ſubſtantial goſpel-truths, and the uncontroverted duties of holineſs: for, there is hazard too ſoon to bring ſuch a people to the new wine of the moſt ſublime things in doctrine, or the moſt extraordinary practices of grown chriſtians: and it is better that they be fed upon milk, and what is healthful and nouriſhing, than, that to pleaſe their appetites, they be diverted with uſeleſs queſtions. 6. There would be much dependance upon God in ſuch a caſe; for he is the maſter, and hath appointed a great ſteward over the houſe, who hath the keys laid upon his ſhoulder: and the miniſter in ſuch a caſe, would know that he hath no tack or leaſe of ſuch a condition, but is at the maſter's pleaſure: and therefore he would be acknowledged in every ſtep of the work as it is done, or in doing. *Laſtly*, The great ſhot of all preaching would be driven conſtantly, both in public and private, viz. the edification and ſalvation of the people, and the forming of Chriſt in them by travelling, as it were, in birth for that effect. *Obſerve* 4. Sometimes there may be greater ſucceſs unto mean

gifts, by Chriſt's countenancing the ſame, than where gifts are in themſelves more eminent and ſhining: The reaſon is, becauſe, for the attaining of ſucceſs, it is not only neceſſary to have the exerciſe of a gift: but alſo to have a door opened to them by Chriſt: and theſe two are ſometimes ſeparated, as was formerly ſaid. And by ſo doing, the Lord would teach miniſters, to know their own inſufficiency for any ſuch thing; and alſo neceſſitate both miniſters and people to the acknowledgment of him. There is a notable inſtance of the power of mean gifts beyond great abilities in the hiſtory of the council of Nice, wherein a ſubtil philoſopher who had long kept the aſſembly jangling with diſputes, at laſt by a man of ſmall parts (in reſpect of others who had been diſputing) was convinced by the ſimple propounding of the truth of the goſpel, which he cloſed thus, This *is the truth of God, philoſopher, believeth thou this?* who anſwered, *He did.* Then ſaid the honeſt confeſſor, (for ſo he is ſtyled by the author) If ſo, then follow me, and be baptized: unto which the philoſopher yielded, as if he had never learned to gainſay; expreſſing theſe words to the hearers, and eſpecially to ſome other philoſophers that were with him, *So long as I was dealt with by words, I did repel words with words, but when power proceeded with words out of the mouth of him that ſpake, I was not able*, ſaid he, *to reſiſt that:* and thereupon inſtantly went out to be baptized. At firſt all the doctors were affrighted that the truth ſhould have ſuffered; and therefore hardly gave way to him to ſpeak; yet did that ſimplicity prevail by God's bleſſing, to the conviction and converſion of the philoſopher, when all theſe ſcholaſtic debates did not. This is recorded by Ruffinus, in the third chapter of his book, which is the firſt added by him to Euſebius his eccleſiaſtic hiſtory. *Obſ.* 5. That ſome men of mean and ſmall gifts or parts, and who are not able to do much by writing or diſputing againſt ſubtil adverſaries; do yet often prove more ſtedfaſt adherers to truth in times of perſecution, than others, who, in the former reſpects, have gone far beyond them, and have been of greater eſteem as friends to truth, both with themſelves and others. This angel's ſtrength was not much; but his ſtedfaſtneſs and patience under affliction was great. Worthy Perkins, on the place, giveth a memorable inſtance of this in the time of their perſecution under Queen Mary of England, viz. that there was an honeſt man of mean parts, and no great eſteem, near to Cambridge, who did ſeal the truth with his blood, when all the great ſcholars and doctors of that univerſity did miſerably and ſhamefully make defection from the ſame. *Obſ.* 6. That oftentimes an honeſt miniſter with mean gifts, hath more countenance and ſucceſs in his miniſtry, than where greater gifts without honeſty are, as by comparing this angel with the angels of Sardis and Laodicea in this ſame chapter is clear. For (to ſay no more) he hath this advantage, that his works may *be found perfect before God*, wherein the others cannot but be defective. *Obſ.* 7. That a little meaſure of gifts, being honeſtly and faithfully improven, have their commendation from Jeſus Chriſt, as if they were of the higheſt meaſure and degree: becauſe it is not gifts that commendeth a miniſter to Chriſt, but faithfulneſs in improving the meaſure which he hath: and ſo if two talents be faithfully improven, it will be ſaid, *well done* to that ſervant, and he will be called *faithful*, even as well as he, who had five, or even ten talents, beſtowed upon him. And if this were well conſidered, miniſters might be leſs anxious for the meaſure of their gifts, and more provoked to be ſerious and faithful in their improving of the ſame. *Obſ.* 8. That it is a ſpecial mercy, even to be keeped from the common trials that others meet with: There is much mercy in God's people being keeped free from ills, that otherways they might be over-maſtered with: and it is not by chance or fortune, that the lot of one church or perſon is more eaſy than the lot of others; but this cometh from the Lord's over-ruling providence, keeping them from that hour of tentation which, in his wiſdom, is ordered for others; who is therefore humbly and thankfully to be acknowleged in the ſame. *Obſ.* 9. That ſtedfaſtneſs in honeſty and faithful adherence to Chriſt and his truth, do never of themſelves involve a people in trials and afflictions; but in God's good providence, do often prevent the ſame: therefore this honeſt and zealous church, is kept from a coming ſtorm, which was to try all the world beſide. *Obſ.* 10. That it is not impoſſible to God to make open blaſphemers real converts, and that ſometimes he hath actually done and doth the ſame. *Obſ.* 11. That when he doth this, it is one of the rareſt gifts that can be beſtowed upon a church, and one of the greateſt confirmations that an honeſt miniſter can meet with in his miniſtry; and in the uſual diſpenſation of

God's providence, doth attend a minister's honest, zealous and faithful discharge of his duty in simplicity. Therefore both ministers and people would not only be animated and encouraged to pray for the same; but also to love and follow honest simplicity and faithfulness, as the most suitable and probable way for attaining the same. *Obs.* 12. That as usually true conversion to God, and sincere love to the saints, go together, so also it is found in experience, that the more bitterness hath been against the ordinances, saints or servants of our Lord Jesus there will be, if conversion be true, the more full and manifest testimonies of respect shewed to them, even often beyond what are shewed from these that have been formerly sincere. *Ob.* 13. That profane men, before their conversion, do not look upon honest, simple, and godly followers of God, as so beloved of him as indeed they are. *Obs.* 14. It is a good token when men are brought in sincerity, to acknowledge, that it is neither the great men, nor the wise and learned men of the world that are beloved of God; but only the godly, and all such, whatever their places or parts be. *Ob.* 15. The right impression of godliness in a person or church, is not to conceive such and such to be more deserving than others, but to be more beloved of God: which is the great fountain of all the rest.

Concerning Ministerial Qualifications.

IF we will compare the angels of these three churches in this chapter together, we will find great difference: these of Sardis and Laodicea, it is like, had many gifts, which made the first get a name from others, and the last to esteem of himself; yet hath none of them a great commendation for grace, but the contrary; he of Sardis had a name, but *was dead*, and his works, whatever they appeared to men, were not perfect before God: what he of Laodicea was, that epistle also will clear. And for fruit, the angel of Sardis hath little, but a *few names;* and, it is like, he of Laodicea had less or none at all. The angel of Philadelphia again, is in all these three contrary: he hath few parts, *but a little strength;* yet hath a good testimony of honesty and success. Whence may we not only gather: 1. That there are different measures of gifts amongst ministers. And, 2. That some are more honest than others. And, 3. That the most honest have often the meanest gifts in appearance; and who have greatest gifts, often are least conscionable in the improving of them. And, 4. That a sincere honest minister may have very mean gifts, either considered in themselves, or as being compared with others; and yet may be more faithful in improving of them, be more accepted of by Jesus Christ with his small measure, and have more fruits, and greater success, than others of more shining gifts, without tenderness in their walk: but we may also have occasion to inquire, what qualifications are requisite in a minister of the gospel? and particularly, if learning be any way useful to a minister? or, if it be not rather hurtful, seeing weak Philadelphia is so commended, when others are reproved? or, if grace ought to be reckoned amongst ministerial qualifications? There are here extremes, some giving too much to learning, and too little to grace, and others doing the contrary. These are not then to be looked on as inconsistent; but as agreeing well together: for it is not the angel of Sardis his reproof, that he had a name or gifts; but that he was unanswerable to them: nor is it Philadelphia's commendation, that he had a little strength; but that he improved well that little which he had: otherwise, one talent may be hid and abused as well as five.

To speak a word therefore to the thing, we conceive, that these three are necessary for the qualifying of a minister, or of one of the ministry, viz. 1. Gifts. 2. Learning. 3. Grace. The second helpeth to manage the first; the third sanctifieth both, and maketh them level at the right end and mark. Yet take these advertisements: 1. That there are degrees in all these, and that we intend not to stint to any rigid measure or degree in any of them. 2. That although they be necessary, yet not equally, nor after the same manner; the first two being necessary to the *esse*, or being of ministerial qualifications; the last belonging to the *bene esse*, or to the well and integral being thereof, as will afterward appear.

By *gifts*, we understand a fitness given of God, whereby one is capacitated for such a calling: and although, by improving, it may increase, yet we conceive, that it is in itself no acquired thing, simply, but is like a stock or a talent that is given to trade with in such a station: and therefore by no pains, skill, or art, can be attained, where it is

not given. Hence it is peculiarly called a gift: and of Chriſt's giving, Eph. iv. 12. 1 Cor. xii. 14. 1 Tim. iv. 14. 2 Tim. i. 6. The apoſtle comprehendeth it in that word διδακτικὸς apt to teach, 1 Tim. iii. And we may take it up in theſe three, 1. A capacity to diſcern and conceive of the things of God with ſome diſtinctneſs: if this be not, there can be no progreſs to any other ſtep; and this may be called *the gift of knowledge* (as there is a word of knowledge which doth ſuppoſe this gift, 1 Cor. xii.) whereby one is able to take up the truths of the goſpel, which every one is not: this is prayed for to Timothy, 2 Tim. ii. 7. not as to a Chriſtian ſimply, but as to a miniſter. 2. It taketh in a fitneſs to expreſs and bring forth, for the edification of others, what they have conceived themſelves: called by the apoſtle *utterance*, Col. iv. 3, 4. and he that hath it, διδακτικὸς And it may be called the *word of wiſdom* or knowledge, whereby one is fitted profitably to ſpeak to others: without which, no knowledge is ſufficient. 3. There is alſo comprehended in this gift, an energy, or efficacy, which bringeth out things in another manner, and with another ſtamp, than the rhetoric and eloquence of men can do. Hence the *word* and *power* in the preaching of the goſpel are diſtinguiſhed, 1 Cor. iv. 19. *I will know, not* their *word*, but their *power*, (what the two great divines Calvin, and Martyr ſay on the place, is excellent to this purpoſe) and this, we conceive, is the main differencing thing of a miniſterial gift, the former two being common to men of all profeſſions in ſome reſpect, but this is not. Hence many men may have much knowledge, and be able by great eloquence to expreſs it, and yet be far from that power and life, which a native miniſterial gift hath with it, as the corrupt teachers at Corinth, who abounded in human eloquence were: which (as holy and learned Mr. Boyd of Trochrege ſaith) is to be tried, not *ex dono*, or, *by the gift* only; but, *ex doni efficacia*, or *by the efficacy of that gift* in the impreſſion of it upon conſciences. And, altho' this may be beſt known to a ſpiritual ear, which can try and diſcern gifts, as the palate meats; yet is the thing clear in ſcripture, and often (as it is more and leſs) will be acknowledged by natural hearers; ſuch as not a few of Chriſt's, and John the Baptiſt's hearers were, who yet, notwithſtanding, diſcovered this power and efficacy in their preaching, which they did not in the preaching of the Scribes and Phariſees, Mat. vii. 29. that is, when a preaching for matter and manner of expreſſing exquiſite, yet will leſs affect, and have leſs weight, than ſome few words ſpoken thus in ſimplicity by another. This efficacy conſiſteth not in natural fervour and outcrying: there may be much of that, and little of this, and contrarily; nor conſiſteth it in any meer exerciſe of art, in diſpoſing of the matter ſpoken, or chuſing of taking expreſſions. Theſe things, it is true, when not affected, may have their own uſe; but otherwiſe ſuch affectation of words, may well draw men to admire the carrier, or love their gift; but doth not engage to eſteem of him that ſendeth, and chiefly to commend the matter that is ſpoken to the conſcience; which is the native rule by which a true gift is diſcerned and ſquared. And we may conſider it mainly in theſe, 1. In its *ſimple* plainneſs, or plain ſimplicity, whereby the truths of God are propoſed like themſelves, having nothing mixed in to divert the hearer from them; but they made as naked as can be to them, for their underſtanding of them: this ſimplicity is often ſpoken of by Paul, and is oppoſed to human eloquence, as in the epiſtles to the Corinthians. 2. It conſiſteth in *evidence* and demonſtration, a gift whereby one is fitted convincingly to propoſe or preſs ſuch a thing, not ſo much doctrinally in drawing concluſions from premiſes, as by leaving the impreſſion of ſuch a thing upon the conſcience, that it is bound with it: this is called the *evidence and demonſtration of the Spirit, and of power*, 1 Cor. ii. 4. 3. There is a *power* and efficacy which accompanieth this, as to its effects: this maketh threatenings ſo weighty, that Paul will make Felix to tremble; and it maketh promiſes ſweet and perſuaſive, ſo that Agrippa will almoſt be perſuaded to be a Chriſtian: this will make even the idiot or ſtranger, 1 Cor. xiv. to ſay, *Doubtleſs, God is there.* And that is more than an ordinary diſcourſe, even of ſuch a ſubject, thus to commend the word and ourſelves to mens conſciences in the ſight of God; when by his aſſiſtance, he maketh the goſpel to triumph in every place, and to be a ſweet ſavour to him in all, 2 Cor. ii. 14. 4. This miniſterial gift taketh in a ſeaſonable way of ſpeaking as to the time, occaſion, hearers, &c. Thus it is a gift of right dividing the word of truth, 2 Tim. ii. 15. ſo as neither to ſtrengthen the wicked, nor to faint and make ſad the righteous; but to lay battery at the proud imaginations of natural men, for taking in of theſe ſtrong holds, and

to pour oil in the wounds of exerciſed ſinners, and that ſo, as the one, may not by the preacher's fault, partake of the allowance, or be wounded with the ſtroak that is deſigned for the other: this is indeed true learning, to be able to condeſcend and make plain a word in ſeaſon to the weary, Iſa. l. 4. and ſuch a one is a workman that needeth not to be aſhamed. 5. There is in this gift a παῤῥησια, or holy *boldneſs* and freedom, whereby, in an authoritative way, the Lord's word is ſpoken as it ought to be ſpoken, ſuch as is to be obſerved in the chief paſtor's preaching, Matth. vii. 29. it is called Col. iv. 3, 4. a *door of utterance, and a ſpeaking as it ought to be ſpoken;* or, as it is, 1 Pet. iv. 11. *as the oracles of God;* ſo that in leſs or more, this gift ought to have a ſtamp of the majeſty of God on it, as his word hath in itſelf. And this rebuking with authority, that none deſpiſe this miniſtry, is both often mentioned in Paul's practice, and recommended by him to others, in the perſons of Timothy and Titus: and it is like, ſomething of all hath been in this angel of Philadelphia. And this *power* is not any thing phyſically and inſeperably united to the man, or to his preaching, but is in him a fitneſs and dexterity given of God, which he accompanieth with a ſingular impreſſion by his Spirit ordinarily on the hearts and conſciences of hearers, thereby diſcovering it to be of him.

For the ſecond, viz. *Learning*, what to ſay of it will be harder to decide, ſeeing it hath many ſeveral acceptations; as, 1. It may be taken for acquaintance with ſcripture, and with divine and heavenly things in it; or, for acquaintance for human literature, as knowledge of tongues, arts, ſciences, &c. 2. We may conſider learning, either materially in itſelf, as it is a fitneſs which a man hath to reaſon for a truth againſt an error, to draw concluſions from premiſes, to open hard places, or reconcile ſeeming contradict places, and to anſwer objections, &c. or we may conſider it in the manner how men come by this faculty, or acquire this fitneſs to underſtand tongues, to inveſtigate and ſearch into difficulties, &c. and thereby come to be enabled to improve the gift given, and ſtir it up: which is either by an extraordinary illumination, as the apoſtles had it, and prophets of old, without any mediate pains or means; or by an ordinary and mediate way of reading, ſtudying, and learning of theſe by mediate helps, which may conduce for that end. Now, in anſwer we ſay,

1. That learning conſidered materially, or in itſelf, as it implieth acquaintance with the things of God, that is ſimply neceſſary. This all the apoſtles had, viz. ability to reaſon againſt gain-ſayers, to open the myſteries of the goſpel, &c. This is required in all miniſters, 1 Tim. iii. 2. and Tit. i. 9. that he *be apt to teach:* and it is uſeful in reference to the truths he hath to propound, whereof ſome things are hard, and not eaſily underſtood, which the unlearned and ignorant are ready to pervert to their own deſtruction, 2 Pet. iii. 16. A miniſter then had need to be thus learned, leſt he ſpeak, not knowing whereof he affirmeth, 1 Tim. i. 7. and (being unable *to hold faſt the form of ſound words, which himſelf hath learned*, 2 Tim. i. 13.) he be turned aſide to *fooliſh unlearned queſtions*, chap. ii. 23. It is alſo needful for his opening of ſcripture, for his dealing with adverſaries; and that *both to exhort and convince gain-ſayers*, Tit. i. 9, 11. *whoſe mouths are to be ſtopped* by him, as in many of the epiſtles, we ſee Paul did; and that in a learned and methodic way of diſpute: and this did Stephen, Acts vi. and it is frequent in that ſtory. Yea, there is even a learning required in reference unto the weary, to whom words and expreſſions by a ſingular dexterity are to be wailed, Iſa. l. 4.

2. For the manner of acquiring this learning and ability, we think it not ſimply neceſſary to try it in the ordinary mediate ways: for, God often did communicate it immediately; and if he had thought good, could have continued it in his church in that manner.

Yet, 3. Seeing the Lord now giveth not this acquaintance with divine truths, and ability to reaſon, &c. immediately; the way of ſtudying, by reading, and being brought up by others in the knowledge of theſe, is now, upon this ſuppoſition, ſimply neceſſary alſo: for, if it be neceſſary to know the myſtery of the goſpel, and men, by an immediate way, do not attain to it, then it is neceſſary to follow the way, whereby it is attainable. That it is not now immediately communicated, we ſuppoſe is clear in experience. Men cannot now ſpeak with a ſtrange tongue; yea, not read their own tongue without teaching and learning: and can it be ſuppoſed that they ſhall be fit for propheſy, which is the greater gift? Beſide, the Lord hath not left us his word to ly by us, but that we ſhould read it, as the command is expreſſed, 1 Tim. iv. 13. &c. *Give thy*

ſelf to reading: Yea, he hath ſo vailed many parts of his word purpoſely, that the reader ſhould be provoked to ſearch into it, as is ſeveral times inſinuated in this ſame prophecy: and ſeeing there is a communication of gifts, and what is made known to one, may, and ſhould (in a right manner) be made known to others, and that by write, as well as by word: what reaſon can there be, that a believer or miniſter now may not, and ſhould not improve the knowledge that others before him had, or now at a diſtance from him have, in the myſtery of God, as well as by conference, he may make uſe of one that is alive, and preſent? And what other way is there than by reading to attain that? This cannot be denied to a private Chriſtian, much leſs to a miniſter: and the many ſad fruits of ignorance, error and confuſion, which flow from the neglect of ſtudy, ſhew the neceſſity of this. Neither is it for nought that parents are commanded to *bring up their children in the knowledge and admonition of the Lord*, which, in Timothy's education, is commended: which could not be, if this way of acquiring knowledge were unlawful. And it is alſo confirmed by that property (given by the Lord himſelf) of the ſcribe, who is taught unto the kingdom of God, Mat. xiii. 52. that he bringeth *out of his treaſure things new and old:* whereby it appeareth, not only that he hath a treaſure or ſtock laid up, but that he hath in it what is *old*, as having been of long time uſeful to the church, and what is *new*, and added thereunto by his own painfulneſs.

4. For the knowledge of human learning, and the ſtudying thereof, ſuch as tongues, ſciences, hiſtory, &c. although we conceive them not eſſential, and ſimply neceſſary for the being of every miniſter, ſo as none could be a miniſter without them; yet we conceive them uſeful exceedingly to all, and neceſſary for the church, being uſed in a right ſubordination to the great end of edification. For although the Lord gave gifts of many tongues; yet are the ſcriptures in two original languages only: and is it not neceſſary to be acquainted with theſe? yet hath the Lord made uſe of no extraordinary gift of tongues to tranſlate them into ſeveral languages; but of men who, by his bleſſing in the way of ſtudy, had acquired ſkill in theſe languages; which ſaith, that ſuch a ſtudy is neceſſary to the church: and indeed if that had been unlawful, many nations of the Gentiles had never had the word, and ſo never had been churches, had not this been: that therefore which is ſuch a mean for the propagating of the goſpel, and ſo bleſſed of God, cannot be diſpleaſing to him, who could have appointed otherwiſe, and not left this neceſſity on us, if he had thought meet. Beſide, the right uſing of all ſciences, (even theſe which men by their corruption do moſt abuſe) contribute exceedingly to advance edification: not by furniſhing new weapons (the ſcripture is the only ſword;) but by enabling men to manage the old. Theſe are to men, like ſkill to one that hath ſtrength, to teach him how to handle his arms for his ſafety; like phyſic to the body, to make all the members act to their ſeveral uſes; and like the pulling out of ſomething in the ear or eye, which marreth the hearing or ſeeing: ſo learning is but the fitting of the natural faculties of the ſoul, of reaſon, and even of the gift formerly mentioned, to act neatly, and to be forth-coming accordingly, and ſubſerviently to the orders and dictates of a ſanctified judgment: whereas otherwiſe, a natural and habitual indiſpoſition doth in much incapacitate men for the exerciſing even of that which they have. Neither can this be thought ſtrange, ſeeing men are not born ſkilful in any common occupation, till it be taught them: It is no marvel therefore that they be undexterous as to the main things. And the writings of heathens have been made uſe of for good ends by Paul, as his citing of them upon ſeveral occaſions cleareth, and can the reading thereof hurt us? It is a good ſimilitude which Baſil uſeth, *Orat. ad adoleſc.* That as dyers, when they are apt to dye purple, do firſt put ſome common colour on the cloth to make it receive the purple better; ſo human learning is uſeful for fitting one for the more profitable ſtudy of divinity. Only we ſay, This learning would be well regulated, ſo as to be made uſe of only for edification, men not flying to that as if the principles of heathen philoſophers were more ſure and ſtrong than plain ſcriptures, or as if loathing the ſcripture phraſes and arguments, we would confirm truths from more learned mediums out of theſe: much leſs would we reconcile their principles and the ſcriptures by aſcribing ſuch a meaning to the ſcripture, as muſt be conſiſtent with them, as lother to brangle them in their authority than the ſcriptures of God;

nor yet by using their phrases to derogate from scripture-plainness or simplicity, (as often the miserably blind schoolmen do) which is an high fault. It is abused also, when a minister thinketh himself something because of it, and despiseth these who are inferior to him therein; or, when he accounteth that in himself, or in others, sufficient for qualification; or, when he useth it for ostentation, or getting of a name amongst hearers; that is a poor learning, which maketh the message less intelligible, and less useful; and that is truly a learned pastor, who can make spiritual mysterious truths more plain and palpable to the simplest hearer, as Luther once said, that he is the ablest preacher who *pueriliter*, *populariter*, & *simplicissime*, *docet*. *Melc. Adam. in vit Lutheri*. Learning serveth to enable one in searching forth truth, to conceive what is solid or unsolid, and to express it plainly; whereas that is a great abuse of learning used by the schoolmen (follow them in it who will) to make the plainest scripture, or practical thing obscure with many doubts, questions, divers senses, objections, and many frothy unedifying notions, which have never profited them that have been occupied therein, and is contrary to the true end of learning, which ought to be edification. And often the most learned preacher, in this sense, hath the most ignorant people. He is not the most learned and skilful lawyer, schoolmaster, &c. who knoweth most speculatively, but he who can reduce it best to practice, as the nature of his calling doth require; so it is truly in the learning of a minister, he who can inform, convince or edify others with most dexterity, is the most learned minister, though it may be, the less knowing man.

5. We said also, that grace was necessary, and that he that thus carrieth the Lord's message, now should be holy as they were, who of old carried his vessels; we do not rigidly call for this as for the former two, so as if no man could be a minister without saving grace, and unless he be truly regenerated: what was said in the former epistle, doth guard against this; yet we may assert, that it is necessary by necessity of precept: for holiness is a qualification in that same roll with ability to convince gainsayers. Tit. i. 8, 9. And also by way of mids. It is useful and necessary in many respects, 1. For himself: he cannot have confidence of his calling, or of his being approven of God in it, without this: though he may be called; yet he cannot act as called of God, and so must be much incapacitated in that respect. 2. For the work: which is of that nature that, it requireth communion with God, and a standing in his counsel, Jer. xxiii. 18, 22. Otherwise it may be accounted a stealing of his word without acknowledging of himself, verse 30. And though these be necessary in any calling, yet the nature of this sheweth them to be in a singular way necessary in it. 3. There cannot be that boldness in the message, especially where difficulties occur, without it. 4. For application of truths, and speaking especially to the weary, this is necessary; that they may more natively take up the cases of others, apply the remedy to them, and sympathize with them, by making forthcoming the consolation to others, wherewith they have been comforted themselves, 2 Cor. i. 9. Which is a main way whereby God fitteth his ministers experimentally; and even the head, in some respect was thus qualified. From this, Luther said, that these three, *tentatio meditatio*, & *oratio*, were requisite in a minister: and they who want this holiness, are certainly exceeding defective. Further, in respect of his having fruits, it is most necessary, these being often blessed of the Lord with many, and others with all their learning, but with few, as in these two churches appeareth, beside a minister's prayers having influence on the hearers profiting, as well as his preaching; and he being to pray for them, and to account their thriving to be an answer of his praying, as well as the fruit of his preaching, as in Paul's practice is manifest: what can the unrenewed minister do here? can he ly between the porch and the altar? can he strive without ceasing in prayer to God for them? and therefore must he be much incapacitated to be profitable in this respect? yea, for the credit of the ministry, it is requisite that he be of good report, even to these without, otherwise his word will not have much weight: and what will gain such a good report without holiness? hypocrisy often is not much convincing, neither is it continuing, whereas holiness, even in a common servant, will adorn the gospel; much more in a minister, who is a city set on a hill, and cannot be hid.

Again, we say, That this qualification of holiness should be greatly respected both in a people's calling or choosing of a minister, and in a presbytery's ordaining of one for a people; so that if they should respect all other qualifications, and yet never

inquire for this, they are exceeding faulty: and altho' holineſs be not ſimply neceſſary to a miniſter, as if without it he were not to be accounted ſo, when lawfully admitted, as is ſaid; yet we conceive that neither a people, nor a preſbytery ſhould paſs over that qualification in their choice or admiſſion, ſo as to make no inquiry for it, or not to reſpect it, where, it may be, there is nothing to ſway any to that opinion of the man in well grounded charity, but ſomewhat more to the contrary: for, the people are not left to call whom they will; if it were a deacon, he is to be a man full of the Holy Ghoſt, Acts vi. And this place being the firſt clear evidence of a peoples intereſt in their calling of a miniſter, this rule for their proceeding muſt be of force alſo. Again, it being ſuch a great truſt, as to be intruſted with the oracles of God, and with the ſouls of people, can he be thought fit to endeavour the ſaving of the ſouls of others, who yet maketh no conſcience in taking heed to his own? This is the apoſtle's reaſoning, 1 Tim. iii. 2, 3, 4, 5. *If a man know not how to rule his own houſe, how ſhall he take care of the church of God?* Which is propoſed by way of queſtion, to ſhew the unanſwerableneſs of that reaſoning, by which he preſſeth the obſerving of the former qualifications. And certainly theſe two are not without weighty reaſons put together, Acts xx. 28. and 1 Tim. iv. 16. *Take heed to thyſelf, and to the flock and doctrine.* But to ſhew this, that who care not for the one, will never natively and naturally care for the other. Eſpecially that word which followeth, being conſidered, *So ſhalt thou ſave thyſelf, and thoſe that hear thee*, intimating, that careleſneſs in his own walk, may not only mar his own ſalvation, but alſo the ſalvation of his hearers, ſeeing theſe two ordinarily are carried on jointly, as in this epiſtle: and, can people diſpenſe with this, to have only a form of ordinances, not caring whether their miniſters have fruit amongſt them or not? Or that the profit be to many or few? And yet there cannot much be expected (whatever God may ſovereignly do (from a man that ſtandeth not in God's counſel, Jer. xxiii. 22. And therefore turneth not many from their iniquity: neither can any expect that the Lord will approve that he ſhould be made a ſteward in his houſe, and an under-father to his children, who yet, upon no charitable ground, can be accounted a child himſelf, and what confidence can there be, that a man not eſteemed gracious, ſhall either Chriſtianly carry in the outward form of religion, or yet keep ſoundneſs in faith? and will they not be acceſſory to theſe evils, who have hazarded ſo much on them, who are not worthy of any ſuch truſt?

The conſidering of this, as it relateth to a preſbytery's duty, will confirm it further. We ſay, they ought not (whoever call, or whatever ones parts be) to proceed to admit men to the miniſtry, without reſpect to this qualification of holineſs: my meaning is not, that ſearch in extraordinary ways ſhould be made for knowing of men's converſion; or, that infallibility ſhould be expected in this; or, that any particular evidences in ſuch a meaſure or degree ſhould be pitched on, without which nothing is to be ſatisfying, (for there are degrees, as was ſaid) but becauſe even ſcholars are naturally ſinful, and gifts do not mortify corruption, nor edify, but as they are well improven; and ſeeing often by mens profanity, good gifts do much hurt in the church; and ſeeing there can be no ground to expect the right improvement of gifts, by one not ſuppoſed to be gracious: therefore trial would be, 1. To clear that he be not profane, and that nothing can be charged on him. And, 2. That there are ſome things making him look holy-like, and giving ground, in a diſcerning charity, to eſteem ſo of him, that whatever afterward he prove, they may have peace in what they have done. And laſtly, That ſome fit time and way be taken purpoſely for trying of this. This is clear, 1. From the many directions that are given to miniſters concerning this one thing, in the epiſtles of Paul to Timothy and Titus, where they are expreſly limited in their proceeding to this, *That he be holy*, 1 Tim. iii. 2, &c. and Tit. i. 8. And this holineſs is not only deſcribed negatively, that he be *blameleſs not given to wine*, &c. v. 6, 7. but poſitively, that he *have a good name, be ſober, juſt, holy:* which ſheweth that it conſiſteth not meerly in negatives. 2. It is evident that it is to be tried: becauſe even a deacon alſo is to be proved, 1 Tim. iii. 10. (which alſo ſuppoſeth that a miniſter is much more to be proved) and then let him uſe the office, if he be found (that is, after trial) to be blameleſs: and ſo there is a proof to be had of this qualification, as of others. 3. It appeareth by his excluding of a *novice* from this charge, v. 6. (that is, one lately brought into the faith) as not being yet able to bear it, or as not being well known what he might prove: and there being to us a proportionableneſs, and likeneſs in ſome reſpect, betwixt the

novice then (they being all accounted believers) and one that ſeemeth now to profeſs more ſeriouſly than the generality of others; it ſaith, he would be of a ſtanding profeſſion that ſhould be admitted to this charge. And, 4. That which is, chap. v. 22. *Lay hands ſuddenly on no man*, &c. doth confirm this alſo; and that is, not only leſt he be not of parts, but leſt he, through untenderneſs, abuſe his parts, and thou become guilty, as the reaſon ſubjoined, clear-eth. And to meet that objection which one might have, viz. *It is not raſhly done; for nothing can be laid to his charge*, Paul ſaith ſome mens ſins are at the firſt obvious; but ſome, ſaith he, will follow after: and therefore will take time before they be diſcovered. Therefore there is need of warineſs and trial to bring them out, as the rev. Mr. Dickſon expoundeth the place. And can this be ſo to be ſlighted in miniſters proceeding, which Paul ſo frequently preſſeth, not only to obſerve when it is palpable, but to ſearch for it where it is not ſo obvious? And if it be ſo requiſite, even for a deacon, what will it be for a miniſter, whoſe ſtation leadeth him more immediately to the things of greateſt concernment? And as the apoſtles appointed, ſo practiſed they, Acts vi. *Seek ye out men full of the Holy Ghoſt, them* we will ordain, intimating concerning others, that they would not ordain them; ſo is the qualification propoſed for the apoſtle, Acts i. although Judas in God's ſovereign wiſdom had been employed; yet, there is another rule given them to walk by, than he taketh to himſelf; they muſt take one of theſe who had given beſt proof of their integrity, ver. 23. And through all the epiſtles, when Paul is recommending miniſters, there is ever ſome evidence of their ſanctification given: whereby he would let us know, what weight is truly in that qualification for commending of men for the miniſtry; and what ſort of men others ſhould recommend after him. And there are alſo many reaſons which may be gathered from what is ſaid, to make miniſters very careful in this, that holineſs be well looked unto in inſtruments, as they would expect an open door to be ſet to them by the Lord, as he doth here.

If any ſhould ſay, 1. That this looketh like the way of rigid trying of church-members, and ſeemeth to favour that conceit. *Anſw.* 1. I am not ſpeaking of the manner of proceeding, but of the thing, whatever way any judicatory, or perſons in Chriſtian prudence, ſhall take to ſatisfy themſelves in the particular, that I conceive can be regulated by no certain directions: for, that will be fit in one caſe, which will not be in another, &c. 2. Although there be a proving and trying here called for; yet it will not hold as neceſſary to all members: becauſe there is not the like ground; nay, nor ſuch precepts nor practices for trial of members, as there is in this: And were it ſo clear for members, I ſuppoſe it were hard to ſhift it. Yea, 3. This doth overturn that rigidity and ſcrupuloſity concerning church-members, it is ſo far from ſtrengthening of it: for, if there be ſomewhat ſingular required of a miniſter, and if one that is already a church-member be yet to be proved, if probably he be holy e'er he be a miniſter, (ſo that one may be a church-member for his holineſs, and yet unfit, in reſpect of his being defective in this qualification, to be a miniſter; yea, a deacon) then is there no ſuch rigid and accurate ſearch to be made for poſitive evidences in every church-member: for then, there could be no addition to it, or further length to go: but from this, it is clear that ſomething is required in the trial of an intrant to the miniſtry, more than of one to be admitted into the church: for one may be warrantly admitted to the church, who yet may be unfit in this reſpect to be a miniſter: therefore the extending of this concluſion to all the members indifferently, is unwarrantable: for, this new trying of them, ſuppoſeth the former not to be ſo exact, and yet all this probation is to be of ſuch as are within.

If any ſhould further object, That this layeth on that which is impoſſible. *Anſw.* There is no ſuch thing intended. But, 1. It is more than is needful to every church-member. 2. It is ſomewhat that needeth proof and trial, and is not to be taken on truſt: but the manner of trial we leave. 3. It is ſomewhat that may warrant the conſcience, not to determine infallibly concerning ſuch a perſon's ſtate, but concerning a man's own act, in a deliberate well grounded concurring in his ordination; ſo that there be no ground for a challenge afterward, being put to ſay, it was ſudden, and ſo to charge himſelf as acceſſary unto, and guilty of his ſins alſo, if afterward he miſcarry: which is intended by that precept, 1 Tim. v. 22. &c.

If it be objected further, Then there would be few miniſters entered, and many congregations would be deſolate. That great pattern and patron of learning and piety, Trochrege, when he moveth this objection to himſelf, which ſheweth that it hath

been ordinary in all times ſo to diſpute againſt this duty) anſwereth, that it is not ſo much to be reſpected, *quot*, or how many be in the miniſtry, as *quales et qui*; that is, who, or of what qualifications they be. Therefore, ſaith he, it had been the advantage of the miniſtry that they had been ever fewer, rather than that many who are in that ſtation ſhould have been admitted to it: for, ſaith he, ſome became not only uſeleſs themſelves, but do incapacitate others, and make the miniſtry deſpicable before all by their carriage. And, indeed, it is often found ſo, that many congregations had been better ſtill to have waited for what providence might have ordered for them, than to have been planted as they were. Many excellent things hath he to this purpoſe, p. 1187, &c. particularly p. 1107, &c.

We are perſuaded, that whatever profane men think of holineſs, that yet the people who deſire to have their ſouls ſaved, will be loth to have a blind guide, who by falling into the ditch, may hazard others, or, one that may heal their wounds ſlightly; or, at beſt, point out the way to them, but in little join with them in it. And eſpecially, that miniſters of the goſpel, who know what eſteem Chriſt hath of ſouls, and what difficulty it is for themſelves to walk ſingly in this miniſtry, even though they mind their own ſalvation; and what native and natural ſympathy is called for betwixt a miniſter and his flock; and who are well acquainted with the devices of the devil, who aimeth to make havock of ſouls by an ungodly, as well as by an erroneous miniſtry; and alſo are laying to heart, and ſeriouſly minding their reckoning to Jeſus Chriſt at his appearing, for the ſouls of ſuch congregations, as they have had acceſs to provide with miniſters, whether his ſheep were committed to a friend, or an enemy, to one that loved him, and ſo would feed the lambs; or one that loved and ſought his own things, as all men in nature do, and ſo would feed himſelf. We are perſuaded, we ſay, that ſuch will tremble to be acceſſory to ſuch heinous affronting of Jeſus Chriſt, or ſuch cruel betraying of poor ſouls, in committing them to an ignorant, or unfaithful guide, who may fall in the ditch with them. And ſeeing this is of main concernment to the advancement of Chriſt's goſpel, and the edification of peoples ſouls, to have miniſters according to the Lord's heart, and not mens, to feed the people; and a ſpecial promiſe ſubjoined to his marrying of a land, Jer. iii. 14. And an evidence of his dwelling with a people, Let all ſuch therefore, whether people or miniſters, who have a hand in this, be obteſted in the fear of the Lord, and by the coming and appearance of our Lord Jeſus, the great Shepherd of his ſheep, that they be wary and circumſpect in this moſt concerning buſineſs, as they would not in that day be guilty of the blood of many ſouls, that unholy miniſters cannot but be guilty of; and as they would not be accounted partakers with them in all their ſins. And, no queſtion, this command amongſt others, is implied in that charge to Timothy, 1 Tim. vi. 13, 14, 21. And it is very obſervable, that, in theſe epiſtles, while he giveth directions to Timothy and Titus, in the name of all miniſters which are to be obeyed to the end of the world, he ſo often *chargeth*, more than in other epiſtles, that theſe commands ſhould be done without partiality; which certainly ſheweth, that miniſters muſt eſpecially reckon for their obſerving thereof. Yea, that *charge* is particularly given in reference to this duty, 1 Tim. v. 21. and 22. *I charge thee*, &c. *Do nothing by partiality:* withal ſubjoining, *Lay hands ſuddenly on no man:* which, as Calvin obſerveth, is upon this ground given, becauſe men often are ready to be partial in admiſſions; therefore, ſaith the apoſtle, whatever others do, *do not thou partake of that ſin with them.* And though that reverend forecited author, Mr. Boyd, be every way moſt moderate; yet, page 1108. doth he cenſure the prepoſterous moderation of ſome good men, who are too charitable in the matter of admiſſion of men to the miniſtry; and directly aſſerteth, that in trial of ſpirits for ſuch an end, not only the doctrine, *ſed et animorum motus, conſilia, conatus*, are alſo to be proven. And if nothing ſatisfying appear, which may hold forth God's call, although it were for many years, it is to be foreborn. *Nec enim tam refert quot ſint hoc Miniſterio fungentes quam qui ſint, et quanta cum cura delecti atque probati; praeſtatque plurimis abdicatis, vel unum aliquem admitti, qui ſit unus ex mille, &c. quam plurimis indifferenter admiſſis, ex mille vix unum, qualem cupias invenire.* And thereafter citeth our Lord's practice, Luke ix. 57. who, though moſt tender of the church's edification, and in a time when the harveſt was very great, and the labourers but few, yet doth reject two, who ſeemingly offered themſelves with affection to the work, and preſſeth one, not ſo ſeemingly forward as the other two. In all which,

and in much more to this purpoſe he doth excellently enlarge himſelf, as in a thing of moſt grave concernment, to the church's edification. His famous maſter alſo, divine Mr. Rollock, doth moſt pathetically preſs this; and particularly in his lectures upon the Lord's laſt ſermon and ſolemn prayer, John xvii. Lect. xxiii. Altho' this be true, and will not, we hope, by any be called in queſtion; yet there are two things which poſſibly to ſome may need more particularly to be ſpoken to; ſeeing it is eaſy to run into extremes. The firſt is, *What length may be attained, or is to be aimed at in this trial of a miniſter's ſanctification, by virtue of that precept*, lay hands ſuddenly on no man? Secondly, *How it may be made to appear, that ſeeing ſo much is attainable in this caſe, that as much is not to be ſought after in the trial of private members?* We ſhall therefore, before we leave this, ſpeak a word to theſe.

To the firſt we ſay, 1. That by virtue of that precept, there is no infallibility to be expected nor pretended unto; becauſe there is no ſuch thing poſſible: nor doth the Lord in his word give ſuch ſymptoms and evidences as may found ſuch a judgment or deciſion of another perſon's gracious eſtate: nor is this to be enquired for, as if the validity of a perſon's ordination did depend upon the ſame: for ordination may be valid, where no ſanctification is, as was formerly ſaid; but it is ſuch a trial and probation as is oppoſite to raſhneſs and haſtineſs, and may give ground of quietneſs unto theſe that go about this work, even though the perſon ſhould not be found afterward anſwerable. Becauſe the ground of their peace is not the reality or truth of the thing; but it is to ſay ſo, the reality of ſuch and ſuch evidences, which, after trial, are found indeed to be ſo, although poſſibly they be not ſincere.

2. We ſay, that negative evidences, or negative knowledge, that is, that we ourſelves know no evil of the perſon, and ſuch like, will not be ſufficient to exoner us in proceeding to ordination, according to this precept; for, that may be, where a man is not known at all. Beſide, that will not give ground to make him be accounted *of good report, holy, faithful, &c.* which are the qualifications required in him to whom the word of truth is to be committed. Alſo the ſcripture holdeth forth ſuch qualifications as are poſitive, to be enquired for in this caſe: which were uſeleſs, if negatives were ſufficient. And certainly there is a negative holineſs at leaſt required in a private member; yet it is clear that more is to be enquired for in an officer; yea, even a deacon is not to be admitted without ſpecial qualifications, which are not requiſite in ordinary members. Amongſt other words, Ambroſe ſaith on this place, *Non enim ſufficit ſi ſine crimine ſit quia merita ejus debent præire bonorum operum ut dignus ſit ad ordinationem.*

3. We ſay then, That ſomething poſitive is attainable, and is to be enquired for: which though it be not infallibly convincing of the perſon's ſtate, yet may be ſufficient, to quiet the mind againſt the challenges of raſh and ſudden proceeding in that matter. Which, in the general, may be drawn to theſe three; 1. That there be a ſearch in the external poſitives that are given in the word; the knowledge whereof may be attained by ſearch. 2. There may be ſome obſervation of a man's way, and tract of carriage, from which ſome diſcovery may be made of a man's ſingleneſs and ſpirituality in ſuch duties. 3. There may be ſome diſcovery attained of a man's univerſality in theſe duties ſo qualified, by conſidering his carriage in reference to divers caſes and conditions, and divers perſons, both ſuch as are more tender, and others. That theſe are attainable cannot be denied, at leaſt ſo far as is neceſſary for the ſcope foreſaid. And certainly, that precept muſt be underſtood to require proof and trial in this, ſo far as is poſſibly attainable, (otherwiſe a man cannot be thought to be ſufficiently exonered in his duty) as the reaſon ſubjoined confirmeth: eſpecially in ſuch caſes where neither the good works, nor the evil of ſome men, are open before hand. And theſe being attainable, as is ſaid, it will follow then that they are to be enquired into. Judicious and learned Mr. Wood, in his piece againſt Mr. Lockyer, doth aſſert, *That there are ſome more eminent outward works and actings in religion and piety, by which men (ſo far as is competent to men to judge) may be warrantably judged poſitively gracious*, page 142, and ſheweth how this is to be attained, page 152, 153, in theſe words, *There is requiſite ſome ſeemingneſs of ſpiritual ſincerity in a man's profeſſion*, id eſt, *that he doth it from a ſpiritual principle, upon ſpiritual motives, and for a ſpiritual end: but a meer, ſober, not mocking ſerious profeſſion without more, is not a poſitive appearance of ſpiritual ſupernatural ſincerity.*

which ſheweth, that ſuch a thing is poſſible, and experience alſo doth confirm this.

4. We ſay, that in this precept it is implied, that theſe poſitive evidences are not ſoon to be truſted; but that men are ſeriouſly and diligently to inquire into the reality of them, for the quieting of themſelves rationally, in concluding that he is ſo and ſo qualified. And this, we conceive, is the great ſcope of that precept: for the general, that a miniſter ſhould be eminently qualified even in reference to godlineſs, I ſuppoſe will not be denied by any: the miſcarriage is ordinarily in the application, and that is not purpoſely to admit an holy man to be a miniſter, but to account a man holy without ground, and thereupon ſuddenly to proceed. The apoſtle's ſcope therefore is principally to guard againſt this, that ſuch thoughts of a perſon's fitneſs be not ſuddenly and without trial admitted and entertained. And we ſuppoſe, that altho' particular evidences be not inſiſted on; yet trial in the general, ſeriouſly, and with circumſpectneſs gone about, will do much to quiet the mind in reference to its own act. And this is ſo underſtood by Chryſoſtom, Theophilact, and others, as importing a command to try, and try again.

If it were more particularly inquired, *What theſe poſitive evidences are which may be warrantably looked for in one that is to be admitted to the miniſtry? Anſ.* Altho' by proportion, what may evidence one man to be gracious unto another, ſo far as is requiſite for one man to judge of another, that will hold here; and tho' there be ſome generals laid down, which include many particulars, as to *be holy, full of the holy Ghoſt*, Acts vi. ſuch as have given good proof of their faithfulneſs and conſtancy in religion, Acts i. ver. 21, 22. and ſuch like; yet, beſide theſe, the ſcripture hath pitched upon ſome particular characters for the diſcovery of this.

Firſt, He is to be a man *that ruleth well his own houſe*, 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5. which doth imply a man's faithfulneſs and profitableneſs, as a Chriſtian, in whatſoever private ſtation he hath been in formerly; ſo it is to be looked, how he hath done the duty of a ſon to parents, of a ſtudent in his ſtudies, of a private Chriſtian in his private walk with others, or how he hath behaved himſelf in families, or in other places wherein he hath had more near acceſs to be edifying, and ſuch like. This one character putteth to take trial: 1. Of a man's zeal and ſincerity in ſtudying edification according to his place. 2. Of his prudence in managing and ordering what he may meet with. And, 3. Of his authority, how probably he may be able to keep his people in a kindly ſubjection to Chriſt's ordinances, as the particular obſerving of that place will bear forth: which ſpeaketh not only of his fitneſs to teach; but alſo to govern in the houſe of God. And it would ſeem that though always the church is not to be reſtrained from calling one that is young, and without a family; yet, by a man's living ſome time after his going thro' private ſtudies, before his coming to the miniſtry, or having a family to govern, there might be much more acceſs confidently to diſcern a called miniſter in reſpect of this qualification: for, as the apoſtle reaſoneth, 1 Tim. iii. 5. *If a man know not how to rule his own houſe, how ſhall he take care of the church of God?*

Secondly, He is to be tried according to theſe marks wherewith a Chriſtian may be tried; ſuch as, to be *vigilant*, to be *ſober*, (which looketh to ſobriety in his whole carriage) not only to be *blameleſs*, but to be of *good behaviour, given to hoſpitality*, not *greedy or covetous, patient*, &c. 1 Tim. iii. 3. Titus i. 7, 8. In which qualifications, not only is to be tried what are men's practices; but what are their diſtempers or infirmities; what are their natural inclinations and diſpoſitions, and ſuch like: and if theſe be froward, except by the evidences of the oppoſite graces there be hope that they ſhall be ſubdued, there can be no confidence to proceed; for a miniſter ſhould be *meek, gentle*, no *brawler*, &c.

Thirdly, He is one that muſt have *a good report from them that are without*, 1 Tim. iii. 7. which importeth a ſhining eminency in his converſation, ſo as to be convincing even to wicked men: from whom ſeriouſneſs and ſincerity will get a teſtimony, when lightneſs and lukewarmneſs will be abhorred even by them.

Fourthly, He is to be *a lover of good men*, Titus i. 8. It is a mark of a believer to love the children of God; and here it is made a character whereby one that is to be called to the miniſtry, ought to be tried: and it is ſuch a love to them, as is demonſtrable and evidenced to others, by their converſing with them, eſtimation of them, and that in oppoſition to others, whom in that reſpect they love not, tho' poſſibly their natural ties to ſuch may be more. This character doth firſt ſuppoſe a capacity in them to diſcern good men beſide others. And, *Secondly*, A principle within, making them to love and e-

ſteem ſuch: which, where they are in reality, are both commendable in themſelves, and cannot but be ſome way diſcernable to others; and therefore may be the more warrantably obſerved and laid weight upon, and when they are wanting, proceeding may, yea, ſhould be at the greater ſtand and non-entry.

A fifth evidence is, that he be no *novice*, 1 Tim. iii. 6. which holdeth out, that he ought to be of ſome ſettled ſtanding in the profeſſion of godlineſs; at leaſt there would be ground to think him ſo: which cannot well be, if the man have been but as others in his education, and poſſibly come, by reaſon of the thoughts of a miniſtry, to have ſome fairer outward carriage than others; when yet, as to the practice of religion, he may be but a meer novice, and ſo give no ground to found a rational charity for expecting any thriving of the work of grace in his heart, or of the work of the miniſtry in his hands.

When theſe external evidences are found, then miniſters ought to reflect upon all, to ſee if any thing can be gathered concerning the ſincerity of their end, ſpiritualneſs of their walk, and ſuch like, as by the words of theſe two eminent divines formerly cited doth appear. And becauſe this cannot be diſcerned by one act or two, or in a month or two; therefore it is neceſſary to take time, and to conſider the equity of ſuch a man's way for ſatisfying of themſelves concerning him. And tho' it is not like that each miniſter can come to a well grounded knowledge in reference to the admiſſion of every one, by his own particular acquaintance; yet in ſuch a caſe, it is to be ſupplied by the teſtimony of ſuch, who being able to diſcern, and thoroughly ſatisfied themſelves upon ſolid grounds, dare confidently give teſtimony of the good behaviour and Chriſtian carriage of ſuch a perſon, according to the former characters: and ſuch teſtimony, when given, ought to have weight. Therefore we ſee that in ſcripture, the faithful ſervants of God uſed to commend ſuch as were of their acquaintance to others: and ſuch recommendations wanted never weight. Only concerning this, we ſay, that ſeeing recommendations and teſtimonies may have much influence upon the good or ill of the church, this would not be overly gone about; but theſe caveats would be obſerved; 1. That when men teſtify poſitively ſuch and ſuch qualifications to be in any, they would have ground of ſatisfaction in their own conſciences that ſuch things are true, and conſiſtent in their knowledge. 2. As this teſtimony would be on knowledge; ſo the matter teſtified would be weighty; and ſuch as being true, evidenceth ſome good beginning, or appearance of the work of grace. There are many teſtimonies given thro' Paul's epiſtles to ſeveral perſons; but we will ſtill find them have theſe two; 1. The thing teſtified, is ſomething that doth indeed commend them as Chriſtians; as having love to God, and to the edification of ſouls, and ſuch like. 2. It is upon knowledge; yea, oftentimes from ſuch evidences as were diſcernable even to others, ſuch as ſuffering for Chriſt, diſtributing to the ſaints, painfulneſs and diligence in what they have been employed about, and ſuch like. On the other ſide, there is alſo need of taking heed what teſtimonies be received. And, 1. That the teſtimony be full, bearing out theſe characters ſufficiently in the boſom thereof: otherwiſe it can be no proof of them, whoever be the teſtifier, and, it may be, it were not impertinent to do it in the apoſtle's words. 2. Reſpect is to be had to theſe who give the teſtimony. And, 3. To the ground upon which they give it, viz. If it be of their own certain knowledge that they do teſtify ſuch things, or only upon the report of others, and ſuch like conſiderations: wherein faithful preſbyteries will employ their zeal and prudence for the ſatisfying of themſelves; and ſo there is the leſs need to inſiſt particularly on them.

Now, as to the ſecond, if any ſhould aſk, *What reaſon there can be more to enquire thus in reference to miniſters, than in reference to members? and if the one will not follow upon the grounds that are laid down for inferring the other?* We anſwer, It is enough to ſay, that this inquiry, in reference to miniſters, is commanded, and the other not. Neither will any objector, I ſuppoſe, be able to give ſuch precepts for the trial of church-members, as have been laid down for this trial in reference to miniſters. It is obſervable which that great vindicator of this truth, concerning the admiſſion of church-members without ſuch exact trial, doth anſwer to this objection; I mean learned Mr. Wood, in his examination and confutation of Mr. Lockyer's Little Stone, p. 80, 81. Mr. Lockyer had made the ſame objection, which he anſwereth thus, *All that Mr. Lockyer here bringeth in concerning admitting perſons into offices in the church, is idly and impertinently alledged to the point in hand: we acknowledge that none ought to be put in ſuch offices, but ſuch as give*

evidences of all manner of godly converſation; we have an expreſs and full rule for this, 1 Tim. iii. *And hands ought not to be laid upon any man, without a foregoing trial and proof of theſe things. But where will ye ſhew us in all the ſcripture, from the one end to the other, ſuch a rule, requiring ſuch qualifications in perſons, and ſuch a trial of them before, and in relation to their admiſſion into the fellowſhip of the viſible church; and to be under paſtoral care and the miniſtry of the word? If he could ſhew us this, either in precept or approved practice, we ſhould ſoon yield and be at an end of this controverſy; but this he cannot, nor ever will be able to ſhew; and therefore the reaſoning from the care and accuracy to be uſed in trying perſons, who are already in the church, in relation to admitting them to places of office, unto admiſſion of perſons into the ſociety of the viſible church, is unreaſonable.* Thus far he convincingly to the point in hand. It is obſervable alſo, that theſe amongſt the antients, who have ſaid and done moſt againſt the Novatians and Donatiſts have been yet moſt preſſing and peremptory in this, viz. that none with any blemiſh ſhould miniſter in the holy things, as in the writing of Cyprian and Auguſtine is clear. This is enough to remove any ſuch objection: yet, for further ſatisfaction, we ſay, that there want not palpable reaſons for this difference: as,

1. When a member is admitted, he is received to be trained up in Chriſt's houſe or ſchool; and therefore if he profeſs himſelf docile, and ſubject himſelf to ordinances, it cannot be expected that he will be, or can be accurate before he have learned: for, it is within the church that properly Chriſtianity is taught. It is not ſo in the admitting of one to be a miniſter: for, he is to be entered to be a teacher; therefore more muſt be required of him; and he is ſuppoſed to have been a ſcholar in Chriſt's ſchool, and under his ordinances for ſome conſiderable time; and therefore more may juſtly be expected and ſought for from him.

2. When a profeſſor ſeriouſly deſireth entry to the church or baptiſm, he doth it by pleading a title or right thereto according to Chriſt's warrant, wherein a church judicatory is obliged, in juſtice, to decide, and that legally according to his title and right: and if he be found to have ſuch a right, they cannot upon any conſideration juſtly refuſe him: but in trying of a man for the miniſtry, there is no ſuch title and right which can be pleaded: for, 1. This is no man's particular privilege, which he, as a ſaint, or profeſſor, may claim by virtue of the covenant, or Chriſt's inſtitution, as he may do the ſacraments; for many have right to theſe that have none to this. 2. A particular perſon may be kept from the miniſtry and not be wronged, even although he be honeſt; becauſe, in admitting thereto, church-officers are to walk according to the general ground of the edification of the church: and, therefore, when it is not for the edification of the body, a man may be foreborn, to ſpeak ſo, and not admitted to ſuch and ſuch a particular charge, at leaſt, without the wronging of any juſt title of his, which cannot be in baptiſm, if the man be qualified accordingly, as is called for in ſuch a caſe: for, in deciding anent the admiſſion of a particular member, the queſtion runneth, if he have what giveth title to membership; but, in deciding concerning a man's admiſſion to a particular miniſtry, beſide any qualifications of his as church-member, it is to be conſidered, if it be expedient for, and edifying to the church, that ſuch a man be admitted to be a guide; and therefore there is more of Chriſtian prudence and deliberation required in the deciding of this, than in the other, where meer right hath place.

Laſtly, this difference may be obſerved, that, in deciding the firſt, viz. the man's right, church-officers muſt decide according to what judicially is made out; for, a perſon that giveth in his title, looking like a ſerious profeſſor, he cannot be refuſed, although men have only a negative knowledge of his ſincerity: yet this cannot be admitted in a miniſter, where want of clearneſs, and poſitive ſatisfaction is enough to keep a man from poſitive deciding for the admiſſion of a miniſter. All which may be thus illuſtrated: ſuppoſe ſome in an incorporation or city, ſhould claim to be burgeſſes thereof by virtue of their ſufficient title and right thereto; in this caſe, the judges were to decide ſtrictly according to law, as they found theſe titles to be made out, or not: and it were injuſtice to refuſe them that privilege, if they were found to have right to the ſame: but, if an incorporation or city were to chuſe out of all the burgeſſes, ſome to govern, to be their treaſurer, or the like; the caſe would be quite different: for, ſo men were not here to decide what were any man's particular right, but what were good and expedient for the whole body; and ſo many might be paſt with-

out any prejudice to them; which could not be in the firſt. In this laſt election alſo, men walk not ſo much by what is judicially made out of the fitneſs of any perſon, but as they are ſatisfied anent their qualifications and fitneſs, by their knowledge of them, and acquaintance with them in the private courſe of their carriage: both which will well agree to the caſe of the admiſſion of miniſters, as it differeth from the admiſſion of members.

LECTURE III.

Ver. 14. *And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans, write, Theſe things ſaith the Amen, the faithful and true witneſs, the beginning of the creation of God;*

15. *I know thy works; that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.*

16. *So then becauſe thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will ſpue thee out of my mouth.*

17. *Becauſe thou ſayeſt, I am rich, and increaſed with goods, and have need of nothing: and knoweſt not that thou art wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked.*

18. *I counſel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayeſt be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayeſt be clothed, and that the ſhame of thy nakedneſs do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye ſalve, that thou mayeſt ſee.*

19. *As many as I love, I rebuke and chaſten: be zealous therefore and repent.*

20. *Behold, I ſtand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will ſup with him, and he with me.*

21. *To him that overcometh will I grant to ſit with me in my throne, even as I alſo overcame, and am ſet down with my Father in his throne.*

22. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the churches.*

THIS is the laſt of the ſeven epiſtles, and is directed to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans. It containeth the diſcovery of an exceeding deſperate condition, and a moſt ſharp threatning for the ſame; yet, which is wonderful, it hath a moſt excellent advice and counſel unto this lukewarm church.

The diviſion is common with that of the reſt of the epiſtles. The inſcription is verſe 14. The body of the epiſtle is from that unto the 21. The concluſion is ver. 21, 22.

In the inſcription, ver. 14. The Lord taketh theſe two titles to himſelf; 1. Thus ſaith the *amen*, which is expounded by the next words, *the faithful and true witneſs*; that is, he who being truth itſelf, and cannot lie, as he cannot be miſtaken in taking up the condition of any, although never ſo ſecret; it is he that directeth this epiſtle. *Amen*, being an Hebrew word, is frequently uſed even in the New Teſtament, as a ſign, or evidence of the confirmation of ſomewhat that hath been ſpoken; or as a teſtimony of the ſincerity of the ſpeaker, in wiſhing ſeriouſly ſomething which he hath been praying for; therefore often it is uſed in the cloſe of prayer; and is here applied to Chriſt, to ſhew, that in him there is not *yea* and *nay*, but *yea* and *amen*, as the word is, 2 Cor. i. 19, 20. The ſecond title is, *The beginning of the creation of God*: the word rendered *beginning* here, is not to be taken paſſively, as if it were to be underſtood thus, the firſt thing that was created: for, the Greek word will not admit that; but it is to be taken actively, that is, thus ſaith he who gave a being and beginning to all things that were created: in which reſpect, it is ſaid, John i. 3. *All things that were made were made by him.* He taketh the firſt ſtile in this place, becauſe he was to diſcover a hidden hypocriſy, and to bear ſharp teſtimony againſt this church: therefore at the entry he removeth all prejudice that might be againſt his teſtimony. He taketh the ſecond title, to be a ground of faith to them, for expecting a recovery from their deadneſs, upon the terms offered by him, ſeeing he is omnipotent, and can give a being to things that have none.

In the body of the epiſtle, we have theſe four. 1. Their caſe is propoſed, and aggravated, ver. 15. 2. They are threatned, verſe 16. and the reaſon thereof is given, ver. 17. 3. The cure is propoſed, and commended by way of counſel, ver. 18. And, laſtly, The improving thereof, and the practice of

ſome other things needful to their caſe are preſſed ver. 19, 20.

Their caſe is, in ſhort, *Thou art neither cold nor hot;* but, as it is, verſe 16. *Thou art lukewarm.* By *cold* here, is underſtood the want of all form and profeſſion; and ſo, a being in their natural and heatheniſh condition without any change; this is clear from the ſcope. *By hot*, is underſtood not only to have profeſſion, but to have power, warmneſs and life therewith, and ſo to have the change thorough. The condition of this church was neither altogether without a profeſſion, nor yet having power with a profeſſion; but having renounced groſs idolatry and profanity, and having been kept free from corruption in doctrine, ſhe ſatisfied herſelf in that formal profeſſion, without ſingleneſs and zeal in the performance of theſe duties which ſhe went about: therefore they are called *lukewarm*, as if ſome way the cold had been put off them: and yet not being thoroughly warm and hot, they continued to be *lukewarm*, which making water moſt lothſome to the ſtomach, it is here alluded unto, to ſhew how lothſome this indifferency in the practice of religion was to our Lord Jeſus. That this is their very condition, is clear from the ſcope, and from the amplification following, where it appeareth they had ſome form, and therefore thought well of themſelves; and yet were indeed miſerable and wretched under the ſame. Alſo, the Lord's provoking them to be *zealous*, ver. 19. ſheweth, that their fault did conſiſt mainly in what was oppoſite to this. And ſo their condition will be like Iſrael's in the days of Elias, 1 Kings xviii. 21. As halting between two opinions, that is, neither altogether forſaking religion, nor yet ſeriouſly following the ſame; or, as it is ſaid of Ephraim; Hoſ. vii. 8. he was *as a cake unturned*, that is, having the one ſide ſomewhat hot and baken, but the other cold and raw. Only this is the difference, that indifferency of theirs was in reſpect of doctrine, this is mainly in reſpect of practice.

The Lord aggregeth the hatefulneſs of this condition in the words following *I would thou wert cold or hot*, that is, altho' you think yourſelves much better than others, becauſe of your formal profeſſion; yet, ſuch hypocriſy is more hateful to me than the want of the form of religion altogether. So this, *I would thou wert hot or cold*, is not to be underſtood of Chriſt's will, as preſcribing to them a duty: for ſo, it cannot be thought that he commandeth them to be cold; nor doth it imply any will or deſire to be in him of ſuch things ſimply; (for it cannot be thought that he is ſo indifferent concerning theſe extremes) but it is to be underſtood as his expreſſing of his lothing of their condition: after the manner of men: and doth hold out this, that he doth eſteem ſuch a hypocritical profeſſion to be indeed more diſhonourable to him, than if profeſſion had never been taken on. That this is the meaning thereof, appeareth by theſe conſiderations. 1. That Chriſt here is following a ſimilitude uſual among men, to ſhew the abominableneſs of the thing in itſelf, and it is not rigidly to be preſſed in every part of the ſimilitude in reference to him beyond the ſcope. 2. Becauſe he putteth *cold* and *hot* in the ſame balance together: ſo that whatever difference otherwiſe be in his eſtimation of being *hot*, beyond that of being *cold;* yet in this place they are made equal, and nothing is aſſerted concerning the one, but is alſo aſſerted concerning the other: which doth clearly ſhew, that the Lord's expreſſion is to be underſtood after the manner of men, (as was ſaid) that is, as men uſe to expreſs their hating of any thing by this, I wiſh it were, or had been, any other way: that ſame is the Lord's intent here, I cannot therefore but ſomewhat wonder, that a learned man (Joannes Dallaeus in his apology, &c.) doth draw this place of the Lord's wiſhing that Laodicea were hot, to confirm that aſſertion of the Lord's having a will and deſire of the ſalvation of all men, beſides his ſignifying of what is acceptable to him as conſidered in itſelf, by his word.

If it be aſked how hypocriſy or lukewarmneſs may be ſaid to be more diſhonourable to the name of God, than the want of a profeſſion altogether? It may be anſwered in theſe three reſpects, 1. Where no profeſſion is at all, the name of Chriſt is not ſo concerned, as where it is: and therefore by any miſcarriage of ſuch, it is not ſo reflected upon, and made obnoxious to reproach, as it is in reſpect of theſe who have ſome way given up their names to religion. It is on this account that in Ezek. xx. 39. The Lord doth diſcharge the people of Iſrael to pollute his holy name with their gifts, and biddeth them, *go ſerve ye every one his idols*, &c. which is not to give them allowance to run to idolatry; but it is to ſhew them, that if they would not wholly cleave to him, his name would be leſs polluted and diſhonourable by their direct betaking of

themſelves to idolatry, than it was by mixing his worſhip, and the worſhip of idols together. 2. The nature of the ſin itſelf, hath alſo ſome aggravations in it, which maketh it exceedingly lothſome to Jeſus Chriſt, and diſhonourable to him beyond the condition of ſuch as have no profeſſion at all: for ſuch a perſon indeed is really cold, and without any religion, as others are; and hath theſe two things beſide, 1. He is a counterfeiter of religion, and that before God: therefore, Acts v. 3. &c. ſuch are ſaid to tempt God, and lie to the Holy Ghoſt; becauſe they preſumptuouſly intrude themſelves in a profeſſion, as if they were ſomething, being yet indeed nothing; and ſo tempteth the majeſty of God ſingularly to take notice of them, and diſcover them, or otherways ſome way to ly under the imputation either of no diſcerning, or of approving ſuch unſoundneſs, as if it were religion. 2*dly*, Ordinarily ſuch, though they be poor, yet are they proud, preſumptuous and haughty, in reſpect of their form; for they *ſay they are rich and increaſed with goods, &c.* verſe 17. which no perſon without all form can be ſo readily tempted unto: now the Lord abhorreth this empty pride above any thing. A 3d reſpect in which hypocriſy is hateful beyond the want of all form is, that it maketh ſuch a perſon's converſion, converſion, and ſalvation more difficult than if they had no profeſſion at all: for if ſo, it might have been more eaſy to have convinced them of their emptineſs, and to have brought them to Chriſt, than in the caſe of their formality and pride. And thus not only is the caſe of hypocriſy more dangerous to themſelves, but it is more diſhonourable to God, becauſe it ſome way fruſtrateth the end of his ordinances amongſt ſuch. And therefore the Lord uſually doth prefer the publicans and harlots in this reſpect, to the ſcribes and phariſees: becauſe ſuch were more eaſily convinced, and brought to ſome fruitfulneſs under the ordinances, than ſcribes and phariſees were, who rejected the counſel of God againſt themſelves. Thus, Matt. xxi. 31, 32. publicans and harlots are ſaid to go unto the kingdom of heaven before the ſcribes and phariſees, becauſe they believed John's preaching, which the other did not.

The ſecond thing in the body of the epiſtle, is, the Lord's threatning of them for this ill, by an expreſſion ſuitable to the ill, ver. 16. *So then becauſe thou art luke-warm, neither cold nor hot, I will ſpue thee out of my mouth*: which is in ſum this, ſeeing then thou art in a luke-warm temper, which uſually mens ſtomachs can more hardly keep that what is cold or hot, but muſt ſpue out the ſame as a thing lothſome unto them; ſo will I in ſome ſingular and extraordinary manner evidence my lothing of this thy luke-warm hypocritical temper. And this expreſſion, *to ſpue out, &c.* ſeemeth to import theſe three, 1. That it ſhall be ſuch a judgment as will be an evidence of the Lord's lothing of them, and giving up with them without reſpect to their form. 2. It implieth a making of them lothſome before others, as vomit uſeth to be: and ſo it is the Lord's taking by the vail of their hypocriſy, and making them to fall from that reſpect and eſtimation amongſt others, which poſſibly they hunted after in this their external profeſſion. 3. If it may imply the Lord's giving them up to break out into groſs external ills, whereby they might be emptied of that vain ground of boaſting which they had in their former formality. And this being a common plague that follows proud hypocriſy, and a thing that diſcovereth the rottenneſs and lothſomeneſs of ſuch, it may well be underſtood here, ſeeing the ſcope is to threaten them with making them appear to be lothſome, although they did endeavour by all means to cover the ſame.

The reaſon of this ſeverity is added, verſe 17. and it is in ſum this, I will take ſuch courſe as may diſcover the lothſomeneſs, becauſe thou art not only miſerable and poor, but art conceity and proud, as if all were well, and knoweth not thy own rottenneſs and unſoundneſs, therefore, ſaith he, I will thus diſcover it.

In this verſe we may conſider, 1. What was indeed the caſe of this church. 2. What they themſelves did eſteem, and give it out to be. 3. With what confidence, and upon what ground they did this. And laſtly, the connection betwixt this and the former threatning.

Their true ſtate is ſet forth in five words, in the cloſe of the verſe: the firſt is, *Thou art wretched:* which is a comprehenſive word, and doth ordinarily ſet forth the bodily defects and perſonal unſoundneſs, and lothſomeneſs of, in reſpect of grievous diſeaſes, and ſuch like: this here is to be applied to their ſpiritual condition, which in theſe reſpects is no leſs wretched, disjointed, lothſome, &c. than the bodily condition of any can be. The ſecond word is *miſerable:* which looketh to a concurrence of external things beſide the for-

mer wretchedneſs, as want of means of ſupply, want of fitneſs to do for themſelves, and want of any ſolid way of proviſion made for them by others, and ſuch like: thus, Ezek. xvi. the wretched child is deſcribed not only as loathſome with the *navel not cut, without waſhing with water to be ſuppled*, &c. ſo here, thou art *miſerable*, that is, not only wretched in thyſelf, but in a diſconſolate condition in reſpect of what thou may expect from others in this caſe. The third word is *poor*, that is, thou thinks thou haſt many good works, and much grace; but it is quite contrary; really thou haſt nothing. The fourth is, thou art *blind:* that is an aggravation to all, that though thou be in this miſerable condition, thou art ſenſeleſs and ignorant thereof, and neither knoweth thy danger, nor how to rid thyſelf out of the ſame. The fifth word is, and *naked*, that is, without any thing to hide or cover this miſerableneſs, and filthineſs before the juſtice of God. It is not deſperate when folks are poor and miſerable in themſelves, if they have on Chriſt's righteouſneſs to cover the ſame: but ſaith the Lord to this church, thou art in thyſelf miſerable, and alſo without this cover, ſo that thou art lying as caſten forth in the open fields, and obnoxious to the juſtice of God: this holdeth forth a very ſad and a very dangerous condition. Yet, in the ſecond place, we will find their thoughts of it to be far otherways: which the Lord ſetteth down in three words, 1. Thou ſayeſt *I am rich*, that is, abounding in grace and good works, and having a righteouſneſs ſufficient enough. 2. *I am increaſed with goods*: which is ſtill to be underſtood of their eſteem of their own ſpiritual furniture, which they think ſufficient, not only to make them rich, but alſo to make them abound: and this, to be *increaſed with goods*, doth imply both their eſteeming of themſelves to have much, and alſo to be upon the growing hand: which is a moſt dangerous condition, when a hypocrite doth not only falſly eſteem himſelf to have grace when he hath none, but doth flatter himſelf as if he were thriving and growing in the ſame. The word is, *and have need of nothing:* this is indeed a comprehenſive commendation of a condition, if there were ground for it: but where this entereth in a perſon abounding in corruption, it is the very height of ſelf-deluſion and preſumptuous hypocriſy, viz. that a perſon ſhould think himſelf free of hazard, well ſtored with graces, and a great length therein, &c. But eſpecially, as in this place, that he ſhould think himſelf fully clear, and ſure of his peace with God, and intereſt in the covenant; ſo that in theſe reſpects there is need of nothing. This we conceive is here intended, and doth indeed look very like the language of ſtout ſelf-confident ignorant hypocrites.

It may be wondered how and with what confidence they could entertain ſuch thoughts. This is the third thing propoſed to be cleared in the words, and may be gathered from two expreſſions, 1. *Thou ſayeſt I am rich*, &c. which words do not ſo much expreſs the language of their mouths, as the inward language and confidence of the heart, and do import, not only their thinking of ſuch a thing to be true, but their perſuaſion thereof, and confidence therein, even to a kind of audacity and impudency, ſo as nothing can put them from it, and is like theſe words, Jer. ii. 23. *How canſt thou ſay I am not polluted*, &c. ver. 35. *yet thou ſayeſt, becauſe I am innocent*, &c. which places hold forth the impudence of formal hypocrites, that will ſtick to their own juſtification, even contrary to the cleareſt applications of the word of God againſt them: and therefore, Luke xiii. 26, &c. Some are brought in pleading, as it were, with Chriſt, in the day of judgment, their own juſtification, and tho' there will be no ſuch pleading in that day, yet it ſheweth that many hypocrites may live and die, without being brangled in this their vain confidence, until Chriſt's final ſentence do it, which is the ſcope of that place. The ſecond word is, *and knoweth not that thou art wretched*, &c. Some might think how could ſuch poor perſons boaſt ſo of their riches? this word ſheweth that they were not groſs diſſemblers ſpeaking what they thought not; but that really they knew no better, and ſo they are, to ſay ſo, native, ſubtil hypocrites, as ſubtil hypocriſy is diſtinct from groſs diſſembling. Which doth ſhew, 1. That hypocrites may really be blind and ignorant of their own unſoundneſs, and indeed think it otherwiſe than it is. 2. That this their ignorance doth not excuſe them and extenuate their guilt; but on the contrary, it is both a ſin in itſelf, and an aggravation of other ſins to them; and for that end it is made uſe of here.

The laſt thing in the verſe is, the connection of this with the former threatning in the word *becauſe*, and is to this purpoſe, the reaſon of my ſo lothing thee, is not becauſe ſimply thou art poor, miſerable

and naked, &c. but becauſe thou being ſuch, art conceity of thy counterfeit profeſſion, and unhumble under, and ignorant of, thy ſpiritual ills: therefore *I will ſpue thee out of my mouth, &c.* Otherwiſe poverty and grace can agree well; but blind, proud, reigning hypocriſy and grace, can never be conſiſting together in one perſon.

From which words theſe obſervations are clear, 1. That many may be in a very miſerable ſpiritual condition under ſome ſeeming form and profeſſion. 2. That yet ſuch who are poor and rotten, and withal have ſome profeſſion, are oftentimes exceeding vain, proud, and carnally confident in reſpect of the ſame. It is a wonder that a perſon or church, in ſuch a condition, ſhould yet eſteem itſelf ſo as this doth: but this preſumption, and vain confidence, is not the leaſt part of the ſubtilty of the ſin of hypocriſy, and of the great deceit of natural hearts. 3. It appeareth here, that many may abſolve themſelves with great confidence, and as having many ſeeming good grounds for their doing ſo, who yet may not be abſolved by the Lord. 4. There is no condition more dangerous to a perſon, and lothſome to Chriſt, than to be poor and proud, or corrupt and rotten, and yet withal to be conceity and confident. 5. This univerſal confidence and ſatisfaction with one's own condition, is oftentimes, if not ever, a companion or fruit of the moſt deſperate hypocriſy: becauſe ſincerity being imperfect as to its degrees, and ſo ever walking within ſight of many wants, is ſtill labouring under the ſenſe thereof; and ſo in a diſſatisfaction with its own condition in one reſpect or other. 6. We may ſee alſo, that it is a main part of a miniſter's duty to rip up the ſecret and hidden hypocriſy of hearts. and to beat down the proud preſumption of ſecure hypocrites, as well as to reprove the groſs outbreakings of profane perſons. 7. In application, miniſters would commend the word to conſciences, and therefore would ſeek to convince the hearers of their heart languages, who oftentimes think more proudly and groſly of themſelves, and of their own condition, and even of religion itſelf, than they dare outwardly profeſs.

The third thing in the body of the epiſtle is, the cure which the Lord propoſeth for ſuch a caſe, verſe 18. There is a wonderful depth of iniquity and hypocriſy in their caſe: but here there is a far more wonderful depth and myſtery of free grace and infinite love in the propoſed cure. It is propoſed by way of offer under the expreſſion that belong to bargaining. And indeed here is an excellent market or fair, wherein we may conſider theſe five.

Firſt, There is the wares propoſed, which indeed are the cure of the former caſe; and they are contained in three words; 1. *It is gold tried in the fire.* 2. *White raiment.* 3. *Eye-ſalve.* All which are very ſuitable to their wretched, poor and blind condition: under which expreſſions is underſtood, Chriſt Jeſus himſelf, and his benefits, who only can work the effects aſcribed to theſe upon ſinners, and make ſuch a change upon their ſpiritual condition: for he it is 'that is made to 'us of God, wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, 'and redemption,' 1 Cor. i. 30. And conſidering the ſtrain of the goſpel where theſe properties are only attributed to Chriſt, together with the ſcope of this place, there can be no doubt of this.

Secondly, We may conſider here the parties that are bargainers: upon the one ſide, the offerer is the 'Prince of the kings of the earth, the beginning 'of the creation of God,' our bleſſed Lord Jeſus, who maketh offer of himſelf to ſinners, and ſaith, 'Behold me, behold me, unto theſe who were not 'called by his name:' On the other ſide, theſe to whom the offer is made, or who are to be the buyers, they are 'wretched, poor, miſerable, &c.' This looketh diſproportionable-like at firſt; yet it ſuiteth well with the bargain of grace, where the Lord's merchant is, every man 'that hath no mo-'ney,' Iſa. lv. 1. providing he be thoroughly ſenſible of the ſame.

Thirdly, We have the commendation of theſe wares, eſpecially in reference to the parties that they are propoſed to; As, 1. The excellency of the things themſelves, the gold *is tried*, the raiment *is white*, &c. There is nothing in our Lord Jeſus but is exceeding excellent. 2. The wares are exceeding uſeful and profitable, it is gold that *maketh rich*. The perſon that hath Chriſt, wanteth not righteouſneſs to pay his debt; and there is no other thing to make a perſon *rich*. 3. This raiment covereth *nakedneſs*: ſin is not taken notice of where Chriſt is put on by faith: for his blood cleanſeth from all ſin, whereas there are many naked, lothſome ſouls, under gorgeous robes. 4. The wares are moſt ſuitable to the party to whom they are propoſed; they are poor, Chriſt maketh rich; they are naked, he covers; they are blind, he enlighteth

them, and openeth their eyes; there are no ſuch ſuitable wares for a ſinner as Chriſt, and whatever account ſelf-righteous men have of him, yet they who think themſelves ſinners, ſhould, by all means, endeavour to purchaſe him. 5. Wares are commended in this; they are neceſſary, eſpecially to ſuch a party: there is no other way to be rich, but by having Chriſt; no other way to be covered or clothed before God, but by his righteouſneſs; or to ſee, or be in capacity to walk rightly in ſpiritual things, except he prove the Leader.

The fourth thing in this market or bargain will yet commend this more; and it is this, viz. the terms upon which theſe wares are propoſed, implied in theſe words, *Buy of me;* which is not to be underſtood, as if there were ſome equivalent price required, or to be given for Chriſt: for that is contrary to the ſcope of this place. And, conſidering the excellency of theſe wares, and the poverty of theſe that are called to be the merchants, what can be expected of them in recompence for ſuch an excellent bargain? The terms then muſt be *grace*, as the ſame market is proclaimed, Iſa. lv 1. 2, 3. 'Ho, every one that thirſteth, come ye to the 'waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy 'and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without 'money, and without price, &c.' And ver. 3. the wares to be bought are the ſame, viz, *the ſure mercies of David;* that is, Chriſt Jeſus, as being compared with Acts xiii. 34. is clear, whom the Lord promiſeth there to give, becauſe there is no other way poſſible for the attaining of him. This is expreſſed under the ſimilitude of *buying*, to ſhew, that as there is in covenanting with God, two parties to be conſidered, as in all bargaining, and ſome excellent wares, which the one muſt have from the other; ſo there muſt be a mutual conſent and engaging for the cloſing of this bargain, as there uſeth to be in bargains amongſt men, tho' the difference be ſtill in this, that here all the terms are of grace. But, God willing, we ſhall conſider the nature of this bargain peculiarly by itſelf.

The fifth thing in this bargain, is, The manner of Chriſt's propoſing the ſame, *I counſel thee*, &c. Which is not ſo propoſed, as if it were left indifferent to them to hearken or not. But it is thus expreſt, for theſe reaſons; 1. That thereby he may bear out his affection, who, as a friend, condeſcendeth to give them counſel in things that are of moſt concernment for their own good. 2. This alſo ſheweth the neceſſity and advantage of following this advice, becauſe they are counſelled to it by him that is the *Counſellor*, Iſa. ix. 5. and the Father's ſubſtantial wiſdom. It muſt therefore be folly to reject his advice. 3. It is thus expreſſed, to gain their conſent more willingly to the ſame: therefore, in the goſpel, he doth beſeech and intreat, &c. that thereby hearts may be induced to ſubmit cheerfully to him.

This verſe contains a ſum of the goſpel, and is a treaſure of many goſpel truths; as, 1. That there is no condition ſo deſperate, but there is a fulneſs and efficacy in our Lord Jeſus to cure the ſame: he is *gold*, *white raiment*, *eye-ſalve*, &c. and, the meaning of theſe expreſſions being obvious, we conceive there is no need to inſiſt upon them. 2. This doctrine is clear, that upon condition of believing and flying to Chriſt, the moſt lothſome, lukewarm, deſperate hypocrite may have mercy: otherwiſe ſuch a counſel had not been given to Laodicea. 3. As there is a fulneſs in Chriſt; ſo there is a freeneſs in grace to make that fulneſs forthcoming to ſinners that will follow Chriſt's advice: and there is no ſinner that heareth this goſpel, but may think himſelf ſufficiently warranted to cloſe this bargain with Chriſt, if heartily he ſubmit to the terms thereof. But of theſe no more for the time.

The fourth thing in the body of the epiſtle, is, Our Lord's preſſing of this his counſel: which is done two ways, ver. 19, 20. *As many as I love, I rebuke and chaſten*, ſaith he, *be zealous therefore, and repent.* The firſt part of the verſe hath the argument in it. The ſecond part, is a concluſion drawn from it. The argument is, *Whom I love, I rebuke and chaſten;* that is, it is not my way to reprove with words, or chaſten with rods, theſe whom I carry no reſpect unto; but I uſe this way to them whom I love, as I love my viſible church, which is confirmed from Prov. iii. 12. And therefore, ſeeing I take this way with you, and do not give up with you, my counſel ought to be the better received: where it would be obſerved, that it is ſtill the ſame perſons whom at firſt he chargeth. The concluſion drawn from this, hath two parts: the firſt is, *Be zealous;* that is, mind to exerciſe religion more ſeriouſly, in oppoſition to their former formality and lukewarmneſs; and that in the performing of the duties thereof, zeal to the glory of God may be lively and predominant. This, we conceive, doth not preſs new duties; but a more ſpiritual end, motive,

manner and edge in the doing of them: for, many duties may be done without zeal to God, though, where this is not, they are never acceptable. The ſecond part of the direction is, *And repent:* which calleth them kindly to be affected with their hypocritical condition: and theſe two are inferred by the word, *Therefore*, from the former ground that expreſſeth God's love to them.

The ſecond way he preſſeth it, ver. 20, is, By a moſt inſtant and importunate purſuing of his offer, with a proteſtation of his being there, and of his making the ſame. This is done four ways; *Firſt*, By ſhewing his work and poſture, *I ſtand at the door, and knock.* Hearts naturally are as caſtles ſhut and guarded by the devil againſt Chriſt: when he cometh with his ordinances, he doth thereby, as it were, lay a ſiege at them, and by his work knock at the doors thereof to gain their conſent; and the more pungently he preſſeth by his ordinances, he is ſaid to knock the more: and, in this reſpect, Song v. 2. his voice is ſaid to knock at the believer's door in their ſleepy condition. Here theſe two things are imported; 1. Chriſt's continuing to deal with his church, and to wait upon her in his ordinances, notwithſtanding of her many former refuſals. Thus, he is ſaid, *to ſtand at the door:* whereby is holden forth their ingratitude to him, in keeping of him out, and his patience that ſtill waiteth on. 2. In this, by the other word, is imported his growing more inſtant in his dealing with them: therefore he is ſaid to *knock*. And indeed if the former ſharp threatning and charge, and the ſweet and free offer be conſidered, it may well be ſaid that now his knocks are doubled.

The ſecond way he preſſeth in this verſe, is, By making his offer particular, as it were, bringing it to every man's door, *If any man hear my voice, and open the door*, &c. wherein: 1. He expreſſeth what he would have. 2. From whom. What he would have, is in two expreſſions; the one, is, *If any man hear my voice;* that is, its hearkening to his voice which he requireth, as Pſal. xcv. 7. for the want of which he complaineth, Pſal. lxxxi. 13. And in theſe expreſſions often the terms of the covenant of grace are expreſſed, as Iſa. lv. 2, 3. and is, upon the matter, that ſame with *buying*, formerly mentioned, as in that place of Iſaiah is clear. And it ſetteth forth faith's conſenting to hear and hearken to, and accept of God's offer of grace in the covenant; as refuſing to hear, holdeth forth mens rejecting of the ſame. The other word is, *And open the door:* it is the ſame thing for ſubſtance with the former. Thus alſo faith's cloſing with the covenant of grace, is often expreſſed, as Pſal. lxxxi. 10. Acts xvi. 14. becauſe by faith, the heart, that was formerly ſhut againſt Chriſt, is made open to him, and he hath way made for him to enter into the ſame, as is clear from Song v. 2. Pſal. xxiv. 7, 9. and Acts xvi. 14. where the Lord's opening the heart of Lydia, is expreſly expounded to be *her giving heed to theſe things which Paul ſpoke;* that is, her receiving of the ſame faith. This then is the duty called for, and the terms upon which the offer is made, viz. Faith's yielding to receive and admit Chriſt, for the end for which he is propoſed. *Secondly*, The perſon called to this, is expreſſed thus, *If any man*, &c. which putteth it ſo to every hearer, as if it went round to every particular perſon, *If thou, and thou, or thou*, &c. And this manner of expreſſion doth obviate any objection which might riſe; ſuch as, What if the moſt part reject? Be it ſo, ſaith he, *If any man open*, it ſhall be well with him: or, if it ſhould be objected, I am a ſinner, miſerable, a hypocrite of long ſtanding that hath often rejected the goſpel, &c. This, *If any man will open*, &c. anſwereth all theſe at once: becauſe where the Lord ſaith, *Any man*, without exception, who is he that can limit the ſame, where a perſon of whatſoever condition or qualification is found, that will accept of the offer according to the terms propoſed? And ſo this *any* is a particular application of the former advice; yet ſuch a particular application as reacheth every one of whatſoever condition they be.

The third way how it is preſſed here, is, By ſubjoining a moſt comfortable promiſe unto *any man* ſo underſtood, as it is ſaid, viz. *If any man will open, I will come in to him*, that ſheweth an union which ſhall be betwixt Chriſt and him, *I will ſup with him.* This ſheweth a friendly familiar way of communion that Chriſt ſhall entertain with him, as it is, Song v. 1. *I am come into my garden; I have eaten my honey with my honey-comb; I have gathered my myrrh*, &c. Chriſt is a moſt heartſome gueſt where he is entertained. It is added, *And he ſhall ſup with me:* this is the fruit and effect of the former two; and expreſſeth the ſweet ſatisfaction that the ſinner who openeth to Chriſt ſhall have by union and communion with him, as in that ſame place of the Song v. 1. when he cometh to *feed* himſelf upon his

own *Spices*, his own *Myrrh*, and his own *Wine*, and what he brings with him, then hath he a large allowance to his friends, as in the next words, *Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.* O, ſo ſatisfying a life as it is to have Chriſt dwelling in the heart, and thus to be feaſted with the comforts of his preſence which are better than life! And what more can there be requiſite to preſs the making of Chriſt welcome by ſinners, than ſuch a promiſe, or rather three promiſes put in one?

The fourth thing that preſſeth this offer in this verſe, is, the *Behold*, which is deſervedly premitted to all. And in this place (beſide the uſual weight it hath in other caſes) it is Chriſt, making this offer of his obſervable to them, ſo that afterward they ſhall not get it ſhifted, but this ſhall be as an inſtrument taken upon his making the offer, to ſtand *in futuram rei memoriam:* and ſo is like that, *Be it known unto you, men, and brethren, &c.* whereby Paul cloſeth his ſermon, Acts xiii. 38. And thus, as it were, he driveth the nail to the head before he leave it, teſtifying that if this good bargain come not to a cloſe, the blame ſhall be upon their ſide. And ſo we may ſee how weightily the Lord preacheth in theſe epiſtles to the churches.

The concluſion of the epiſtle followeth, in the laſt two verſes, having two parts, as all the reſt have. The firſt is a promiſe made to the overcomer, with an excellent qualification of the ſame, ver. 21. The promiſe is, *To him that overcometh, will I grant to ſit upon my throne:* It is in ſubſtance the ſame with many promiſes formerly mentioned, viz. a promiſe to make him partaker of Chriſt's glory: it is not only to bring him to glory, but to make him a ſharer of that glory which Chriſt the head poſſeſſeth, that ſo he may reign with him and partake of the fruits of his dominion and conqueſt. The qualification or amplification of this promiſe, is, *Even as I overcame, and am ſet down upon my Father's throne:* which doth import theſe three; 1. The greatneſs of this glory, which they are to partake of: Chriſt is ſet upon the Father's throne, and they are to be admitted to Chriſt's throne, and ſo conſequently to partake both of the glory of the Father and of the Son, according to their capacity. 2. It is ſet forth in the ſureneſs thereof: it is ſure to the overcomer, even as that exaltation is ſure to Chriſt. 3. It ſetteth forth the method of it: ſo that as Chriſt did firſt ſuffer and overcome, and did then come to glory; ſo theſe that are to be ſet down upon his throne muſt come in the ſame method, by wreſtling, and overcoming to obtain the ſame.

The other thing of the concluſion is, The common advertiſement, now, the ſeventh time repeated, ver. 22. Yet it is never idly done: which ſheweth, 1. What all mens duty is, viz. it is their part, that live in any place at any time, to receive the word of God with as great reverence, as others who lived in ſome other place, and at ſome other time: therefore this advertiſement is given equally to all the churches, and to all hearers. It is mens duty to receive with reverence every word of God, of whatſoever kind it be: therefore it is ſubjoined to all the ſeveral meſſages. 2. It ſheweth mens ſinful ſtubbornneſs that are not eaſily brought to give obedience to this principal duty.

It is meet now that we take notice of ſome difficulties that may ariſe from the words. And here it may be enquired, *What is to be thought of this church?* or, *What judgment may be given of the ſame? Anſw.* Altho' it is hard to determine peremptorily concerning the ſtate; yet it appeareth that the condition of this church, is the very worſt of any that hath been written to: for, 1. There is nothing in her commendable, at leaſt commended, as was in Epheſus, Pergamos, and other churches. 2. There is no perſon excepted from the charge of lukewarmneſs and hypocriſy, as was done in the epiſtle to Sardis, ver. 4. But the ſtrain of the epiſtle runneth to charge them, and to charge them all with a moſt grievous charge. And ſeeing our Lord doth take this title to himſelf, in this very epiſtle, to be *the faithful and true witneſs*, it is not like that he would altogether have paſt over their honeſty, or ſuch as were ſincere amongſt them, without commending the ſame, if there had been any ſuch to be commended. For our Lord kept that way in all the former epiſtles; and had there been any ſincere perſons in this church, it had been no leſs to their commendation, and to the commendation of his grace, to have commended the ſame; yet we think that the Lord is in tryſting terms with them, and therefore might poſſibly have ſome to call effectually from amongſt them, which maketh him thus, out of love, to continue and *knock:* yet we cannot ſee any ground to conclude that there was any ſincerity, or ſincere perſons amongſt them for the time. Upon which, ſeveral queſtions may ariſe; As,

1. It may be aſked, *If there can be any particular church, without ſome ſincere perſons in the ſame, ſeeing it is compared to a floor where both wheat and chaff are? Anſw.* If we conſider the viſible church as catholic and univerſal; ſo, indeed ſhe can neither be without hypocrites, nor without true converts, as may be gathered from theſe ſimilitudes, whereby ſhe is holden forth in ſcripture: but if we conſider the particular ſocieties or congregations that meet together at ordinances for worſhip, we ſuppoſe that it cannot be ſo peremptorily determined in reference to each of theſe, as if there had never been a particular church without hypocrites on the one hand, or ſincere perſons on the other: for there is no ſuch promiſe that can be extended to every particular congregation; but theſe promiſes muſt be applied to the catholic church: in which only, faith cannot fail. Again, theſe properties and deſcriptions of the viſible church, do not agree to every particular congregation, but to the church univerſal, which is called the kingdom of heaven, and likened to ſuch and ſuch ſimilitudes. Beſide, if we conſider experience, it will be hard to ſay that never any company of hypocrites did combine together of themſelves, or by providence were caſten to meet at the ſame ordinances in the way of a particular congregation. There can be little ſaid of this church of Laodicea to vindicate her from this. On the other ſide, it were hard to ſay that never any, tho' the moſt choice number ſhould meet together in a church way, and be without hypocrites: this indeed I grant is much more difficult, and cannot but be much more rare than the other; (which I ſuppoſe is but two frequent) yet conſidering what may be ſaid for theſe hundred and twenty who did meet and continue together, Acts i. 15. we ſuppoſe it is hard ſimply to deny the ſame. From which it will follow, that the viſible church muſt be principally conſidered in the new teſtament as catholic, ſeeing theſe many properties and deſcriptions can only be applicable to it as ſuch, and are not ſo to be applied to particular congregations.

2. It may be enquired, that ſeeing this church is holden forth as hypocritical, *What may be the characters of a hypocrite, as they are here drawn by the Lord? Anſw.* There are two ſorts of hypocrites: one is more groſs, and do indeed know that they are but diſſembling: theſe are not properly hypocrites but diſſemblers. A ſecond ſort is more ſubtil; that is, when not only they make others to eſteem of them, as if they were ſincere; but when they come indeed to have ſuch an eſtimation of themſelves. Theſe are properly hypocrites, and ſuch as are deſcribed here, ver. 17. Now, from this epiſtle, ſuch a deſcription may be gathered; 1. A ſubtil hypocrite is one that hath ſome large profeſſion and fruitfulneſs, as to many external duties: in this reſpect *he is not cold*, as wanting all form; but it may be he aboundeth in that. 2. Tho' he hath much form; yet hath he no power nor reality at all: otherways he could not be denominate a hypocrite, tho' he might be ſaid to have much hypocriſy in him: and in this reſpect, the hypocrite is not *hot*, even as he is not *cold*. 3. He is one that notwithſtanding of this his want of ſincerity, is yet ſtill inſenſible of his *poverty*, *wretchedneſs*, and *miſery*, &c. Thus verſe 17. he knoweth not that he is *poor*, *miſerable*, *blind*, &c. And this is a main piece of the ſubtilty of hypocriſy, whereby not only others, but even the perſon himſelf is deceived, in reſpect of his own ſtate and condition. 4. As he is inſenſible of his poverty, ſo is he highly puffed up with the eſtimation of what he appeareth to himſelf to have: and thus his ſecurity is perfect peace; his preſumption is ſtrong faith and confidence; his praying and common liberty in the ſame, are moſt lively parts of communion with God in his account: and thus *he ſaith, he is rich*, ver. 17. and really thinketh ſo. 5. He is a man that doth continue and grow in this ſelf-opinion: for, being unacquainted with thorough convictions, and with any apprehenſion or declining, or falling from the good which he had, he doth apprehend himſelf to be upon the growing hand, and ſo to him ſtill, his faith, grace, and ſtate of friendſhip with God, &c. do become the more unqueſtionable to him, and he ſuppoſeth himſelf to be, in all theſe reſpects, upon the thriving hand: therefore it is ſaid, that *he thinketh himſelf to be increaſed with goods*, &c. 6. He is one that is exceedingly well content and ſatisfied with his own condition; and ſo, in his own eſtimation, there is none more honeſt and ſincere, none that loveth God more ſingly, or is more beloved of him; and, in a word, none with whom he would exchange his condition. This is a man that hath *need of nothing* in his own account; but is as if all were well already. 7. Under all this, he is a man that hath never been at the market of free grace, nor hath bought, or put on the white raiment, &c. therefore ſtill all

the wares are his own; his righteouſneſs is of his own ſpinning; his peace ſtandeth on his own bottom; and Chriſt hath never been fled unto, or accepted of for righteouſneſs by him: therefore is there ſtill need of making offer of, and preſſing the market of grace unto and upon him. 8. Notwithſtanding of this, he is as confident as if all were well: and he is in an incapacity (except the Lord doth it in an extraordinary way) to be convinced either that he wanteth ſincerity in the ſtrain of his walk, or that he hath not received Chriſt, or made uſe of his righteouſneſs: and though he may take with many particular challenges: yet he is guarded, as it were, againſt theſe two. Therefore it is ſaid, there muſt *be Eye-ſalve* beſtowed upon him, to diſcover his nakedneſs to him. And this is even the height of all, when ſelf-conceitedneſs and vain confidence ſo poſſeſs the heart, as to make all convictions to be rejected, and to keep the ſoul ſleeping ſecurely without ſuſpecting its own naughtineſs.

3. If it be aſked, *How a perſon that is ſo unſound cometh to have ſuch thoughts of himſelf, or ſuch confidence of his own condition?* We may anſwer, upon theſe conſiderations; 1. Men naturally are lovers of themſelves, and admirers of what is in themſelves. Hence it is, that men are ſo eaſily induced to overvalue their own natural and moral parts, and, upon the ſame account, theſe things that look more ſpiritual-like. 2. Men naturally cannot diſcern the things of God, for they are ſpiritually diſcerned: it is no wonder therefore that they take that which glittereth to be gold, eſpecially this being added to the former conſideration. 3. He hath all the concurrence the devil can give him to cauſe him to entertain ſuch thoughts: and therefore often ſuch a man is kept from groſs temptations, and foul outbreakings, which many ſincere perſons are tortured with: by which the devil aimeth to keep all in quiet, as the ſcope of the parable runneth, Matt. xii. 29. 4. If we conſider his practice, it needeth not ſeem ſtrange that he be thus deluded: for he doth not ſearch himſelf; he doth not make hypocriſy his burden, or uſe theſe means whereby the ſincere hearted are helped to a diſcovery of their own naughtineſs: and therefore, what wonder is it that ſuch be ſtrangers to this? 5. When they go on ſmothering convictions, neglecting duties, and ſuch like, there is ſomething that cometh judicially from God to give them up to that deluſion, ſo as to truſt the language of their own hearts concerning their own ſtate, beyond the moſt clear convincing proofs that may come from the word of the Lord: and this is to be found, Iſa. xliv. 20. in a very irrational-like thing, as the worſhipping of ſtocks and ſtones; yet ſuch a perſon, being *turned aſide by a deceived heart, cannot deliver his own ſoul, nor ſay, Is there not a lie in my right hand?* 6. There are ſome concurring things which may alſo have influence upon this, as ſuppoſe men be ſo eſteemed of by others who are eſteemed gracious, eſpecially if upon ſome fits of convictions, or common exerciſes, they have been inconſiderately cried up by miniſters, as exerciſed Chriſtians, when as yet the exerciſe hath not taken root, nor hath it been adverted poſſibly, how it came to a cloſe: by ſuch and ſuch like means, often may a novice, or one who is not a Chriſtian thoroughly, come to be puffed up and fall into the condemnation of the devil, by this or ſome other way. And, no queſtion, theſe fooliſh virgins were not a little confirmed in their vain confidence and preſumption, from this, That they had the company and countenance of the wiſe virgins, which, it may be, many others had not, Matth. xxv.

4. If it be aſked, *If a hypocrite can diſcern his own rottenneſs and hypocriſy, or fear and ſuſpect the ſame? Anſw.* 1. A hypocrite may come a great length as to this, at ſome particular times and occaſions, eſpecially when ſome ſudden fears ſeem to ſurpriſe, or when ſome particular challenge and the fear of wrath is born in upon him; yet in ſo far as he hath theſe, and entertaineth them, he cannot be called a hypocrite; but in ſo far as he beareth down and paſſeth over the ſame. For, there is a real ground of ſuſpicion and fear within him, &c. and therefore to be affected therewith, is not properly hypocriſy, except the ſame be hypocritically uſed; that is, that it be keeped from making diſcernible to him the rottenneſs of his ſtate, but on the contrary, he becometh the more vain becauſe of ſuch flaſhes and ſeeming exerciſes, when yet they have never been ſuffered to come the length of any real ſincerity. 2. We ſuppoſe, that the continuance of ſuch ſuſpicions, challenges and fears, is inconſiſtent with the ſtate of hypocriſy, of which we are ſpeaking, becauſe ſecurity and preſumption, to ſay ſo, are eſſentials to ſuch a hypocrite: and we conceive that the continuance of ſuch challenges, fears, &c. in any degree, cannot be conſiſtent with ſuch an ab-

ſolute ſecurity and confidence, as was formerly ſpoken to. Yet no ſuch fear or exerciſe, &c. will be a proof of ſincerity, except they be rightly improven for the diſcovering of a perſon's ſelf-inability, and for the putting of them to the market of free grace, by which only ſuch fears can be rightly removed. 3. Where theſe fits of fears and ſuſpicion are in hypocrites, they proceed rather from ſome apprehenſion or ſenſe of wrath (as in theſe who deſpair concerning their ſalvation) than from any ſeen or felt groſſneſs of the corruption that is in themſelves; or from any diſſatisfaction with their own faith, or ſincerity upon the diſtinct diſcovery of their own rottenneſs and hypocriſy in itſelf: and therefore ſuch fears follow not upon their ſearching of themſelves, nor reſult from the diſcovery of their own naughtineſs, nor are willingly entertained by them: but, on the contrary, it is ſome apprehenſion of wrath that wakeneth them; and what apprehenſions they have of their unſoundneſs, are but impreſſed upon this occaſion: whereas the believer firſt ſeeth and feeleth the body of death within him, and then hath the apprehenſions of wrath flowing from that. 4. In their doubtings and ſuſpicions they are moſt ſenſibly touched with reſpect to the end and event; that is, they doubt whether they may attain heaven, or miſs it: and poſſibly becauſe of their unbelief, they may draw ſuch ſentences ſometime againſt themſelves; yet are they not uſually brought to ſentence themſelves in reſpect of their own ſtate, and to judge themſelves as loſt and graceleſs: for eye-ſalve, to diſcover our nakedneſs, is a gift of Chriſt's giving, and goeth alongſt in one bargain with gold, white raiment, &c. Therefore it cannot be thought that any hypocrite can have this kindly diſcovery of their own nakedneſs, and natural lothſomeneſs in reſpect of the root thereof, tho' they may have many particular fruits diſcovered to them. 5. If a hypocrite come under any fit of terror or conviction thus to ſentence himſelf: yet, even then, it is not ſimple diſſatisfaction with his own ſinfulneſs, which maketh him do the ſame; but ſome apprehended terror of God upon him: and therefore when that is removed, his ſentence paſt upon himſelf is retreated. And ſo, in ſuch a caſe, a hypocrite's ſentencing of himſelf, is but his expreſſing what he apprehendeth to be God's ſentence upon him; or, it is his foretelling of what he thinks coming: and this ſuppoſeth ſtill God's ſentence to be paſt in his apprehenſion, which maketh them not ſo much paſs their own ſentence upon the account of their own deſervings, as to expreſs with regret what he hath paſſed already: which by no means they would do, if they could eſchew it: whereas a ſincere perſon doth arraign and judge himſelf, from the ſenſe of his own guilt, accounting it juſt that God ſhould do ſo alſo, although they do not look upon his deed as the ground of theirs, (as in the former caſe) but on their own guiltineſs without reſpect thereto.

5. It may be aſked, *How a miniſter may diſcern a lukewarm temper among the people over whom he hath charge? Anſw.* Altho' peremptory deciſion of ſuch a perſon's ſtate, who hath a form of religion, be a thing that miniſters, nor others, are not to take on them; yet, conſidering that ſuch a caſe is often moſt frequent, and that it is of moſt weighty concernment for a miniſter to diſcern the ſame; alſo, that where it is common, it is ordinarily one way or other ſo far diſcernable, as is fit to a ſearching diſcerning eye. We may offer from theſe words ſuch characters thereof, as may help a miniſter in applying of himſelf ſuitably, at leaſt to their preſent frame. 1. Such a lukewarm temper hath much more light than life, and much more delight in ſpeculative knowledge, and in ſuch preachings as bring ſome new things to that, than they have in what really feedeth the ſoul, and tendeth to ſearch the conſcience, or awaken any ſpiritual exerciſe therein. 2. Such a people have ordinarily a heal and unbroken condition, without fears, exerciſes, or doubts; and ſo accordingly there will be little of ſuch ſubjects the matter of diſcourſe betwixt them and the miniſter: yea, if ſuch a thing be moved, either they will ſuffer it to die out, as a thing which they are not acquainted with, or delighted in; or, ſo entertain it with ſome ſuch general expreſſions as rather ſhew their deſire not to be thought ignorant, than any way to expreſs their ſenſe of the ſame. 3. Much of their diſcourſe of religion will readily be to their own commendation, even when they ſeem with the Phariſee, Luke xviii. *to thank God they are not as other men:* and ſo ſtill there is ſome expreſſion of their ſatisfaction with their own condition that's diſcernible in the whole ſtrain of their diſcourſe and way, whatever acknowledgments may be intermix'd. 4. It's diſcernible by pride, ſelf-eſteem, vain-confidence, &c. that do accompany ſuch, which for a continuance of time together

can hardly be hid to a ſearching miniſter: for, this doth not only kyth negatively in their want of ſpiritual exerciſes, and ſuch like; but it will even often kyth poſitively by their cenſuring of others when they fall; by their aſſerting their own ſincerity, and the clearneſs and confidence that they have of their own good condition, and by their looking upon all things which may touch at their ſore, as not belonging to them, and as if they were above and without the reach of all ſuch grounds of doubting. 5. Such love rather to have the eſteem and familiar acquaintance of their miniſter, than to have profit by his miniſtry: hence they will be ſhort in no civil courteſy; will be deſirous of having the miniſter frequently with them, and that he may love them, and readily complain if he humour them not in that; yet he may be many nights in their company, and find it hard to edify much, or diſcover any great greedineſs in them to take the word off his hand. We ſee the Phariſees invited Chriſt to their houſes, thinking it a part of eſteem, and name, to be familiar with ſuch a perſon; yet it is not recorded of any of them, that they intended their edification, or made uſe of ſuch opportunities for that end, as Mary did, Luke x. 42. 6. Men in ſuch a frame, as they are profeſſed enemies to profanity; ſo are they ſecret whiſperers againſt true tenderneſs and tender perſons; they wonder what ſpiritual exerciſes are, and why folks will not believe, and ſo quiet all their doubts; they are ready to count diligence and ſeriouſneſs beyond their own pitch, to be but fancy and conceits, as we ſee in ſome Phariſees, condemning poor women that were mourning at Chriſt's feet; and, upon occaſions, they cannot well hide the ſame, eſpecially, when any faults break out in ſuch, as once ſeemed to be more tender, then they bleſs themſelves in their own form of religion, and inſult upon theſe; whereas theſe that are truly ſpiritual, are commanded to reſtore, and will readily endeavour it, ſuch as fall with the ſpirit of meekneſs, Gal. vi. 1. 7. Somewhat is diſcernible by a people's converſing with others: for, ſuch readily love to converſe with theſe that do admire them, and make no doubt of their piety and ſincerity: and ſo miniſters and people both, that ſpeak moſt ſmoothly to them, without ripping up any thing of their wounds, are moſt beloved by them, and ſpoken of with the greateſt commendation, even in their abſence. 8. Something alſo may be gathered from this, if the congregation be eſteemed to be generally religious, and if their manner of carriage under it be ſtill the ſame and hath been ſo for a long time together, without any obſervable change, and ſuch like. When theſe things concur, it may juſtly be ſuſpected if ſuch a work be real, that is ſo univerſal and eaſily conſtant. By theſe, and ſuch like, an obſerving and diſcerning miniſter may, at leaſt, come ſo far in the knowledge of ſuch a caſe, as may warrant him to apply himſelf to deal with them ſuitable to the ſame.

6. If it ſhould be aſked, How it is that a miniſter ought to deal with people in ſuch a frame? This will be indeed more difficult to anſwer, and will be the matter of many ſerious thoughts to a faithful miniſter, leſt he run, and labour in vain among ſuch a people; for there is no people with greater difficulty gained by the goſpel; and there is not ordinarily any caſe that doth deſtroy ſo many ſouls in the viſible church; as this doth: and therefore there is not more zeal and prudence required in reference to any ſort of perſons, than in reference to ſuch. For helping to anſwer this, we may offer theſe things from the way which our Lord uſeth in this epiſtle: 1. A miniſter that hath to do with ſuch a people, would endeavour to have a miniſterial eſteem amongſt them; that is, that, upon the one ſide, he may have a teſtimony in their conſciences, that he loveth them, and wiſheth the good of their ſouls, as a faithful miniſter ſhould do: otherwiſe, if there ſhould be any other jar, all his reproofs and threatenings will be accounted to flow from that, and ſo be rejected. Again, on the other ſide, when, I ſay, this reſpect ought *to be miniſterial*, it is to ſeclude a carnal, trivial reſpect and affection, that doth proceed from too great familiarity with ſuch perſons, than which there is nothing more dangerous both to miniſters and people: for, where it is, he is accounted a companion, and, plainneſs from him, hath no weight with it: for they cannot think that he would converſe with them ſo familiarly, if he had indeed ſuch thoughts of their condition, as faithfulneſs will put a miniſter to expreſs in ſuch a caſe: and, as ſuch perſons uſually ſeek to gain ſuch affection and familiarity from their miniſter, as a ſpecial mean to keep him in eſteeming ſo of them, as they do of themſelves; ſo miniſters would beware of giving them ſuch a ſtumbling; but to endeavour ſuch an eſteem amongſt them, as is, *for the work's ſake*, 1 Theſ. v. 12. 2. A miniſter in ſuch a caſe would

not hold upon general doctrines, nor the reproving of groſs ſcandals only; but he would ſet himſelf in application to inſiſt upon hypocriſy and lukewarmneſs, and ſo to deſcribe it, to ſhew the rifeneſs of it, to ſet forth the lothfulneſs of the hazard that cometh to ſouls by it, and that in a ſearching, grave and weighty manner, that he may be ſeen to be affected therewith himſelf, as the Lord doth in this place. 3. This would be done pungently and purpoſely, as if a miniſter were building forts to beſiege a city, or taking a ſtrong hold by the goſpel: and therefore one battery would be made to follow upon the back of another, if ſo be ſuch ſtout pillars of preſumption may be battered down: and for that end, the word would be ſharpened and edged, that it may prove a diſcerner of the thoughts and intent of the heart, and lay open, not only what is the man's practice without, but what is the heart language within; what are his thoughts of himſelf; what are the grounds upon which he buildeth them; what are the anſwers whereby he ſhifteth challenges; what are the deceits wherewith he beguileth himſelf in all theſe, and ſuch like: which is the Lord's practice here, *thou ſayeſt*, &c. 4. A miniſter would threaten ſuch indefinitely, as here; and when he hath deſcribed them, with their characters and ſymptoms, thunders out the Lord's wrath and curſe even againſt hypocriſy, lukewarmneſs, ſelf-conceitedneſs, want of humility, ſuch as have not fled to Chriſt, are not born again, and ſuch like; that they may know ſuch ſpiritual ills are loathſome to God. 5. It is fit in ſuch a caſe to rid marches between nature and grace accurately and diſtinctly; and to give ſuch ſymptoms of the one, and marks of the other, as may clearly from ſcripture ſet bounds between hypocriſy and ſincerity; between duties done in the right manner, and ſuch as are but in ſhew, ſo as conſciences may be bound with it, that theſe things are the truths of God. 6. There would be ſtill a plain opening up of the way of juſtification through faith in Chriſt, which is the ſure ground of all peace: and there would be a clearing of the terms of the covenant of grace, and of the doctrine of regeneration; and withal a moſt ſerious preſſing of them to make the right choice, and to accept of the beſt bargain. *Laſtly*, This application would be carried on with more than ordinary vehemency in the manner, weightineſs in the expreſſion, convincingneſs in the arguments and motives, &c. Beſides ſecret wreſtling with God for them: therefore the Lord here obteſteth, and proteſteth in the preſſing of this: this alſo would not be done for ſome little ſpace of time; but would be continued, and inſiſted in: therefore the Lord *knocketh*, and he *ſtandeth* and *knocketh*: which giveth a pattern of what miniſters ought to do in ſuch a caſe. And, indeed, there is no greater need of any thing, than by weighty powerful preaching and convincing application, to bear and knock at the hearts with the word, as with a hammer: becauſe there is no condition more rife, and more dangerous in the church of God, than the ſame of which we have ſpoken.

Concerning the Indentity of Angel, Biſhop, and Presbyter.

IT may poſſibly ſeem ſtrange to ſome, that in the oppoſition of all theſe epiſtles, we have ſtill applied what is ſpoken to, or of the angels, as being ſpoken to, or of, ordinary miniſters: whereas to ſome, it appeareth, that theſe angels were ſome ſingular and eminent perſons, having juriſdiction and authority over other miniſters, ſuch as uſually is given to biſhops and prelates, as contradiſtinct from the other: and that therefore this expoſition and application, which all alongſt doth confound biſhops and miniſters, as if there were no diſtinction amongſt them, is not to be admitted.

To ſay ſomething to this now, upon the cloſe of all the epiſtles: we do, indeed, acknowledge, that this expoſition doth confound the ſame, and will admit of no diſtinction amongſt them, as amongſt officers of the church of a higher and lower place. And although we hinted ſomewhat at the reaſons of this, chap. i. ver. 20. yet we ſhall atteſt any ſerious reader (who will ponder and weigh the ſeries of theſe epiſtles, and the application of them) if he can judge it poſſible to expound, and apply theſe epiſtles in any uſeful and practical manner, and not be neceſſitated to underſtand what is ſpoken of, or to theſe angels, as being ſpoken of, and to, the miniſters of theſe churches. And, having now gone through the ſame, we profeſs ourſelves to be more confirmed in the expoſition of this title *Angel*, which was formerly given. And if it were not ſo, we truly would not know how to expound theſe e-

piſtles, or to apply the ſame to one, ſuch as this biſhop contradiſtinguiſhed from miniſters or preſbyters, is ſuppoſed to be. And although we purpoſe not to digreſs in this; yet that it be not looked upon as any unreaſonable thing, thus to confound biſhops and miniſters, and to take them for one and the ſame officer, we ſhall propoſe theſe four conſiderations:

The firſt is, that we are ſure this is agreeable to ſcripture: and if, in ſcripture, they be thus confounded, it muſt certainly be ſafeſt to ſpeak with it. Now, that the ſcripture doth ſo, may appear from theſe ſcriptures, which even many of the antients have made uſe of for this end. The firſt is, Acts xx. where, ver. 17. Paul doth call the elders of Epheſus; and when he hath continued for a time to ſpeak unto them, verſe 28, he doth give them this ſtyle of biſhops (for what is tranſlated *overſeers*, is, in the original, επισκοπους in which place they are moſt evidently ſpoken of as one, both in reſpect of name, and in reſpect of office.

The ſecond place is, Phil. i. 1. where Paul directeth his epiſtle, beſides the ſaints, *To the biſhops and deacons*, without mentioning of any miniſter or preſbyter. The reaſon why they are called *biſhops* in the plural number, is, not becauſe there were plurality of lord-biſhops, as diſtinct from miniſters in one city; but it is, becauſe by biſhops is underſtood the plurality of miniſters that were therein. And Chryſoſtom, upon the words, obſerveth, that in the ſcripture, diſtinction is not made betwixt theſe titles; but the ſame that is a miniſter, is alſo biſhop.

The third place is, Titus i. by comparing verſe 5. with verſe 7. where, in the one, theſe words are, *For this cauſe left I thee in Crete, that thou ſhould ordain elders* (or miniſters) *in every city*. And, in ver. 7. after he hath given ſome directions concerning their qualification, he doth ſubjoin this as a reaſon enforcing the obſervation of the ſame, *For a biſhop muſt be blameleſs*, &c. and if both were not one, there could be no force in his ſo reaſoning. The word alſo rendered *biſhop*, is that ſame which was in the former places.

The fourth place is, 1 Pet. v. 1, 2. where Peter, exhorting the miniſters, or preaching elders, to watch carefully over the flock, and to feed the ſame, expreſſeth the nature of their office to conſiſt in this, *in having*, or taking *the overſight of the flock*: which, in the original, is the ſame word that muſt be applied to biſhops, and might be rendered thus, *Feed the flock that is among you, overſeeing the ſame as biſhops, not by conſtraint, but willingly*; for the word is επισκοπουντες. And there were no reaſon for him to require miniſters to play the biſhops, to ſpeak ſo, by watching ſo over the flocks, as belong to them, if biſhops and miniſters, in the language of the Holy Ghoſt, were not one and the ſame. Neither will that exception which Bellarmin hath, *de Clerici, lib.* i. *cap.* 15. and ſundry other Papiſts with him, viz. that at that time theſe titles were not diſtinguiſhed in the church, but uſed in common, as they prove out of many of the antients; but, on the contrary, this doth confirm our aſſertion: for, 1. If they were not diſtinguiſhed then, who can afterwards diſtinguiſh them. 2. Can there be ſo univerſal and frequent mentioning of them as one, except they be really and wholly ſo? 3. It appeareth by theſe ſcriptures, where not only the titles are confounded, as belonging to the ſame officers, but the offices themſelves are confounded, both in reſpect of the qualifications of the perſons, and in reſpect of ordaining and inſtalling of them in theſe offices, and alſo in reſpect of the duties that are required of both. It is worth the obſerving which the Jeſuit Lorinus hath to this purpoſe, Acts xx. 17. who, after the rejecting of many anſwers, is brought to acquieſce in this as truth, that theſe names were common in the apoſtles days, who did uſe the title of *biſhops* and *presbyter* indifferently: and that therefore theſe who are preſbyters in the one verſe, are ſtyled *biſhops* in the other: he doth alſo afterward ſubjoin this ſimilitude to illuſtrate the ſame; as, ſaith he, in the primitive times, the title *Papa*, or pope, was indifferently given to all eminent biſhops; but afterwards was reſtricted to the biſhop of Rome, for diſtinguiſhing him from others; ſo, ſaith he, the title *biſhop*, which was at firſt common to all miniſters, was at laſt appropriated to ſome few; who, for diſtinguiſhing them from others, were thus ſtyled, for ſetting forth their authority and juriſdiction above them. This, indeed, ſeemeth to be the truth, and ſheweth clearly that biſhops and popes, in the ſenſe that ſome do plead for, have the ſame original, and are grown up by the ſame means, to be diſtinguiſhed from others as being above them, viz. by mens pride and human conſtitutions.

I know that even by ſome of the fathers, theſe two places viz. Eph. iv. 11, 12. and, 1 Tim. iii. 2. with 8. are adduced for the ſame end: becauſe, in the firſt place, the apoſtle reckoneth out both extraordinary and ordinary preaching officers, without making any mention of biſhops: which could not be, if they were not the ſame with *Paſtors* that are named, as Ambroſe on the place aſſerteth. And altho' it ſeemeth that in ſome things he miſrepreſenteth the primitive order of the church; yet is he forced to add, *Ideo non per omnia conveniunt ſcripta Apoſtoli ordinationi quae nunc in Eccleſia eſt: quia haec inter ipſa primordia ſcripta ſunt.* And though that laſt reaſon hath no weight in it to infer any change upon the church now, in reſpect of its office-bearers, from what it was then in the apoſtles days, and ordained to be by them; yet this is clear, that he granteth a clear difference between the ſtate of the church in theſe days, wherein this diſtinction of biſhops from paſtors was come to ſome height from what it was in the time of the apoſtles, which certainly muſt be the moſt pure times of the church. In the other place, viz. 1 Tim. iii. 1, &c. the apoſtle propoſeth certain rules for the trying and ordaining of one to be a biſhop, and after, in ver. 8. he doth immediately paſs to the office of a deacon, without mentioning of a preſbyter or miniſter: which ſheweth, that in ſpeaking of biſhops, he did underſtand preſbyters, and did acknowledge no diſtinct teaching officer between them and deacons. And, indeed, the rules and qualifications are the ſame which he maketh common to biſhops and preſbyters, Tit. i. Chryſoſtom moveth the ſame queſtion on the words, ver. 8. Homilia 11. viz. *Why doth Paul paſs immediately from biſhop to deacons, omitting preſbyters? becauſe*, ſaith he, *between a biſhop and a preſbyter there is almoſt no difference: for, the care of the church is committed to preſbyters: and what he ſpoke of biſhops, doth agree to preſbyters.* Only he ſubjoineth, in the matter of ordination, doth the biſhop differ from the miniſter. And this difference is not to be underſtood to be ſuch as was in the apoſtles days: for, the former ſcriptures will confute that. Therefore even this ſame father, with others do aſſert, that then preſbyters did ordain biſhops, as in the inſtance of Timothy, 1 Tim. iv. they eſſayed to make out; but it is a difference that was brought in afterward in the church, and was in exerciſe for that time, tho' without any warrant from the word. And if theſe ſcriptural grounds hold, as by what is ſaid, they neceſſarily and clearly muſt, it mattereth the leſs what may be ſaid from other grounds. And ſo we leave this firſt conſideration.

Our ſecond conſideration is, that this confounding both of the titles and offices of biſhop and preſbyter, will be found agreeable to the moſt pure primitive times. It is true, within ſome few ages, difference was made between biſhops and preſbyters in the church; yet was never that diſtinction counted by them to be *jure divino*, or by the law of God; but as a thing belonging to order in the church, and brought in by cuſtom: which was, that he who was of greateſt age and reſpect, and did preſide in the meetings, was particularly called biſhop, which afterwards was eſtabliſhed by ſome councils. If we might take the teſtimony of ſome Papiſts here, they will confirm this; Michael Medina, as he is cited by Bellarmin, *lib.* 1. *de Clerici, cap.* 15. doth affirm, that not only Jerom was of that mind with Aerius, whoſe opinion was, that the biſhop and the preſbyter were equal and the ſame, but alſo, that Ambroſius, Auguſtinus, Sedulius, Primaſius, Chryſoſtomus, Theoderetus, Oecumenius, and Theophilactus were of that ſame mind. *Atque ita (inquit Medina (iſti viri, alioqui ſanctiſſimi, et ſanctarum ſcripturarum conſultiſſimi: quorum tamen ſententiam prius in Aerio, deinde in Waldenſibus, poſtremo in Joanne Wicclifo, damnavit Eccleſia*, &c. Note here, that this hath been always accounted the common judgment of the Waldenſes and of Wicklife, with his followers, whoſe judgment certainly is of great weight, ſeeing they were eminent witneſſes againſt the beaſt, whereof more may be ſpoken, chap. xi. and he doth at large make out the argument of theſe fathers with Aerius in this point, viz. that by divine right there is no difference between biſhop and preſbyter. This teſtimony will be more clear, if we conſider many of theſe teſtimonies themſelves, as they are ſet down by Sixtus Senenſis. *Bibliothecae ſanctat, lib.* 6. *annotatione*, 319, and 324. where he hath the words of many of theſe authors, as agreeing with Jerome, whoſe teſtimony is moſt largely ſet down; and, beſide what was already cited from Ambroſe, theſe words are added out of his comments on 1 Tim. *cap.* 4. *Epiſcopi et Preſbyteri una eſt ordinatio: (uterque enim Sacerdos eſt) ſed Epiſcopus primus eſt, ut omnis Epiſcopus Preſbyter ſit, non tamen omnis Presbyter Epiſcopus. Ille enim Epiſcopus eſt, qui in-*

ter Presbyteros primus est, which is not to shew any superiority of degree, but an orderly precedency which he that was the chief presbyter had amongst others. He is also cited upon Phil. i. 1. where he bringeth in, Acts xx. 17, 28. to confirm this, that presbyters and bishops were the same.

Beside these, we may add two more particular testimonies, The first is of Jerom, first, in his epistle to Euagrius, where at large he asserteth and proveth this truth: and when he proponeth the question, *Would ye have authority?* he goeth thro' these scriptures, Phil. i. Acts 20. Tit. 1. 1 Tim. 4. 1 Pet. 5. and from those places doth confirm, not only the titles to be common; but that the presbyters were, by office, bishops: and for that cause he cites the Greek word, viz. επισκοπουντες, which in that place of Peter is applied to presbyters, to shew the identity of one office with the other: yea, he addeth many other places, as the second and third epistles of John, and 1 Tim. 3. where, saith he, *de ordinatione Episcopi et Diaconi dicitur; de presbyteris, amnino reticetur: quia in Episcopo et presbytero continetur.* If it be asked, *How this distinction did enter?* He answers it in that epistle, *quod autem postea*, &c. that is, that when afterward one came to be elected and preferred to the rest, it was done for the remedy of schism. And it is observable, that this remedy is said by him to be after John's writing of his epistles, during which time, there was no such difference. And he illustrateth it thus, as if the deacons should peculiarly choose one from among themselves, whom they knew to be industrious, and give him the title of arch-deacon, for helping them in the managing of what belongs to their office orderly: thus he: which clearly sheweth what kind of precedency this is which he attributeth to the bishop, even such as he would allow to a deacon, that for some special end is advanced to some peculiar care by others. Again, he doth purposely handle this same thing in his commentators on Titus 1. where without any prejudice by the heat of dispute, having compared v. 5. with ver. 7. he addeth, *Idem est ergo presbyter qui Episcopus: et antequam diaboli instinctu studia in religione fierent, et diceretur in populis, ego sum Pauli, Ego Apollo, ego autem Cephae, omnium presbyterorum consilio Ecclesiae gubernabantur. Postquam vero unusquisque eos quos baptizaverat suos putabat esse, non Christi, in toto orbi decretum est, ut unus de Presbyteris electus superponeretur caeteris, ad quem omnis Ecclesiae cura pertineret; et schismatum semina tollerentur.* And lest this assertion of his should be thought to be without warrant, he addeth, *Putat aliquis*, &c. doth any think that this is not the mind of the scripture, but our own? viz. that a bishop and presbyter are one and the same, and that the one word, bishop, denoteth the office; and the other, presbyter, the age? For then they used to be well stricken in years; and presbyter signifieth elder. And he doth subjoin, in this place, the scripture formerly mentioned for confirming the same: which he doth not only cite, but solidly reasoneth the conclusion from them, and having cited Acts xx. he hath these words, Observe here diligently, how calling the presbyters of one city, viz. Ephesus, he doth afterwards stile them bishops. And also maketh use of that, Heb. xiii. 17. where submission and subjection is required to all that watch over souls, and, saith he, *ibi equaliter inter plures Ecclesiae cara dividitur.* And lest it should be thought that he esteemed this difference, which afterward followed between bishop and presbyter, to be of divine institution (tho' in part he did then own some difference, *de facto*) he doth close with this, *Sicuti ergo Presbyteri sciunt se ex Ecclesiae consuetudine ei qui sibi praepositus fuerit, esse subjectos: Ita Episcopi noverint se magis consuetudine, quam dispositionis dominicae veritate, presbyteris esse majores;* that is, as presbyters know themselves to be by the custom of the church, subject to him that is set over them; so bishops would know that they are above presbyters, rather by custom, than by any verity of divine disposition or appointment: And when he cometh again to the text, he useth this transition, *videamus igitur qualis presbyter, sive Episcopus, ordinandus sit.*

From which testimonies these things are clear: 1. That there was no difference betwixt the names and offices of bishops and presbyters in the days of the apostles. 2. That the difference was not begun by any apostolic constitution; but upon church custom, the decrees of councils, and such other grounds. 3. That although he acknowledgeth some difference for the time, as that bishops were to ordain, from which presbyters were restricted; yet that is clearly asserted by him not to flow from any divine constitution, (for there can none be imagined after the apostles days) but from some human or church constitution, as by the former warning both to

biſhops and preſbyters wherewith he cloſeth, is clear.

This teſtimony is ſo clear, that it doth put many of the popiſh adverſaries to a ſtand. Alfonſus Caſtrenſis (as he is cited by Bellarmin, and Sixtus Senenſis, in the places formerly mentioned) doth not ſtand to aver, That in this Jerom did err. And Bellarmin when he hath given one anſwer, viz. That Jerom intended the change betwixt biſhops and preſbyters, to have begun upon the occaſion of the firſt ſchiſm at Corinth, becauſe of his alluding to the words, *I am of Paul, I am of Apollos &c.* and finding him afterward to maintain the ſame doctrine from the epiſtles of Paul to the Philippians, and Titus, and alſo from the epiſtles of Peter and John, which were written long after the ſaid ſchiſm; to weaken his teſtimony, he ſaith, *Obſervandum eſt ſanctum Hieronimum in illa ſua ſententia non adeo conſtantem videri*, &c. whereas he is moſt conſtant, ſeeing by mentioning theſe words, he doth not pitch on that particular ſchiſm at Corinth; but, in alluſion thereto, doth expreſs the ſchiſms that followed thereafter. And we ſuppoſe there can be no infringing of theſe ſo direct and expreſs teſtimonies: yet we may obſerve what eſtimation theſe men have really of the moſt eminent fathers (whom they ſo much otherways cry up) when they differ from them.

This teſtimony upon Titus, is the more obſervable, becauſe, as both Sixtus Senenſis hath it, and Bellarmin doth acknowledge, Sedulius, Scotus, and Anſelmus Cantuarienſis Epiſcopus do expound theſe words of Paul to Titus, in the ſame very words that are uſed by Jerom. And ſo the former teſtimony is not to be accounted the teſtimony of one, but the teſtimony of three, beſide others, who in other words incline to Jerom's mind.

The ſecond teſtimony is of that famous father Auguſtine, who in his 19th epiſtle (which is the laſt of his epiſtles directed to Jerom, and is alſo in that order among Jerom's epiſtles) when he is preſſing Jerom, who was but a preſbyter to uſe freedom with him who was a biſhop, and to correct him wherein he was wrong, he doth urge it thus, *quanquam enim ſecundum honorum vocabula, quae jam Eccleſiae uſus obtinuit, Epiſcopatus Preſbyterio major ſit.*

In which words it is indeed aſſerted, that a biſhop was more than a preſbyter, at that time, yet the riſe of that is ſhown to be from the uſe or cuſtom which had now obtained place in the church. Neither can that exception of Bellarmin and ſome others be of force, viz. that Auguſtine doth compare not the uſe of the Chriſtian church in that time with what was formerly, but the uſe of theſe words in the Chriſtian church with what was before Chriſt: And ſo *the uſe of the church*, and *divine inſtitution*, according to this meaning, will be one: this, I ſay, doth moſt groſly contradict that father's intent: for, 1. His ſcope is to ſhew, that though he was called a biſhop, and Jerom but a presbyter, that yet indeed there was no difference, but only ſuch as uſe and cuſtom had brought in into the church, whereas if we expound cuſtom or uſe otherwiſe, Auguſtine would ſeem rather to aſſert and aggrege the diſtance that was between him and Jerom, than any way to diminiſh the ſame. When yet his ſcope is clear to leſſen that diſtance of ſuperiority that ſeemed to be between him and him, becauſe of theſe titles. 2. The very expreſſion will bear the ſame, *quae jam Eccleſiae uſus obtinuit*, &c. which neceſſarily importeth, that ſometimes ſuch difference was not in cuſtom in the church: and where will it be found in Auguſtine, that he compareth any cuſtom of the church after Chriſt with what was before, as different cuſtoms of different times of the ſame church? for to him, and almoſt all the fathers, *uſus*, or *confuetudo eccleſiae*, is ever taken, when given, as a ground of any practice as contradiſtinguiſhed from divine inſtitution, as in the laſt cited words of Jerom is clear. Alſo, it may have its own weight, that he is now writing to Jerom, whoſe judgment in theſe things was not unknown to him: He muſt therefore be ſuppoſed to uſe the ſame, as it was underſtood by him.

Alſo in that book, which is intitled, *Liber quaeſtionum veteris et novi teſtamenti*, among Auguſtine's works, *Queſt.* 101. When he hath proven from 1 Tim. 3. the biſhop and presbyter to be one, *quid eſt enim Epiſcopus niſi primus Preſbyter?* And after he marketh, that altho' the biſhops uſed to ſtyle presbyters, *Compreſbyteri;* yet, ſaith he, they never ſay to the deacons *Condiaconi.* And whoever be the author, it ſheweth, that in the primitive times this title biſhop, was rather given as a note of reſpect to ſome eminent miniſters, than as that which did conſtitute a different office or officer, eſpecially *jure divino.* And that there was another kind of identity between miniſters and biſhops, than any of them, and deacons, tho'

miniſters virtually comprehend that office alſo.

It is like it may be objected, That all antiquity did condemn Aerius, whoſe opinion is ſaid to be this, That *he took away all diſtinction betwixt biſhop and presbyter? Anſw.* It is the judgment of learned Rivetus in his *Catholicus Orthodoxus*, in his reply to the ſame charge given by Ballius, *tactatu ſecundo Queſt.* 22. That Aerius was condemned by them, not ſimply, as maintaining any thing contrary to truth, in this, but as imprudently in practice brangling the order then eſtabliſhed amongſt them, to the hazard of their union. And there are two clear proofs of this; 1. Becauſe where the ſame tenets were maintained, as in Jerom, and others; yet where theſe perſons continued in the unity of the church, they were never branded with any name of hereſy for the ſame. 2. Becauſe even Auguſtine, who reckons up this hereſy of Aerius, doth yet acknowledge this difference to be by no divine conſtitution, as we have formerly ſeen. And who will conſider the rolls of hereſies, ſet down by theſe fathers, will find that oftentimes ſuch are reckoned among heretics, who much rather ought to be accounted ſchiſmatics. It is obſervable alſo, that even adverſaries grant that none of theſe fathers do condemn him for denying that diſtinction to be *jure divino*, (for which ſee Eſtius, lib. 4. p. 35.) but for denying it ſimply. And ſo now we leave our ſecond conſideration.

The third conſideration is, that there is ſome footſteps of this identity of *Biſhop;* and *Presbyter* in the moſt corrupt writings of the moſt impure ſchoolmen: which may appear in theſe three; 1. In that generally, *Epiſcopacy* is holden to be no diſtinct order from *Presbytery;* and that *Presbytery* or *Prieſthood*, as they ſpeak, is the higheſt order in all their hierarchy. And this is current as the doctrine of Lombardus the maſter of ſentences, Hugo Aquines, Thomas Waldenſis, and generally of all the Thomiſts at leaſt. And tho' they ſeem to make biſhops to be of a more eminent degree; yet by Eſtius, and ſome others alledged by him, this is not thought ſufficient to diſtinguiſh one office from another. And indeed, conſidering their doctrine in all the other branches, or orders of their hierarchy, it will well follow, that theſe two, being the ſame order, cannot be admitted to be diſtinct officers, ſeeing in no other order ſuch a diſtinction is admitted.

2. We may gather it from their acknowledging of this to have been a truth in the primitive times. Thus Lombardus, the great maſter of ſentences, lib. 4. diſtinct. 24. when he giveth the reaſon why only two orders, viz. *Presbyteratus* and *Diaconatus*, are mentioned by way of exeellency in the canons, and are called *Ordines Sacri:* He ſubjoineth this as the reaſon, *Quia hos ſolos primitiva Eccleſia legitur habuiſſe, et de his ſolis praeceptum apoſtoli habemus:* And doth for this end cite, 1 Tim. iii. and Acts vi. Again, that great ſchoolman Cajetan, on Tit. i. 5. 7. hath theſe words, *Ubi adverte eundem gradum, idemque officium, ſignificari a Paulo nomine Preſbyteri & nomine Epiſcopi: Nam praemiſit, idcirco reliqui te in Creta ut conſtituas Preſbyteros: et mode probando regulam, dicit, oportet enim Epiſcopum, &c.* By which words the identity of theſe two officers are moſt clearly aſſerted, and confirmed: and this alſo will be found to be the mind of many more.

If it be aſked, How then theſe more eminent degrees of biſhop, arch-biſhop, patriarch, &c. did enter into the church; and how theſe differences have ariſen? *Anſw.* The ſame Lombardus in that ſame place, *de quadripartico ordine Epiſcoporum*, doth omit his former alledging of the cuſtom of the old Teſtament, and other things which he abuſed, and out of Iſidorus layeth it down thus, *horum autem diſcretio a Gentilibus intro-ducta videtur; qui ſuos flamines, alios ſimpliciter flamines, alios archi flamines, alios proto flamines apellabant. Sacerdotes enim Gentilium, flamines dicebantur, &c.* Which is in ſum, This difference ſeemeth to be brought in from the Gentiles, who uſed ſo to ſtile their prieſts, as to call ſome prieſts ſimply, others arch-prieſts, others again firſt-prieſts, &c. and conſidering that the root of the Roman hierarchy, viz. Papacy, and the ordering thereof, did ariſe from the ſuperſtitious chriſtians their imitating of the heatheniſh *Pontifex maximus*, (whereof we may ſee ſomewhat, cap. 13. lect. 4.) it is no wonder that theſe inferior pillars be of the ſame kind. And if there were any ſhew from the word for ſuch differences, it would ſeem that this great maſter had not gone to the Gentiles to be beholden to them for the ſame. Alſo Eſtius when he is to prove the ſuperiority of biſhops, hath theſe words, *Quod autem jure divino ſint Epiſcopi Preſbyteris ſuperiores, et ſi non ita clarum eſt e ſacris literis, aliunde tamen abunde probari poteſt, &c. in lib.* 4. *ſenten. diſtinct.* 24. and ſo he citeth Pope's Conſtitutions, Canons of Councils, &c.

In the third place, This will appear from the conſidering of the anſwers that generally are given by

them to these places of scripture alledged, whereby it is concluded, that a bishop and presbyter are the same; which are generally one of these two;

First, Some say, That though the office in the primitive times was distinct; yet the titles of presbyter and bishop were common. But we have found already this to be a miserable shift: because, 1. This identity of the names so circumstantiated, proveth the identity of the offices as was said. 2. Because these places do not only apply the titles indifferently; but do indifferently apply the duties, qualifications, and every other thing that belongeth to such officers, and offices; and there is nothing spoken of the one in scripture, but it is also spoken of the other; neither any thing required as a qualification in, or duty from the one, but is also done in reference to the other, and that expresly. A second answer is that of Scotus, and some others who follow him, in lib. 4. *sententiarum distinct.* 24. *quaestione unica*, where he endeavoureth thus to remove that objection, because, saith he, at first believers were few, and so few ministers were needful, and it was not necessary that there should be officers instituted in every degree; but, saith he, when the believers did multiply, then it was necessary. Where there is a double fault; 1. That contrary to the scripture it is asserted, that then the church was not numerous, when as yet very soon the apostles were necessitated to choose deacons for their help. 2. That it supponeth, that when the church is less numerous, there may not only be fewer officers, but that she may want some wholly of such and such a degree. Add, that it supponeth *de facto*, that the church, in the apostles days, was not so compleatly constitute in respect of the kind of officers as afterward: which is altogether inconsistent with that perfect platform of the church in the primitive apostolic times. And when such answers are made by the most learned of that party to such arguments, what is it, but indeed the granting, upon the matter, that there was no such distinction, or distinct offices of bishop and presbyter, in the primitive times, in use and practice in the church.

Our fourth and last consideration is, That this confounding of Angel and Minister in this place, is necessary from the consideration of the scope, and other circumstances of the text, whatever might be said from other places. For, 1. We cannot see how otherways these epistles can be profitably expounded and applied with relation to the state of these particular churches, except this be, as was hinted at the entry of this question. 2. It is certain, that our Lord's purpose is to point out the condition of the ordinary ministers of the churches, as well as of the people, or of any supposed particular bishop. And if this be the Lord's scope, then they must be comprehended under this title Angel, to whom the epistles are directed: and if so, then what is spoken of the angel, must be applied to them indifferently, seeing the Lord maketh no difference; therefore, either we must altogether leave out ministers from being considered in these epistles, or we must thus apply to them what is spoken to, and of, the angels. 3. What is spoken here to, or of, the angels, will agree to what in other scriptures is spoken to, and of, ordinary ministers; as to preach the word, to convince gain-sayers, to censure the unruly, to fulfil their ministry, to have an open door, and such like. All which we will find applied to ordinary ministers in other scriptures; and therefore cannot but be so here also. 4. Seeing in no other scripture, there is expres distinction made between bishop and presbyter; and seeing it is usual to John to speak of presbyter or elder, as of the highest office that was to be in ordinary in the church; for which cause he calleth himself an elder, and seeing also he doth never mention preeminence in one officer above another, but in the person of Diotrephes, and that with indignation, as may be seen in his second and third epistles. And lastly, seeing he never mentioneth bishop, or any other teaching officer but presbyter in his doctrine and writings: is it probable, that under this figurative stile, in a prophetical book, any other officer than a presbyter, especially such as should have preeminence over his brethren, should be understood, and upon this place alone be grounded, it being ever most safe in such obscure figurative places to expound the same by what is more clear? And it would seem strange, that the institution of presbyters; yea, and of deacons with their qualifications, &c. should be so clear and expres in the word, and that yet this superior officer should be so darkly pointed at, and there be no qualifications, directions or rules given concerning him, but what are to be borrowed from the inferior pastor. 5. It would also, upon this supposition, be difficult to find out

who these particular bishops could be: for, 1. Some make Timothy to be dead, and John now to be bishop of Ephesus: and can John himself write to himself, being at that time not in Ephesus? 2. If we take Timothy to be the angel mentioned, will it be charitable to account him to have fallen so from his first love? Yea, supposing it to be Onesimus, it will be hard to construct so of him: and so we might go through the rest. Beside, there is in all these epistles a special fibness and sympathy between the condition of the *Angel* and *Church*: therefore what is directed to the angel at the entry, is applied to the churches in the close of every epistle: yea, these angels are supposed to have much immediate influence upon the conditions, good or ill, of these churches. Now, it may be conceived how the churches and their particular ministers may come to be of the same temper; but it cannot be conceived how it can be so ordinarily between a Diocesian bishop and many congregations under him: for, experience hath proven, that oftentimes there may be a cold dead bishop, and yet where the ministers are lively, the people may be in good condition: but usually, when ministers are lifeless, although the bishop were lively, yet are the people, for the generality of them, but in a dead condition. *Lastly*, If what is spoken to the angels here, is to be appropriated to one bishop, then it behoved to be said, that it were only the bishop that had the door opened to him in preaching, as in Philadelphia; that he only was commended for his labour and patience, as in Ephesus; that he only did convert souls, and in that peculiar sense, were said to have few unspotted persons under him, as in the epistle to Sardis, &c. And if these things cannot be astricted to bishops, so understood, but must agree to all ministers in such cases; then must the title *Angel* be so applied in these epistles.

We know these things are more fully and accurately made out by many others, to whom we refer the reader: and, in particular, to that accurate piece of the ministers of the province of London, called *Jus Divinum Ministerii Evangelici*, and to the books that are frequently mentioned therein: for, it is not our purpose to insist in this: only we conceive that from these considerations there is ground sufficient for our exposition and application of these epistles. It is not unworthy the marking also, that Augustine, expounding that word in the 104. Psalm, (which is to him the 103.) *He maketh his angels ministers*, &c. he doth understand by *Angels*, *Praedicatores Evangelii*, or preachers of the gospel, without any further distinction or title; which certainly must be done with respect to this place. I shall only add a word of that zealous and pious writer, learned Mr. Boyd, who having clearly made out this by many scriptures and citations of fathers, both against Papists and others, who, saith he, in this were Papizantes, doth close with a saying of famous Whitaker against Sanders, who having cited Jerom's reason for the bringing in of bishops, for the preventing of schism, 'Hoc, veri 'verbium gravissime subjungit, saith he, sed ipso mor- 'bo deterius pene remedium fuit: Nam ut primo u- 'nus presbyter reliquis praelatus est, et factus Epis- 'copus; ita postea unus Episcopus, reliquis est prae- 'latus. Sic ista consuetudo Papam cum sua Monar- 'chia peperit et paulatim, in Ecclesiam invexit.' And then doth subjoin of himself, 'Nec ego sane video, si 'semel hoc remedium, ut ad schismata vel tollenda 'vel praecavenda necessarium, admittamus et am- 'plectamur, cur aut quomodo gradus sistendus sit, 'donec ad unum summum, Patriarcham sive Ponti- 'ficem Oecumenicum, qui solus toti, praesit Hierar- 'chiae ecclesiasticae, tandem deveniamus, atque hoc 'Italus velit, et magno mercetur Abaddon ille Ro- 'manus, qui cum suis affectis, eodem hoc utunterar- 'gumento, ad Monarchiam suam in Ecclesia fir- 'mandam.'

The same learned author also, coming to consider this place of the Revelation, after other answers, doth assert, that under this title *Angel*, plurality of ministers may be understood, as we formerly did expound the place, whom Christ writeth to in the singular number: 1. That he might shew that there was an unity amongst the ministers, as well as amongst the members: and so he keepeth the number of them, proportionably to the number of the churches. And, 2. Because by naming them so, the Lord would have them minded, that some way they did constitute but one, and are, in respect of their oversight, so to concur in caring for the one flock, as being each of them ministers thereof, in whole; and, in particular, written unto by Jesus Christ, for that end. And so this naming of *Angel*, in the singular number, will rather remove all supposed differences amongst them, than establish the same: because what is written to one, is written to every angel, or minister, in these church-

es: which is the thing that at first we asserted.

An author of late, viz. Doctor Hammond, among many other strange things which he hath, doth take an unheard-of way to evite the former arguments: and because he cannot deny but the scripture doth take bishops and presbyters for one and the same, he doth therefore, first, acknowledge this to be truth. But, 2. Asserteth, that both are to be understood of Diocesian bishops, and not of presbyters, as they are understood now. And therefore, 3. Doth deny, that, in the apostles times, there was any *middle sort of presbyters*, as he calleth them, betwixt Diocesian bishops and deacons. 4. That many mentioned in the scripture, and these seven angels in particular, were Metropolitan bishops, having power over Diocesian bishops. All which he asserteth, with a great deal of confidence, and doth illustrate the then government of the church from the fourth chapter of this book: which, to him, holdeth forth: 1. The Metropolitan of Jerusalem, as signified by the person that sitteth upon the throne. 2. Four and twenty Diocesian bishops sitting on thrones by him, which, saith he, no doubt was exactly the number of the inferior bishops of Judea, although the same cannot be made out by history. These are represented by the four and twenty elders. 3. Seven spirits, signify the seven deacons which were in that church: thus, saith he, was the estate of the church in John's time, and no other officer was as yet instituted.

Although these be vanities beyond any thing which he condemneth in Mr. Brightman himself, and exceedingly unsuitable to the scope of the Spirit; and though there can be little expectation to convince any who so unfortunately asserteth their own imagination as a certain truth, without any warrant from the word, or any history; yet we must say somewhat, seeing the stress lieth here, whether there was any presbyters in the days of the apostles, in the notion that we now take *presbyters?* Or, whether all preaching officers were then only bishops with jurisdiction, as he doth understand them? For if there were presbyters in this notion as we speak; and if, according to his own principles, bishops and presbyters were one and the same; then it will follow, that at that time they were both preaching presbyters or elders: for, in pleading that there were such presbyters, we purpose not to plead for any meddle order, as he calleth it; but, according as himself saith, the asserting of a lord bishop to have been instituted in these days, doth necessarily deny the office of preaching presbyters to have then been in the church of Christ: so, upon the contrary, it will follow, that if it be made out, that there was such an officer as this presbyter in the church of Christ, then this of bishops, as distinct from it, must also fall. Now, to make out that there were such presbyters in the church of Christ in the apostles days, who yet were not bishops in his sense, we propose these considerations.

First, Consider the general harmony of all the antients, of all the school-men, generally all that ever wrote since reformation: for, I suppose, never any questioned but that there were preaching presbyters in the church, as we take them: and cannot Episcopacy be established, except all these foundations be overturned? without which, yet, there will not be much to say for it.

Secondly, Consider the principles of that party: for, generally, they do account the apostles to have been in the degree of bishops, and the disciples to have been in the place of ordinary pastors; also, that bishops jurisdiction over ministers is instituted and established in Timothy and Titus, their ordaining, admonishing, reproving, &c. of ordinary ministers. And if there were none such in the apostles days, they cannot be said to have had power over such: and so either these arguments must stand, and this author's assertion must fall; or, if it stand, they must fall: by which there is a loss to that party however.

Thirdly, It may be considered how that author's ground can be reconciled with scripture, wherein the office and actual being of such an officer as a presbyter, as we take it, is sufficiently clear: for which see, *first*, These scriptures that do most fully hold forth the distinct offices of the church under the New Testament, as Eph. i. 4. 11, 12. Besides apostles and evangelists, he gave some to be *pastors and teachers*. Now, by *pastors and teachers*, must be understood *ministers*, as we take them; because they are such as were, by feeding and teaching, to edify Christ's body to the end of the world: which cannot be restricted to bishops, as understood by him; otherwise the pastor shall not have access to edify Christ's church for any time to come. And if pastors be here understood, then they must be understood as then in being, as the officers that are mentioned, and to have had their beginning immediately after Christ's ascension. The *second* place is, 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29. where the apostle

ſpeaketh of the Lord's inſtituting teachers in his church, as diſtinct from other officers. And what can theſe teachers be but ſuch as we account ordinary miniſters, their titles bearing out their office, eſpecially to be in teaching? A *third* place is, Rom. xii. 6, 7, 8. where he that teacheth, and he that exhorteth, are ſpoken of, and are required to wait upon their offices; and certainly cannot but be underſtood of ordinary paſtors, whoſe ſpecial duty conſiſts in theſe. And conſidering the doctor's paraphraſe upon theſe verſes, we conceive that either there he expounds them of ſuch as taught for the time, which doth confirm what we ſaid; or, doth make it a direction to ſuch as afterward might be called to that office; whereby he would inſinuate, that there was none ſuch in being for the time: this is expreſly contrary to the letter of the text, which ſpeaketh of *exhorting* and *teaching*, as preſent duties of ſome officers, as well as *ruling* and *ſhewing mercy*, &c. are ſpoken of.

The ſecond ground from ſcripture, is, Such places as hold forth the apoſtles to have placed presbyters in every church, as Acts xiv. 23. Now, it muſt either be ſaid that there was no church in the New Testament, but Dioceſian churches; or, we muſt ſay, that the ordaining elders in every church, muſt be underſtood of ordinary presbyters or paſtors: for it is clear in ſcripture, that there were many churches, which were not in very conſiderable cities, as that in Cenchrea, Rom. xvi. 1. which yet cannot be ſaid to want officers, as alſo theſe of Judea and Galatia: and can it be ſaid that there was no church in any village or part of the country? Beſide, many churches are mentioned to be in Corinth, 1 Cor. xiv. 34. And certainly all had teachers, and yet it cannot be thought that they were all Dioceſian biſhops; they muſt therefore be underſtood of ordinary paſtors.

The third ſort of ſcriptures, are theſe that ſpeak of many elders in one city, as in Epheſus, Acts xx. 17, 28. and Philippi, Phil. i. 1. in Jeruſalem, in Corinth, &c. where it is clear, that beſide the extraordinary officers, that were there, there were alſo many ordinary teachers and presbyters.

I know that author will repel this eaſily, by aſſerting that all theſe were Metropolitan churches, and that theſe other presbyters were inferior biſhops, and that the ſe epistles are not to be underſtood to be directed to theſe particular towns, which are mentioned only, but to all the country, whereof theſe were Metropolitan cities and churches. But to this we oppoſe, 1. How can that be made to appear from any ground in ſcripture, where neither the word *Metropolitan*, nor the thing is heard of? 2. This maketh two ſorts of prelatic biſhops, when yet, whatever be underſtood by biſhops, in the word, it is clear they are but of one degree: and therefore the ſame rules for ordination, for qualifications, trial, and every other thing, are indifferently given for all. 3. This is contrary to the very letter of the text, to ſay, that when he writeth to Philippi or Theſſalonica, he writeth to all Macedonia, &c. For the apoſtle in his inſcriptions, putteth great difference between his writing to a particular church or city, and his writing to ſeveral churches in a country, as by his direction to Corinth, Philippi, or Coloſs, &c. in the one caſe; and his directions not to any church in a particular town, but to the churches in Galatia, and to all the Hebrews, in the other caſe, is clear: which is done, to ſhew that the one reſpecteth a particular town and the Chriſtians in it, and the other the Chriſtians in a whole country. And certainly, if we will mark how he diſtinguiſheth Theſſalonica from Macedonia and Achaia, 1 Theſſ. i. 7. and how, Col. iv. 16. he commandeth to read that epiſtle in the church of the Laodiceans, which yet was not far from this town, it will appear that he underſtood the particular churches which were named. Yet it is clear that there were more biſhops in Philippi, and more miniſters in Theſſalonica, as 1 Epiſtle, chap. v. verſe 12. Now, to put his gloſs upon the words in that place, ſaith he, Theſſalonica was a Metropolis, and all the Chriſtian churches and biſhops in Macedonia were written unto, when Theſſalonica was written unto; how then ſhall, ver. 7. and 8. of the firſt chapter be paraphraſed, ſo *that ye were examples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia?* This would be the meaning, ye Chriſtians of Macedonia, are examples to all the Chriſtians of Macedonia: which were abſurd. Yea, himſelf doth paraphraſe it thus, 'And this in ſo 'eminent a manner, that your example had an 'happy influence, raiſed an emulation in all the 'Chriſtians of the other cities in Macedonia, &c.' Whereby it appeareth, that the church of the Theſſalonians, is to be underſtood of the Chriſtians of that particular city, and that as diſtinct from other particular cities in Macedonia, &c. *Laſtly*, There are divers miniſters in Coloſs: for, Col. iv. 12.

Epaphras is mentioned as one of their number, who certainly was a preacher; and, again, ver. 17. Archippus is ſpoken of. And if there were not plurality of miniſters in one place, what can be underſtood by theſe that are ſpoken of, Phil. iv. 15, &c. who preach Chriſt, ſome ſincerely, and ſome out of envy? Theſe, it ſeemeth, were all in Rome; and yet it will be hard to ſay that they were all biſhops in the ſenſe pleaded for.

A fourth ſort of ſcriptures, are theſe that give directions and rules for the calling and trying of the qualifications of biſhops and presbyters, &c. Now, if theſe ſame directions warrant to call and ordain miniſters in all after-times, and if the ſame rules that are given in the epiſtles to Timothy and Titus, ought now to be obſerved; and the ſame qualifications to be inquired for in ordinary miniſters, &c. by virtue of theſe rules; then it will follow, that presbyters, in theſe places, are to be underſtood of ordinary miniſters: but the former is true, except we will deny that any directions are given at all for trying and ordaining miniſters in the ſcripture. Beſide, the apoſtle's ſcope in laying down theſe rules, is, to direct officers how to walk in the admiſſion of all others, unto the end of the world.

A fourth conſideration which we propoſe, is, that this denial of preaching presbyters, is contrary to reaſon, and is founded upon falſe ſuppoſitions: for it ſuppoſeth, 1. The number of Chriſtians to have been few. 2. That an office may be afterward inſtituted in the church, which was not inſtituted in the apoſtles days. Now, let it be conſidered in reaſon, 1. If the Chriſtians who were ſo numerous in many places, as in Jeruſalem, Epheſus, Corinth, Antioch, &c. can be ſuppoſed to have been fed ſufficiently by one biſhop? It being clear that there were many thouſands, as hath been abundantly made out by that rich piece, learned Mr. Rutherford's *Due right of presbytery*, and that acute piece *Jus divinum regiminis eccleſiaſtici;* where alſo the plurality of officers is abundantly evinced: wherefore there needeth no more of this: only we may obſerve, from Acts xiii. 1. that, in Antioch, beſide extraordinary officers, there was a plurality of ordinary teachers, which, by no means, can be underſtood of biſhops. 2. It may be conſidered what the caſe of theſe churches would have been, when one paſtor was abſent from them, as oftentimes it was by being ſent in meſſages to the apoſtles, and otherwiſe: can it be ſaid that theſe churches are without preaching officers and ordinances of the word and ſacraments all that time? yet that muſt be ſaid, except we ſay there were other preaching officers labouring amongſt them. 3. Is it agreeable to reaſon, to think that all churches were of one meaſure ſo as to be ſerved with one man? or, that where ſome few number of Chriſtians were converted, and did combine amongſt themſelves, they behoved either to be a Dioceſian church, which is impoſſible, or to be none at all, which is contrary to the way of the goſpel? 4. I aſk if the caſe of the Chriſtian church was more perfect with preſbyters than without them? If it be more perfect with them, then it muſt be ſaid the primitive apoſtolic church was not in the moſt perfect form, which will be againſt reaſon. If it be more perfect without them, then they were unreaſonably brought and kept into the church: both which are abſurd.

A fifth conſideration is, That the denying of preſbyters and miniſters in this ordinary notion to have been inſtituted in the apoſtles days, doth go near to ſtrike at the very root of Chriſtianity, and overturn the courſe of the goſpel: for, experience teacheth us, that the great work of converſion in the church hath been, and is carried on by ſuch preſbyters: and this aſſertion doth at once remove the ſame: for, 1. It denieth them to have been inſtituted in the apoſtles days as a mean for converting of ſouls; and what more can be ſaid to overturn them? 2. Seeing he denies this inſtitution to have been, when John wrote this Revelation, chap. 4. Annotation, what afterward can be afterward given for their inſtituting? Yea, it cannot be ſhown from hiſtory or writings of the antients, when or how they were firſt inſtituted; and therefore, in ſum, they come to be a human inſtitution; and ſo ſuch an excellent mean of edification is overturned.

A ſixth conſideration is, That this aſſertion ſeemeth to deſtroy itſelf, and to imply a contradiction: for, if there was but one preaching biſhop in every one of theſe churches to preach and adminiſter the ſacraments to the ſame, then either he was equal to the ſame, the congregations not being numerous, and ſo he diſcharged miniſterial duties without having juriſdiction over any other preaching preſbyter, (of which there were none according to this opinion) or over any other particular church; and, if ſo, he is the very perſon whom we call an ordinary

paſtor or apoſtolic biſhop, of one particular congregation: and, in this ſenſe, we grant there was no other paſtor or presbyter: and, being ſo underſtood, this Prelatic or Dioceſian biſhop having power over many particular congregations, muſt fall to the ground: or, it muſt be ſaid, that this biſhop had a charge beyond what is poſſible for one man to deal with, or, had Chriſtians and officers in divers places and churches ſubject to him, which will alſo be contrary to the aſſertions of the ſame author. Now, if it implicateth not, to ſay that he was a Dioceſian biſhop, and yet had rule but over one congregation; and to ſay that he had power and jurisdiction over other preaching officers, and ſo was not a preaching officer of the loweſt degree; and that yet there was no other inferior preaching officer: which neceſſarily implieth that that biſhop was of the loweſt degree. If, I ſay, theſe things implicate not, we cannot tell what doth: for, the one thing ſaith, he hath none under him; the other ſaith, he is none of the loweſt.

Neither will any have this to ſay, that there was an inferior order to be inſtituted after the apoſtles days, over which theſe biſhops were to govern: for, 1. It muſt be made out that there is an appointment in the word for inſtituting of ſuch an officer, which was not then in the church. 2. It will yet follow, that during the time of the apoſtles, this biſhop did diſcharge the office of a preſbyter, and ſo was the loweſt preaching officer in the church; and that therefore the contradiction would have been ſtill obvious in that time, and they had been liable unto this ſame argument. 3. If they had then any jurisdiction over preſbyters, it behoved to be a *non-ens*, while they had no being, and that for many years: which looketh not like Chriſt's way in giving talents to men. And, indeed, when all is conſidered, ſeeing theſe biſhops did nothing but what we allow ordinary miniſters to do, and had the ſame qualifications appointed for them, and the ſame place in the church, viz. to be next before to deacons, and have only charge of particular congregations, and ſuch like. It will be moſt ſafe to conclude them to have been *biſhops and presbyters* in the ſenſe that formerly we laid down. And ſo we leave any further conſideration of this author.

Concerning the Way of Covenanting with God, and of a Sinner's obtaining Juſtification before him.

THIS laſt epiſtle directed to the church of Laodicea, doth contain a ſhort ſum of the goſpel, and God's way of engaging ſinners to him. It will therefore be meet to take ſome more particular conſideration thereof: for, here, 1. We have man deſcribed in his ſinful condition, as *miſerable*, *naked*, *poor*; and withal, *blind* and *ignorant* of the ſame. 2. We have the remedy propoſed, viz. *Gold* and *white raiment*, &c. that is, Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, which is the great promiſe of the covenant of grace, as the mids leading to the enjoying of God. 3. There is the condition on which this is offered, that is believing, expreſſed under the terms of 'buying, opening to him, hearing 'his voice, &c.' 4. There are motives whereby the acceptance of this offer upon ſuch terms is preſſed, and that both from the neceſſity thereof, and hazard if it be ſlighted, and from the many advantages that do accompany the accepting thereof. 5. We have the duties that are called for upon this acceptance, viz. *zeal* and *repentance*, which are comprehenſive of all.

This doth hold forth God's way of covenanting with a ſinful perſon, whereby the guilt of his ſin, and the curſe following thereupon, are removed: which we may conceive in this order, 1. Man is ſuppoſed not only to be ſinful, but alſo obnoxious to the curſe of God, and in his appearance before God's juſtice, to have that ſentence ſtanding againſt him. 2. There being no remedy poſſible upon man's ſide, as a ſatisfaction to that juſtice, there is an external righteouſneſs provided, viz. the ſatisfaction of the Mediator, which being imputed to the ſinner, is in law to be accepted as ſatisfactory for him by virtue of the covenant of grace; and by virtue thereof, he is to be abſolved, and diſcharged as if he himſelf had ſatisfied: this is the meritorious cauſe of our juſtification. 3. This ſatisfaction of the Mediator is not imputed to all, nor to any, but upon the terms agreed upon, viz. that it be received, and reſted upon; therefore the goſpel is preached; and this righteouſneſs is not only revealed therein, but offered thereby to all, who ſhall, by faith, receive the ſame: in which reſpect, the goſpel, as it is contained in the word, and the preaching there

of, is commonly called the external inſtrumental cauſe of our juſtification. 4. When by the power of God's Spirit, the ſinner is brought to receive this offer, and to reſt upon this righteouſneſs, as the only ground of his peace, and his whole defence againſt the law, before the juſtice of God, then, according to the offer, he becometh intereſted in this righteouſneſs, and Chriſt becometh his righteouſneſs, who is, by this receiving of him, put on by the believer; and by this, he may plead abſolution from the challenges of the law before God's juſtice, as a debtor may plead abſolution from his debt upon his inſtructing the cautioner to have paid it. And in this reſpect, faith is called the condition of the covenant: becauſe it is upon this condition that juſtification is offered to us therein; and upon this condition, God becometh our God, and Chriſt our Righteouſneſs: and it is alſo called the inſtrumental cauſe of our juſtification, becauſe it acteth by receiving Chriſt, as he is holden forth in the word: and if that be juſtly called the external inſtrumental cauſe, which doth offer him for our righteouſneſs, then may faith well be called the internal inſtrumental cauſe; becauſe it doth receive him for that ſame end, and becauſe by this receiving, he becometh our righteouſneſs, upon which our juſtification is grounded. Hence, 5. Upon this receiving of Chriſt, and preſenting of his righteouſneſs for our defence before God's juſtice, that righteouſneſs and ſatisfaction is imputed to us, and accounted for ours; and upon this, our ſins are pardoned, and we abſolved before God: and this is that wherein formerly our juſtification conſiſteth: and this is the end why this counſel is propoſed, that by receiving of this offered righteouſneſs, this may be attained. This way of reſtoring ſinners by grace, is often ſet forth by way of mutual bargain, as in *covenanting*, *treating by ambaſſadors*, *marrying*, *buying*, and ſuch like; all which do import a mutual cloſing of a bargain upon mutual terms: and thus it is expreſſed, to ſhew, not wherein formally our juſtification doth conſiſt; but to ſhew the way and terms by which we may come at it, and upon which we cloſe with God: and, in this reſpect, faith is called the condition of the covenant of grace; becauſe it ſupplieth that place, and hath in it that which ordinarily a condition hath, that is propoſed in making of a mutual bargain: ſometimes alſo, it is ſet forth under legal expreſſions as to libel an accuſation againſt, to charge and arraign a ſinner before juſtice, and then to abſolve him from that charge in oppoſition to condemnation: and thus, ſin is called debt, and to puniſh for it, is to exact or require ſatisfaction: and Chriſt in that reſpect, is called the cautioner or ſurety; and his ſuffering, ſatisfying, the pardoning of the ſinner, is called juſtifying, or abſolving, in oppoſition to condemning; and the deriving of this from Chriſt, is called imputation, or to repute the ſinner righteous on Chriſt's ſatisfying for him; or, it is the reckoning of Chriſt's ſatisfaction on the account of the ſinner. All which expreſſions are borrowed from the way of legal and judicial procedure before men. The firſt way ſheweth, how we become friends with God, viz. by covenanting with him in Chriſt Jeſus. The ſecond way ſheweth, a prime benefit which doth flow from that friendſhip, viz. our juſtification. Theſe two are not to be conceived different things, or ſucceſſive in time, much leſs to be ſeparated; but as they be different ways of holding forth the ſame thing, whereof the one doth eſpecially relate to the means, the other to the end, and that ſo, as grace and juſtice may be ſeen to go alongſt in this great buſineſs, and that a ſinner may be helped to conceive of the ſame the more diſtinctly, when he hath it moulded in the terms and forms uſed among men, and that under divers conſiderations; that ſo he may the more ſatisfyingly comprehend this myſtery of free juſtification. Concerning which, in the general, we ſay;

1. That the immediate meritorious cauſe of our juſtification, is Chriſt's righteouſneſs, we take for granted: for it is the gold here that maketh rich, without which the diver could not pay his debt; it is the raiment which covereth our nakedneſs: and therefore the righteouſneſs of the ſaints, muſt be all put on, communicated, external and imputed righteouſneſs: ſo that, ſuppoſing a man to be purſued before the bar of God's juſtice, there is no defence can be propoſed but Chriſt's ſatisfaction, which only will be a relavent exception in that court; which in Paul's example is clear, Phil. iii. 9. As, if it were aſked, Paul, what wilt thou flee to in that day? *Only to be found in him*, ſaith he, *not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is by the works of the law, but that which is by faith in Chriſt.* Thus, Chriſt is our righteouſneſs, and we are righteous in him, as he was made ſin for us: for,

that oppoſition, 2 Cor. v. 21. doth evince this: but our ſins were imputed to him, and ſo were the immediate ground upon which he was found liable to juſtice: in that ſame manner, therefore, his righteouſneſs muſt be the immediate cauſe of our being abſolved, ſeeing his righteouſneſs muſt be transferred to us, as our ſins were to him, as is ſaid.

2. That this righteouſneſs of the Mediator is immediately imputed to us, hath alſo been accounted a truth amongſt the orthodox hitherto; that is, that as a cautioner's paying of the debt, being inſtructed in a court, is ſufficient for abſolving of the debtor from the creditor's purſuit; becauſe, in the law, the cautioner's paying in the debtor's name, is reckoned as if the debtor had paid it; and ſo it is imputed to him, and accepted for him: ſo it is here. And this way of imputing Chriſt's righteouſneſs immediately, doth ſerve exceedingly: 1. To humble the ſinner, when that whereby he is juſtified, is not in himſelf; this being certain, that we are more proud of what is ſuppoſed to be in us, than of what is imputed to us; even as a diver hath leſs to boaſt of, when the cautioner's payment is immediately imputed to him for his abſolution, than if by his induſtry he had procured ſomething to pay for himſelf, although the ſtock had been freely beſtowed on him by the cautioner. 2. It ſerveth to commend Chriſt, and to bound all boaſting and glorying in him, who is our *wiſdom*, *righteouſneſs*, *ſanctification*, *redemption*, &c. 1 Cor. i. 30. for this very end, *That he who glorieth, might glory in the Lord.* 3. This riddeth marches between the righteouſneſs of the two covenants, that the one is inherent, and conſiſteth in works; that is, as the apoſtle ſpeaketh, Titus iii. 5. the righteouſneſs, or ſomewhat which we ourſelves have done; the other, is without us, and cometh by imputation: and ſo is not only diſtinguiſhed from our own righteouſneſs; but oppoſed to it, Phil. iii. 9. And although this truth be miſrepreſented by many; yet we judge it to be impregnable; and that in the great day the deciſion will be found favourable thereto, when only happy ſhall they be that ſhall be thus found in Chriſt. Thus, therefore, we are to conceive the terms of the goſpel, as if a debauched diver were ready to be apprehended, having nothing to pay, ſuppoſe one ſhould offer to undertake for him, and pay the debt, ſo as he might be liberated, upon condition that he ſhould acknowledge his benefactor, and plead ever his defence againſt the purſuit upon the cautioner's payment, and the diſcharge procured by him: in this reſpect, the cautioner's payment is the meritorious cauſe whereby ſuch a man is abſolved, viz. becauſe that payment is reckoned for him, or imputed to him; yet his pleading that defence, or producing of that diſcharge, immediately, may be ſaid inſtrumently to procure it, becauſe it is not the cautioner's payments ſimply that is ſuſtained, as a relevant defence in judgment, till that be inſtructed, and except the defence be founded thereon; for ſo the law provideth: ſo it is not Chriſt's ſatisfying ſimply, but his ſatisfaction, pleaded by faith, and fled unto, that juſtifieth; for ſo the law of faith hath enacted; yet the producing of ſuch a diſcharge, meriteth nothing, but giveth a legal ground of right to the cauſe that doth merit, and ſo to what is merited. And the Lord hath appointed this to be the condition of juſtification, viz. the pleading of Chriſt's ſatisfaction before the bar immediately: for, 1. That ſtoppeth all mouths; and none can produce that ſatisfaction, but they muſt neceſſarily acknowledge emptineſs in themſelves, juſtice and grace in God, and love and fulneſs in the Mediator. 2. The pleading of this, ſheweth a complete, perfect, equal, evangelic righteouſneſs in all; whereas if it were any thing in us that were accounted ſo, then it would not be equal, if perfect, which cannot be ſaid of that which is our righteouſneſs; or, that one man hath better ground to be juſtified upon, and a better righteouſneſs than another.

3. That faith is neceſſary for juſtification, ſo that none can expect to be juſtified but believers, hath been alſo hitherto almoſt amongſt all uncontroverted, till that of late Antinomians have oppoſed it: but the ſcripture is very expreſs, 1. In limiting all the promiſes of pardon to a believer. 2. In curſing all that believe not, and declaring them to be under the curſe. 3. In placing faith correlatively taken, in the room that works had in the firſt covenant, which muſt be in reference to juſtification itſelf, and not the ſenſe thereof only. 4. In aſſerting that we believe that we may be juſtified, Gal. ii. 16. &c. So that there needeth not much ſpeaking to this, beſide, that many things ſpoken of repentance, may be applied here. And if it be found, that faith is either the condition of the covenant of grace, or the inſtrumental cauſe of juſtification, this will neceſſarily follow,

that there is no juſtification without it. I know there are ſome divines that uſe different expreſſions here; yet ſeeing they alſo oppoſe Antinomians, we will not now ſtick on that.

There is more difficulty in conceiving of the manner how faith concurreth: that there is ſome eminency in it, is acknowledged both by Papiſts, who account it a radical grace, having influence on all other graces, and ſo having ſpecial influence on that which they call juſtification; and alſo by ſome others, who, making works with it to be conditions of the new covenant, do yet acknowledge a ſpecial aptitude in it, for applying of Chriſt's righteouſneſs; and that therefore it is the principal condition, and other things, leſs principal, in this. Indeed, theſe of the laſt opinion ſeem to differ from us: 1. That they place faith, repentance, and works in one and the ſame kind of caſualty in reference to juſtification. 2. That this caſualty is but to account them all cauſes *ſine quibus non*. 3. That all inſtrumentality is denied to faith. 4. That faith is not alone the condition from any reſpect to its immediate acting on its object Chriſt, but as other graces are. 5. That Chriſt is not our immediate evangelic righteouſneſs, but faith properly taken, and that as comprehending all other duties and graces under it; and ſo it is both properly taken, and improperly. 6. That therefore we may be ſaid to be juſtified by works as by faith, faith being taken largely for all. Although, where the thing is clear, and Chriſt is reſted on in juſtification, and his ſatisfaction acknowledged, as is in this caſe, there needeth be no great debate for words and terms of *Condition*, *Imputation*, *Inſtrument*, &c. yet theſe being ſtill uſed among divines, we conceive, there is no juſt reaſon to caſt them, the uſe of them having now, of a long time, made them to paſs in this matter, without miſtake or ſtrict binding of them to the acceptations wherein they are uſed in other matters: much leſs is there reaſon to cry down the matter expreſſed by them: and it cannot but be ſad, that ſuch new controverſies ſhould be moved. We are perſuaded, that the reflecting on many worthy men, the obſcuring of the trodden path by new queſtions and objections, the confounding of readers by propoſing, as it were, of a different ſtrain of the covenant, from what formerly hath been preached, the giving of an open door to men to propoſe new draughts in all things, and that not in expreſſions only, but alſo, as is alledged, in fundamental material things, &c. ſhall be more prejudicial to edification, nor the bringing forth of this ſhall be uſeful: for, if by this all the former doctrine of juſtification be enervated, where are we till now? If it ſtand ſo as the followers thereof may attain heaven: what is the uſe of this ſo full a new mould, with ſo much profeſſed danger in, and diſſatisfaction with the former? Will it not be welcome to Papiſts, to have Proteſtants ſpeaking in their terms, and homologating them in condemning the former language of the moſt eminent reformers! And though *unlearned*, or *unread divines*, be the epithets of the oppoſers of this doctrine, yet poſſibly experience may ſhew, that ſuch may moſt readily be the embracers of it. I ſay, again, when the church is overwhelmed with controverſies already, it is not fit to contend for words, ſeeing there is ſome agreement in the nature of faith, and in the neceſſity of works; and, we are ſure, where both theſe are, there can be no hazard: yet, if under this new model, another matter be comprehended, than formerly hath been intended by other expreſſions in the writings of others, it cannot be ſo eaſily approven, leſt we ſhould condemn the generation of God's people, who have gone before us: laying by therefore prejudice and contention for words, we ſhall a little, ſo far as our ſcope permitteth, inquire into the truth of faith's peculiar concurring for the application of Chriſt's righteouſneſs in the covenant of grace, and what may be ſaid of works. In reference to which, we would permit.

1. That this way of covenanting is borrowed from the practice of man with man, to ſet forth ſomewhat of a ſpiritual nature betwixt God and man: for which end the ſimilitudes of *covenanting*, *marrying*, *treating*, *accuſing*, *juſtifying*, &c. are borrowed as hath been ſaid.

2. That though all mutual covenants have their conditions; yet are they to be diſtinguiſhed, becauſe ſometimes the covenant is ſuch, as entering into it intitleth to the benefits comprehended in it, as in a marriage-covenant, entry thereunto intitleth the wife unto the huſband, and all that is his: ſometimes again, the relation muſt not only be entered, but all the terms thereof actually performed, before there be a right to the

thing promiſed; thus is the covenant betwixt a maſter and a ſervant: for though the ſervant be the maſter's ſervant at the firſt inſtant of the agreement, yet hath he not a right to the covenanted hire, till he hath performed the ſervice, and accompliſhed his term: in the firſt of theſe covenants, that which entereth one in that relation, is the condition, not ſo in the ſecond.

3. Hence we may diſtinguiſh the condition of a covenant: ſometimes it is taken materially (to ſay ſo) and more largely, viz. for all the duties that are required of one in that relation, and ſo a wife's dutifulneſs to her husband after marriage, and an adopted ſon's dutifulneſs to his father after adoption, &c. may be called conditions of the marriage-covenant, and of adoption: ſometimes again, a condition is taken more ſtrictly, and, to ſay ſo, formally; that is, for ſuch a thing as maketh up the relation, and intitles one to, and inſtates him in, the priviledges covenanted: ſo formal conſenting in marriage, is the condition; and a ſon's actual accepting of the offered adoption, and engaging himſelf to be dutiful, do enſtate him in the priviledge of a ſon, although he hath not yet actually performed all that he is engaged unto: and in this reſpect, the actual performing of ſome duties, is rather the duty of one in ſuch a relation, than the condition required to the upmaking of it.

4. There is a difference betwixt theſe priviledges and benefits of a covenant that flow from it as ſuch, and to all in ſuch a relation: thus all wives, as ſuch, have intereſt in their husbands; all adopted children in their parents, whatever years they be of, &c. and theſe benefits and priviledges of a covenant, which are but conditionally promiſed, even to theſe within ſuch relations, and require more than being in covenant: as altho' a wife cannot but have intereſt in her husband, as ſhe is a wife; yet can ſhe not plead the dowry covenanted, except ſhe continue a faithful wife: for, if ſhe fail in the eſſentials of the covenant, ſhe may be divorced: or, an adopted ſon cannot plead actual poſſeſſion of the inheritance, though he be a ſon, till the term come that is appointed by the father, or he perform ſomething called for in the right of adoption, which is inſinuated alſo, Gal. iv. 1, 2, &c.

Now to apply this, we may ſome way ſee in what ſenſe works may be called the condition of the covenant of grace, and in what ſenſe faith only. 1. If we take the condition largely and materially for what is called for from one in covenant; ſo works may be called the condition of the covenant, even as a wife, or ſon, their performing of conjugal and filial duties to their husband or parent, may be called conditions of marriage and adoption: yet if we conſider the condition of the covenant of grace ſtrictly and formally, as that which doth actually intereſt one in, or entitle him unto Chriſt's righteouſneſs, and maketh him a ſon, that is faith properly taken, as it doth unite with Chriſt, John i. 12. becauſe it is impoſſible to conceive one to believe in Chriſt, but he muſt be conceived to have title to him, as a wife hath to her husband, or a ſon hath to his father. And ſo he cannot be conceived to be a believer, but he muſt be juſtified, becauſe to have intereſt in Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, cannot be ſeparated from juſtification.

2. We ſay, if we look to ſuch priviledges of the covenant of grace as preſuppoſe ſomething beſide being in covenant to antecede; as for example, entering into life, admiſſion unto glory, and the like; in that reſpect, works, and holineſs may be called the condition of ſalvation, becauſe that is not actually attained without theſe; even as a wife's dutifulneſs may be called the condition of her obtaining her dowry, yet neither is this properly a condition of marriage, nor the other of covenanting with God: but if we look to the priviledges which follow the covenant immediately and do agree to a covenanter as ſuch, as to be juſtified, adopted, &c. in that reſpect, not works, but faith is to be called the condition of the covenant, and of juſtification: becauſe by faith they are enſtated into that covenant, and ſo in theſe priviledges that agree to a covenant as ſuch.

Hence, 3. We may ſee, that when we ſpeak of the covenant of grace and its condition, it is not to be compared with every covenant amongſt men indifferently, as ſuppoſe, to that agreement that is betwixt a maſter and a ſervant, and a huſbandman and his labourer for his hire, which preſuppoſeth working, (and ſo the performing thereof muſt go before, ere the ſervant or labourer can plead any thing upon their agreement) but it is like a marriage covenant or free adoption, which doth indeed infer duties to follow in the reſpects foreſaid, and doth imply an engagement to perform them, but doth not preſuppoſe the actual perform-

ance thereof, before any right can be pleaded by ſuch relations, but only conſenting and engaging to the ſame. Hence in ſcripture, the covenant of works is compared to that covenant which is betwixt maſters and ſervants, and the huſband-man and his hired labourers, &c. and the reward is called *debt*, or hire, not becauſe of any merit or condignity in the works; (which cannot be pleaded, even in Adam's caſe) but becauſe the performance of the duties of holineſs, and obedience, was neceſſarily preſuppoſed to the having right to the great priviledges contained in that covenant: for though Adam was in covenant with God at firſt, yet could he not claim life by virtue thereof, till he had continued in the obedience of the commands, and actually performed the ſame, as ſervants muſt do before they can plead for their hire. Again, the covenant of grace is compared to free adoption or a man's entitling of a ſtranger to his inheritance upon condition of his receiving that, and to marriage betwixt man and wife (which is frequent in ſcripture;) not becauſe the covenant of grace requireth not holineſs and works, but becauſe it doth not require them actually to precede a perſon's title to all priviledges covenanted, and doth freely entitle him to the ſame, upon his entry therein, as a wife is entitled to what is the huſband's, upon her marriage with him, altho' afterward ſhe be to perform the duties of that relation, rather as duties called for by it, than as conditions of it. Hence we may call the covenant of works a ſervile covenant, and the covenant of grace a filial or conjugal covenant: and therefore, altho' holy duties be required in both, yet there is difference, and the one is of works, and the other of grace. Neither is it the difference that the works in the one were meritorious, and in the other not: for there is proper merit in neither, nor is the difference to be placed in this, that the one requireth works perfectly holy, as the condition thereof, and the other evangelic works not perfectly holy: becauſe ſo, there were not the ſame law for ordering of holy duties to us which they had, nor that ſame abſolute pattern of holineſs for our copy, viz. God's holineſs, calling us to be holy as he is holy; nor were defects, in reference to our perfect holineſs, ſinful under the covenant of grace, if perfection were not required therein: all which are falſe, beſides that ſo it were ſtill of works: but the difference lieth in this; that our working is not to be the ground of our right to the inheritance, nor actually to precede our right as in the covenant of works it was neceſſary, but believing and conſenting only.

This difference betwixt the covenant of works and of grace, may be conceived thus: ſuppoſe a debtor being ſued for his own debt, ſhould either plead no debt, or that he had paid it, or would pay it; this is the covenant of works: again, that of grace, is, as a debtor acknowledging debt, but being unable to pay, pleading only the cautioner's payment, and expecteth to be abſolved upon that account; and not as if by a cautioner's intervening, he had all the debt forgiven him to ſo much, or had a new bargain given him for a penny yearly, or a pepper-corn in the place of a thouſand talents; and, in a word, ſo much down, or that for gold, ore of gold ſhould be accepted: for ſo, 1. Some would have their penny more weighty than others, and thereby be more juſtified than others, or at leaſt have a better ground to be juſtified upon. 2. It would be ſtill the ſame kind of condition, and ſo the ſame covenant in kind (*majus et minus non variant ſpecimen:*) for, paying of one buſhel for an hundred chalders, ſtill ſaith it is victual-rent, altho' it be of grace, that it is ſo little: and indeed ſo, the firſt covenant might be called of grace, becauſe the good promiſed were ſo far beyond the rent required: and ſo it were but as a man that did at firſt require a talent, for that which were worth much more, and ſhould afterward alter and require only a ſhekel. 3. It cannot be ſo; for the ſinner's charge, is not that he wants his penny or pepper-corn, but that he hath broken the law; his righteouſneſs therefore muſt be ſuch as doth meet that charge, as Rom. viii. 34. and ſo it muſt be ſuch a righteouſneſs as muſt ſtand before juſtice, and be equivalent, at leaſt, to his own fulfilling the law, or his having ſatisfied the penalty thereof. 4. When the apoſtle oppoſeth the righteouſneſs of the law and goſpel, he oppoſeth not as it were a thouſand talents to a penny, or one ſort of works to another, but the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, or, to be found in him, to all kind of works whatſoever, Phil. iii. 9. 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. iii. &c. and to have the righteouſneſs of faith, and the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and the righteouſneſs by faith; are ever one and the ſame, and are ſtill oppoſed to works.

From this alſo it doth appear, that covenanting doth in order of nature precede juſtification: becauſe, by covenanting and being in covenant, we come to have a right thereto, as to a promiſe of

the covenant, as the accepting of an offered pardon, doth go before our having actual right to the following priviledges, or a woman's conſent before her actual claim to the huſband's goods, though the one is not ſuppoſed to be without the other; even as the breach of covenant doth precede our being liable to condemnation by the law. Hence alſo we may ſomeway gather, that there may be ſome formal different conſideration of the condition of juſtification, from the condition of the covenant: for, juſtification being a legal judicial act, it muſt preſuppoſe ſuch a condition as may be a ground in juſtice to abſolve a ſinner; and therefore in this, Chriſt's ſatisfaction, as preſented, and pleaded, muſt be the only ground; for, it is with reſpect to that only, by which a ſinner can be juſtified; and this is, *to be found in Chriſt*, Phil. iii. 9. Covenanting again, being a mutual deed, wherein the Lord condeſcendeth to make a free offer, and to admit in covenant on condition of receiving, the condition here muſt be that which entitleth to that thing offered, and entereth the perſon within the bond of the covenant, which muſt be faith. Hence theſe two acts of faith, whereby it is defined, may be thus conceived. 1. It *receiveth* Chriſt, and ſo it entereth into, and cloſeth with the covenant, and getteth inſtantly a title to what is contained therein. 2. It *reſteth* on him; which muſt be judicially underſtood, as one reſteth on a relavent defence, and therefore pleadeth it, as it is ſaid, Rom. ix. that the Jews reſted on the law, which was to expect juſtification by it, and ſo to reſt on the righteouſneſs thereof; in which ſenſe we now reſt by faith on Chriſt's righteouſneſs: this ſuppoſeth one to be in him, and in the covenant, and it looketh, as ſuch, to juſtification; and in reſpect of its manner of acting immediately on Chriſt our righteouſneſs, it may well be called the *inſtrumental cauſe* of our juſtification. Thus, ſuppoſe a ſinner to be lying under God's curſe, and ſuppoſe the Mediator to have ſatisfied, and a proclamation to be made, that whatſoever ſinner, liable to the curſe for ſin, will accept of Chriſt's righteouſneſs; and reſt thereon, he ſhall be juſtified. 1. A ſinner is induced to receive that offer, which is done by conſenting and ſubmitting to that way of obtaining righteouſneſs; this is the cloſing with the covenant, and thus faith is the condition thereof. Then, 2. Suppoſe him to look to the charge that ſtandeth againſt him for his former ſins in God's threatned curſe, and to ſatisfy this he giveth in Chriſt's ſatisfaction; which being offered to him for this end that he, upon the receiving thereof, may be juſtified; he, by faith reſting on God's faithful word, thro' Chriſt, repelleth all theſe charges, by preſenting that as his defence, and by the letter of the law of faith, which ſaith, *He that believeth ſhall not come into condemnation, but hath paſſed from death to life*, he is abſolved: and this is juſtification, even as he was formerly condemned by the law of works. Here the only meritorious cauſe of the abſolution, and the righteouſneſs upon which the ſentence paſſeth, is, the cautioner's payment; yet ſo as it is judicially pleaded: in which reſpect, we ſay that faith is inſtrumental. And tho' this pleading of it be neceſſary, and the law abſolveth not but when the ground is inſtructed; yet this pleading or inſtructing is not in the perſon's righteouſneſs properly, or the ground of his abſolution; but that which is pleaded and inſtructed, viz. the cautioner's payment which being according to law inſtructed, is the ground of abſolving the debtor from the charge; this is plain, even in the dealing of human courts. And the tenor of the way of juſtification, being holden forth in the word, with reſpect to a judicial procedure in human courts, as is ſaid, it can no other way be more ſatisfyingly cleared.

To inſiſt a little more then, there is a two-fold peculiarity attributed to faith, beſide what is given to works and any other grace. 1. That it is the condition of the covenant, properly. 2. That it hath an inſtrumental caſuality peculiar to it, in our juſtification. By the firſt, is meaned that believing in Chriſt, and the receiving of him, is that which enſtates one into the covenant, and giveth him right to what is promiſed, and doth in our having right to God's promiſes, ſupply that room, which conditions do in men's mutual bargains: wherein when one promiſeth ſomewhat on ſuch a condition, the performances of that condition doth turn the conditional promiſe into an abſolute right to him that hath performed it: and ſo a condition is that, upon which the title to the great promiſe, viz. God's being our God, doth depend. And *Faith*, getteth this name in reſpect of the place God hath put it into his covenant, and ſo it floweth from his extrinſic ordination. By the ſecond, viz. that it is called an inſtrumental cauſe, the intrinſic manner of its acting is reſpected: for, tho' it be from the Spirit with other graces, and they be not ſeparated; yet hath it a peculiar aptitude to look to Chriſt,

'receive him, apprehend and eat him, take hold of 'and reſt on him, &c. which no other grace hath. For, it is in the new creature and inner-man ſome way proportionably as it is in the outer-man: for, tho' there be many members of one body, yet all act not in the ſame manner; the hand acteth one way, and the ear another, &c. So it is in the inner-man, there are many graces (which are members thereof) yet have they their peculiar way of acting, whereof theſe mentioned are attributed to faith: for which often it is called the eye, the hand, and the door of the renewed ſoul; becauſe by it, Chriſt is apprehended and received thereunto.

We conceive this inſtrumentality is juſtly attributed to faith, becauſe ſeeing there muſt be an application of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and ſeeing faith doth concur, or is made uſe of as a mids for receiving of him, which is the way by which his righteouſneſs is applied, why may it not be called inſtrumental in our juſtification, as it is inſtrumental in receiving of, and reſting on his righteouſneſs, by which, and for which we are juſtified? And thus faith is not our receiving, but the mean by which we receive, as the eye is not our ſeeing, nor the hand our gripping of any thing; but the organs or means, whereby we ſee and grip. Neither doth this give any thing to faith, that derogateth from Chriſt: for, it leaveth the praiſe and virtue to him; but doth infer only an exerciſing of faith, for attaining of that benefit, viz. *Juſtification*, juſtification itſelf being an *apoteleſma*, to ſay ſo, or effect, both of Chriſt's purchaſe, God's grace, and our believing, and doth flow from them all reſpectively, and doth preſuppoſe the ſame. The diſpute about active and paſſive inſtruments, is needleſs here, ſeeing the meaning is clear, that for attaining of juſtification by Chriſt's righteouſneſs, faith doth peculiarly concur in the apprehending thereof, and reſting thereon, otherwiſe than other graces can be ſaid to do. And this cannot be denied, if we conſider.

1. That to be juſtified by Chriſt, and by faith, or by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and the righteouſneſs of faith, are ſtill one in ſcripture, even then when that concurrence which is allowed to faith is denied to all other things; which ſaith, that faith concurreth peculiarly, and that ſo as Chriſt is reſted on by it when it juſtifieth; or, that it juſtifieth by obtaining juſtification through him.

2. If this be truth, that the righteouſneſs of Chriſt is the thing immediately preſented before God's juſtice upon which we are abſolved, as is ſaid, and alſo if it cannot be denied that faith hath a peculiar aptitude to act on Chriſt's righteouſneſs, and preſent the ſame. Then it muſt be granted, firſt, that faith muſt have a peculiar way of concurring to the attaining of juſtification. And ſecondly, that this may well be called an inſtrumental cauſalty in reference to that end: otherwiſe there is no uſe nor exerciſe of this its particular aptitude, which is ſtill acknowledged. And if it pleaſe better to ſay, that faith juſtifieth, or concurreth in juſtification, in reſpect of its peculiar aptitude to act on Chriſt, and to receive him, than to ſay it concurreth inſtrumentally, we ſhall not contend, providing it be the ſame, upon the matter, with the ordinary doctrine concerning this inſtrumentality of faith: which we may illuſtrate and confirm by theſe conſiderations and ſimilitudes.

1. It is granted that the word is the external inſtrument of juſtification; and that muſt be, becauſe it doth offer the ſame upon condition of believing; or holdeth forth a righteouſneſs by which we may be juſtified; ſo faith muſt be the internal inſtrument, becauſe it receiveth the ſame that is offered by the word; and receiving, is no leſs neceſſary to juſtification, than offering: and ſeeing that receiving and offering relate ſo to each other, and both to the end, there is reaſon to attribute the ſame kind of cauſalty to the one, that is given to the other reſpectively.

2. We are ſaid to be juſtified by faith in Chriſt, as the people were healed by looking to the brazen ſerpent, which was to typify this, John iii. 14. Now they, by the virtue of the ſerpent, (conſidering it typically, and with reſpect to the appointment) did receive health, yet ſo as that health was attained by looking thereto; in which reſpect, their eye, or look, might be called inſtrumental in their health, although it was not looking ſimply, but to that object with reſpect to the Lord's appointment: even ſo it is here; 'tis Chriſt's virtue whereby we are juſtified, yet ſo as by faith it is apprehended, and according to God's appointment looked unto: and thus, as Matth. 7. the eye is called the light of the body, becauſe it is the organ by and through which light is brought or letten in to it; ſo faith may be called our righteouſneſs, as it is the mean by which Chriſt's righteouſneſs without us is apprehended, brought in as it were, and admitted of, to be ours.

3. Juſtification is ſtill held forth in judicial expreſſions, as is ſaid: now, as an accuſed party, their producing of a law for them, or a diſcharge, may be ſaid to be inſtrumental in their own abſolution, altho' it be only the virtue of the diſcharge given in, that doth procure the ſame; ſo may faith be ſaid inſtrumentally to juſtify us, as it preſenteth for us Chriſt's ſatisfaction before the juſtice of God, and ſo it is here as in human courts: for, altho' ſome advocates, it may be, plead better, and ſome worſe; yet ſuppoſe that they all produce the ſame diſcharges, and the ſame laws in favours of their clients, they might all be called inſtrumental in their abſolution; and the ground of their abſolvitours would be equal; whereas, if their act of pleading, without reſpect to what is pleaded, were conſidered, it would not be ſo; even ſo here, tho' ſome mens faith be more ſtrong, and others more weak, yet all apprehending the ſame ſatisfaction of Chriſt, there is equal ſharing in juſtification: which could not be, if faith did not concur inſtrumentally in the uſe-making of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, even as of the only immediate evangelic righteouſneſs, as it reſpecteth our juſtification: becauſe, if faith be conſidered in itſelf, and not as with the object, apprehended by it, it is not equal even in thoſe that are juſtified.

4. See it in miraculous faith: as it concurreth for attaining of a particular benefit; ſo doth ſaving faith for attaining of juſtification: for, that there is an equal influence of both upon their reſpective effects, cannot be denied. Now, that miraculous faith might be ſaid ſomeway to concur inſtrumentally for health, is clear: for, it is ſaid that ſome had faith to be healed, to receive virtue from Chriſt, &c. which others had not, and accordingly the effects are attributed both to their faith and to Chriſt's power; therefore, it may be ſo here, viz. juſtification may flow from faith as the inſtrumental cauſe, and from Chriſt's righteouſneſs as the meritorious.

5. In the ordinary ſimilitude of marriage or ſolemn covenanting, it may be ſeen: for, actual conſenting, or the hand that writeth the name, may be ſaid to be inſtrumental in the cloſing of the bargain, or in attaining the privileges that follow thereon, and the hand hath another influence than the foot or eye, altho' theſe alſo be neceſſary, yet it is not conſenting or ſubſcribing ſimply, but ſuch and ſuch in reference to ſuch objects and covenants: even as it is not the tongue its ſpeaking truths, and the reaching forth of diſcharges ſimply, that are inſtrumental in mens courts for attaining abſolution; but it is the ſpeaking of ſuch pertinent truths, or producing of ſuch ſuitable diſcharges that cometh under that name: and this is all we intend, when we ſay that faith concurreth inſtrumentally, even to hold out the immediate cauſe of our juſtification, to be Chriſt apprehended by faith: ſo that faith and Chriſt are both neceſſary, but differently, and ſo alſo that the efficacy of all the concurrence of faith may be from Chriſt the object, from which it is not to be ſeparated when it is ſaid to juſtify.

The other thing peculiarly attributed to faith, is, that it is the condition of the covenant of grace, properly: which can be ſaid of no other grace or work. This is to be underſtood as is above expreſſed, viz. that faith is that which on our ſide is called for, for conſtituting of us covenanters, and giving us right to the great comprehenſive promiſe thereof, that God may be our God: and upon the performing of which, that which God hath promiſed in it, may be expected, as is before ſaid.

That faith is thus the condition peculiarily, and not works, nor any other grace, (beſide what is ſaid afterward upon repentance) may thus appear, 1. Becauſe faith only hath that peculiar aptitude of receiving God's offer, and returning of our engagement; and ſo, for making the bargain mutually to be cloſed: and faith cannot be conceived to be exerciſed; but the bargain muſt be conceived, to be cloſed, and that perſon to be in covenant: therefore, the exerciſing thereof, muſt be peculiarly the condition. 2. If faith be that which peculiarly riddeth marches between the covenant of grace and the covenant of works and curſe, and a believer *ea ipſo* be freed from the curſe, becauſe he is a believer, and doth reſt on Chriſt, then faith muſt be peculiarly the condition of the covenant of grace; but the former cannot be denied, and is clear, John iii. 18. 36. 3. If works concur in the ſame caſualty with faith, then it muſt either be works before one be in covenant, or works thereafter; but it can be neither: not before one be in covenant, becauſe ſuch works cannot be accepted: nor ſecondly, after; becauſe then they could not be the condition upon which we are admitted: for ſo, we would be accepted before the condition be performed. If it be ſaid, that the ſame reaſoning will ſeclude faith, be-

cauſe if faith be the condition, then it muſt either be faith before we be in covenant, or after, &c. *Anſw.* It followeth not; becauſe it's faith neither before nor after our entry, but that which enters us, that is the condition: and it cannot be conceived before nor after, being an inſtantaneous act, as ſolemn conſenting in marriage, is not before nor after, as it conſtituteth marriage, but inſtantly. Here, ſtill obſerve, that when we ſpeak of a condition, we ſpeak of that condition whereby one is admitted within the covenant, and not of any thing that may be implied to be performed by one admitted already to covenant: becauſe that muſt be the condition of the covenant properly that entitleth one to the privileges covenanted: but what entereth one into this covenant, doth intitle him to the privileges covenanted: therefore it muſt properly be the condition; and faith being that, is therefore alone ſo to be eſteemed. Which we may further urge, thus, either being admitted to the covenant, one is freed from the curſe, and inſtated in all the privileges of the covenant or not: it cannot be ſaid not, becauſe that were to make one a covenanter and not a covenanter: and one cannot be conceived to be in covenant with God, but God is in covenant with him actually, as a wife's marrying of a huſband doth actually ſtate her in what is the huſband's, therefore *faith* being that whereby we are entered into covenant, as is granted, muſt be properly the only condition. Again, either by faith we are inſtated in the covenant of grace upon the very inſtant of believing, and ſo juſtified; or, one may be ſuppoſed to be a believer, and not to be in the covenant of grace; or, to be in the covenant of grace, and not to be juſtified; both which are abſurd: therefore faith muſt be the proper condition.

If it be ſaid here that juſtification is a continued act, then we urge, 1. If inſtantly on believing one be juſtified and freed from the curſe and inſtated into friendſhip with God, then it cannot be a continued act: but the former is true, as is ſaid; and to ſay otherwiſe, would overturn the nature of the covenant. 2. If juſtification be a continued act, then our being received and admitted into covenant as to a right unto the ſaving bleſſings promiſed therein, muſt be a continued act alſo: for, theſe two muſt ſtand and fall together, viz. to be admitted thus into covenant, and to be juſtified; for who are thus in covenant are juſtified, and who are juſtified are thus in covenant: but the laſt cannot be ſaid, viz. that the act of our being admitted, or whereby we are entered into covenant, is a continued act: becauſe, 1. So none living could be ſaid to be in covenant with God, nor account themſelves to be God's, or claim God to be theirs, which is abſurd. 2. So one that is a believer, might be ſaid to be under the curſe of the covenant of works; which is contrary unto that freedom pronounced unto believers: for if they be not under grace, they are ſtill under the covenant of works; and if under grace, then in the covenant of grace. To ſay here, that God continueth to juſtify, will not remove this: becauſe juſtification muſt continue only, as their admitting, or the act of their admiſſion into covenant, may continue; but it cannot be ſaid that they continue in being admitted into covenant; or, that by a continued act, the Lord is ſtill admitting them; or, that they are continuing to enter, as it inferreth non-admiſſion, or non-entry, or an imperfect admiſſion, but as it ſupponeth the perſon to be entered, and to continue ſo, it muſt therefore be ſo in juſtification. 3. If a believer, *eo ipſo* that he is a believer, hath a ſhield againſt all challenges, and a righteouſneſs that can abide the trial in juſtice, then cannot juſtification be a continual act, becauſe if juſtification be not inſtantaneous and immediately perfect, it muſt either be upon one's not believing in Chriſt, or becauſe of ſome defect of the righteouſneſs that faith preſenteth, and ſo faith were not a ſufficient ſhield; for it muſt be, becauſe the word doth not pronounce him juſt upon the ground of that righteouſneſs, which were alſo abſurd; but the former is true, a believer cannot be conceived to be ſuch, but he hath a compleat righteouſneſs in Chriſt, and by being in him, hath a ſufficient anſwer to juſtice, upon the firſt inſtant of believing, as the whole ſeries of the goſpel doth demonſtrate, *he that believeth ſhall not come into condemnation, &c.* Therefore muſt he be upon the firſt inſtant juſtified: for if it were but a perfecting, it could not be ſaid that he had an actual perfect righteouſneſs, but only that it were a perfecting.

Further, we may argue againſt works concurring with faith, thus; If works be a condition of the covenant, then it muſt either be works as begun, or as perſevered into: but neither can be ſaid: not the firſt, becauſe it is granted, that perſevering in holineſs is no leſs neceſſary than entering thereinto: not the ſecond, becauſe perſeverance is

a mercy contained in the covenant, and (if we may ſay ſo) promiſed to us upon condition of our believing and entering covenant: it cannot therefore be the condition of our entering the covenant. Again, many have not actual works, and yet may be ſaved: therefore works cannot be the condition. If it be ſaid, that ſuch have reſolutions of, and engagement unto works; that cannot ſolve this: becauſe this opinion doth diſtinguiſh works, and the neceſſity of them from faith properly and ſtrictly taken; yet to them that hold it, faith ſtrictly and properly taken, (even that which is juſtifying,) doth receive Chriſt as Lord, and ſo implieth this engagement: and therefore, if that definition of juſtifying faith were true, and this ground alſo granted, that engaging is ſufficient, then alſo were faith properly, that is, ſtrictly taken, the condition of the covenant, according as they underſtand it; and ſo there were no neceſſity to add or mention works as diſtinct from it, or to preſs faith to be the condition as more largely and improperly taken: and ſo in ſome reſpect there were no difference: for, this far none denieth but that actual engaging to Chriſt and to holineſs is neceſſary: becauſe, it is impoſſible to conceive one cloſing with the covenant, but he becometh *ipſo facto*, engaged who doth cloſe: or thus, that which is the condition to one, muſt be to all at age; (for of ſuch we ſpeak) but actual works cannot be the condition to all; becauſe ſome may be ſaved without them, as ſuppoſe (which is not impoſſible) actual conſenting to the covenant, and engaging to holineſs, were the laſt act of a perſon before death, neither can they ſay that engaging to holineſs were in this caſe ſufficient, and that is here intended: becauſe works are ſpoken of as the condition, as they are diſtinguiſhed from faith, as it is taken by them to be the accepting of Chriſt as Lord as well as Saviour, as hath been ſaid. See more of this on repentance.

But beſide all that is ſpoken, theſe two mainly ſtand in the way of our accounting works a condition of the covenant, or of juſtification, in the ſame kind of caſualty with faith, 1. Becauſe it obſcureth the difference of the two covenants, viz. the covenant of works, and the covenant of grace: for ſo works ſhould be ſtill the condition of the covenant of grace. Now, the apoſtle doth directly oppoſe theſe, the righteouſneſs of the law faith on this ways, *the man that doth theſe things*, &c. And the righteouſneſs of faith is holden forth as oppoſite to that, and ſo cannot be ſaid to conſiſt in doing of works, Rom. x. 5, 6. Gal. iii. 12. If it be ſaid, that he excludeth legal works, or law-righteouſneſs, which are not alledged by this opinion; but doth not exclude evangelic works, which may well ſtand with grace. *Anſw.* 1. The apoſtle's oppoſition is not made to exclude one kind of works, and take in another; but ſimply to exclude all which may come under the expreſſion *do this*. And hence faith itſelf, as it is our work, hath ever been excluded in this reſpect. 2. If we look to works, with reſpect unto the covenant of works, even ſo works have no proper merit, nor proportion unto the things promiſed of themſelves, but as it is determined and condeſcended to in the covenant, and by virtue of God's promiſe made thereunto: therefore it is called a covenant of works: not becauſe of the merit of the works, but in reſpect of the formality of the condition thereof, viz. *doing*, that is, the righteouſneſs which we ourſelves do, Tit. iii. 5. And in this reſpect, to work one day, and to work twenty years; or paying of a thouſand talents, and one penny doth not difference the nature of the condition of the covenant (ſuppoſing the condition of both to be expreſſed in theſe terms) although the degree thereof be different. 3. Faith is oppoſed to works as the condition of the covenant, or of juſtification, not as conſidered in itſelf, but as with reſpect to its object Chriſt; and ſo we are thus to conceive the oppoſition, works inherent in us, and performed by us, are called for in the covenant of works, as the righteouſneſs thereof, and as the only ground upon which we can expect to be juſtified by it. Again, by the covenant of grace, Chriſt's righteouſneſs without us, received by faith, is only admitted as a righteouſneſs and ground of juſtification: that faith is ſo to be underſtood, in Rom. x. 5, 6. and Gal. iii. 10, 11, 12. &c. is evident: for, the righteouſneſs ſpoken of, Rom. x. 3, 4. (which is the righteouſneſs of faith, and is oppoſed to our righteouſneſs) is Chriſt, *the end of the law for righteouſneſs to all that believe*, who was ſtumbled at by the Jews, &c. So it is alſo in that other place, Gal. iii. as the ſcope manifeſteth, viz. faith as making uſe of Chriſt, his becoming the curſe for us. And it is obſervable, that in both theſe chapters the difference of the conditions of the covenant of works and of grace, is inſiſted on, to plead the neceſſity of a righteouſneſs

without us in oppoſition to our own: and ſo faith muſt be the condition of the covenant of grace, as it acteth or reſteth on that.

The ſecond thing that mainly diſſuadeth from that opinion, is, that it doth propoſe ſomething in ourſelves as the immediate ground of our juſtification before God, under that title of being our *evangelic righteouſneſs:* for if works concur in that ſame caſualty with faith, then our believing properly muſt be accounted our righteouſneſs, and not Chriſt's by faith, taken hold on: becauſe theſe two are inconſiſtent, viz. faith and works, in a proper ſenſe, to be our evangelic righteouſneſs, and Chriſt's alſo. For, ſuppoſe one to be charged at God's bar for ſin, the one way Chriſt is repreſented, and the other way the man's believing and obedience. If it be ſaid, that when we mention believing or faith, it cannot but reſpect Chriſt. *Anſ.* 1. Then there is no difference; for we acknowledge faith correlatively taken to be our righteouſneſs. 2. Then alſo works cannot concur in that manner, for they cannot ſo reſpect him; which is all that is intended.

If it be ſaid, That Chriſt is our legal righteouſneſs, that is, that by him we have ſatisfied the covenant of works, he having paid in our name; but faith and obedience are our evangelic righteouſneſs; that is, as he hath procured a new grant of life, upon theſe eaſy terms in the covenant of grace, and ſo as by performing thereof, we may come to have right to what he hath purchaſed, in ſatisfying the firſt covenant.

Anſw. 1. This miſrepreſenteth God's way of covenanting, who hath not appointed our paying of a ſmall rent (as it were a penny) to be the ground of our right unto Chriſt's purchaſe; but ſeeing Chriſt became cautioner in our name, to pay the debt; he hath appointed the debtor's claiming of, and ſubmitting unto his payment, to be the terms upon which he ſhall be abſolved as was at the entry to this diſcourſe obſerved, and is clear from Philip. iii. 9. where the *righteouſneſs of faith* (which is our evangelic righteouſneſs, and oppoſed to works) and to *be found in Chriſt*, are one; and the one is explained by the other.

2. This way doth make a covenant to be a mids or way for attaining of another righteouſneſs for juſtification beſide Chriſt's; and ſo doth make two righteouſneſſes in juſtification, and one of them to be the mids for attaining the other, whereas the goſpel-righteouſneſs is but one in itſelf, by faith apprehended and made ours.

3. Although this may ſeem not to exalt works by giving them any merit; yet it is impoſſible to account them even to be our evangelic righteouſneſs, or a condition of the covenant of grace, but there will be ſtill a readineſs to heighten them above their own place, which derogateth to the way of grace that is laid down by faith in Chriſt: for it is eaſy to exceed in reference to any thing in ourſelves conſidered in itſelf; whereas when faith only is reſpected, as it apprehendeth Chriſt, it cannot be ſo conſidered; for it not only merits nothing, but it excludeth merit and all boaſting: And therefore the Lord hath thus wiſely ordered, that all may be kept from boaſting, even of faith.

4. We may anſwer, if by legal righteouſneſs be underſtood that which may be ſatisfying to the law, ſo Chriſt indeed is our legal righteouſneſs; yet ſo as by the goſpel only we have acceſs to him, and have a promiſe of being accepted thro' him, without the receiving of which by faith, he is not a legal righteouſneſs to any; and ſo he is our only evangelic righteouſneſs alſo: and thus our legal righteouſneſs and evangelic are the ſame, for there is but one charge to a ſinner, which only can be anſwered by fleeing to Chriſt; and ſo he is our legal righteouſneſs as the law's charge is ſatisfied by him; and he is our evangelic righteouſneſs, as that mean of anſwering the law, is to us propoſed in the goſpel, and for us (upon the condition foreſaid) accepted by the ſame, without which Chriſt had never been our legal righteouſneſs, and the dividing of theſe two righteouſneſſes, doth ſuppone, that there may be a legal righteouſneſs in Chriſt, to ſuch as may actually never partake thereof (and we are afraid that ſome ſuch thing may occaſion this diſtinction) whereas God's way in the goſpel is to provide a righteouſneſs for ſuch as were given to Chriſt, by which they may be actually juſtified, Iſa. liii. 11. And if Chriſt be not this goſpel-righteouſneſs, what can it be? for it is by him we are freed from the curſe of the law, which is the end wherefore this goſpel-righteouſneſs is preached. And it is by putting on him, that even the goſpel holdeth forth juſtification. But, if we conſider the law-righteouſneſs ſtrictly, as it requireth perſonal holineſs, or ſatisfaction from the very party; ſo Chriſt is not our legal righteouſneſs; and in that ſenſe it cannot be pleaded for: it muſt therefore follow that he is our goſpel-righteouſneſs, ſee-

ing no other way but by the goſpel we have acceſs to him, and therefore, that diſtinction will not hold here: for, Chriſt is either our legal righteouſneſs, that is, the righteouſneſs which the law holdeth forth, and accepteth of itſelf, or our evangelic righteouſneſs, that is, the righteouſneſs which the goſpel holdeth forth, and which by it is accepted; but he is not the firſt: *Ergo*, he muſt be the ſecond. And ſo faith, properly taken, cannot be our evangelic righteouſneſs, ſeeing Chriſt, and faith properly taken, without relation to him, cannot both be ſo accounted. Again, if faith properly taken, and that largely, be our goſpel-righteouſneſs, upon which we are juſtified, then it is either faith, including that reſpect to Chriſt, or not; but neither of theſe can be: for, if it reſpect and include Chriſt, then it is what we ſay, faith with its object, and not faith properly; and ſo not faith in that ſame caſualty with works, which is aſſerted: if it reſpect not, nor include Chriſt, then is there a righteouſneſs and ground of juſtification, wherein Chriſt is not comprehended, which will found no way like a goſpel-righteouſneſs.

If it be ſaid, *that he hath procured faith in that large ſenſe to be accepted. Anſw.* 1. That maketh a new covenant of works, as is ſaid. 2. That is not to make Chriſt to be our immediate righteouſneſs; but only to have procured that ſuch works ſhould be accepted, and the former covenant mitigated, but not in its nature changed; and ſo, 3. It homologateth popiſh doctrine, which we would hope is far from being intended by the maintainers of this opinion. 4. That overturneth the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs as our immediate righteouſneſs, which is enough to make it to be ſhunned: for, if we lippen to ſuch graces and duties as abſtracted from Chriſt, and without reſting on him, that is, not *to be found in him*, but in them (for theſe two are oppoſed, Philip. iii. 9.) and ſo they are a righteouſneſs that will never quit the conſcience, and which the goſpel will never own as an evangelic righteouſneſs, reſt on it who will.

If it be ſaid, *Cannot faith then, properly taken, be in any reſpect counted a condition, or ground of right?* For *Anſw.* In ſum we ſay, 1. That faith, at moſt, is but the condition on which Chriſt becometh our righteouſneſs, or is imputed to us for our juſtification; and ſo faith itſelf properly cannot be our righteouſneſs. 2. We ſay, that when faith is called the condition of the covenant, or our righteouſneſs, it doth not imply that it is properly imputed; but it ſheweth to whom, and upon what terms, Chriſt's righteouſneſs is imputed, or how a ſinner may have acceſs to be juſtified by it. 3. We ſay, that faith, when it is called the condition, is ever to be taken ſtrictly, that is, as it receiveth Chriſt, and by that manner of acting, is differenced from all other graces and works. And ſo, 4. We ſay, that it cannot be conceived under this conſideration, but as looking to Chriſt's righteouſneſs, as the object thereof, even as we cannot conceive a conſent, which conſtituteth a marriage, without reſpect unto the party conſented unto, and his offer, or declaration of his will preceding, without which no conſent could be conſtitutive of marriage, or be a ground of claim to any of the goods or privileges of ſuch a perſon; or, as we cannot conceive looking to the brazen ſerpent, as the condition upon, or mean by which health was gotten, but with reſpect to the object thereof, viz. the ſerpent; and the ground and warrand preceding, viz. God's appointment; without which, a look, conſidered ſimply in itſelf, is not ſo to be eſteemed.

If it be yet urged here, *That if faith properly taken, be the condition of the covenant of grace, and hath in that ſucceeded in the room that works had in the covenant of works*, then faith muſt be our evangelic righteouſneſs, becauſe works then were our legal righteouſneſs, and that upon which our right to life did ſtand; but the former is a truth; he that ſaid *do and live*, ſaith now, *believe and be ſaved*. Ergo, &c. *Anſw.* 1. This will ſay nothing for faith largely taken, as comprehending works; but at the moſt for faith ſtrictly taken, as contradiſtinguiſhed from them: and ſo there will not be that ſame kind of caſualty in both, but the contrary. 2. In this condition, faith is never to be taken, without implying the object Chriſt; or without reſpect to its proper aptitude, for receiving of him, and ſo *believe and thou ſhalt be ſaved*, implieth ſtill this, receive Chriſt and reſt on his righteouſneſs, or ſubmit to Chriſt's righteouſneſs, and accept of him for that end, that he may be righteouſneſs to thee, and thou ſhalt be ſaved: it is impoſſible to conceive it otherwiſe, at leaſt rightly. Now, when upon believing, juſtification doth follow, and the perſon is declared juſt, it cannot be ſaid that the act of believ-

ing properly is imputed, and that upon that account he is declared juſt; it is rather Chriſt's righteouſneſs believed on, that is imputed to him; and upon that account he is declared juſt, which is the very terms of the covenant of redemption, whereby the ſinner's ſins are imputed to Chriſt; whereupon he, as cautioner, is ſentenced, and made *ſin*, that his righteouſneſs may be imputed to us, and ſo we, upon that account, made righteous, and that *in him*, and not in ourſelves, as it is, 2 Cor. v. 21. which implieth, that even our evangelic righteouſneſs, whereby we are abſolved, is in him, and not in ourſelves, as the ſin, for which he was ſentenced, was in us, and not in him. 3. There is this difference betwixt the two covenants, as was ſaid; the one is a ſervile covenant, to ſay ſo, and muſt have what is engaged to in it, performed, before one have right to what is promiſed; and ſo works were in the covenant of works, the condition upon which life was to be expected; and without the actual performing of which, there could have been no pleading for it: but this, viz. the covenant of grace, is a conjugal covenant; therefore is not the condition thereof in all things to be ſquared by that. Beſides, works were the very material righteouſneſs upon which juſtification was founded in the covenant of works; but to ſay of faith, as taken in itſelf, and without reſpect to Chriſt, that it were ſo the condition now, would be abſurd, Chriſt being, by the whole ſtrain of the goſpel, holden forth to be reſted on before we can be juſtified: and yet even this would not confirm any way what is ſaid of the joint concurrence of grace and works in that ſame kind of caſualty with faith.

If it be further ſaid, *May not faith, properly taken, be called the condition upon which Chriſt's righteouſneſs becometh a ſinner's, and is imputed to him? Anſw.* 1. This confirmeth what we ſay: for, if faith be the condition upon which Chriſt becometh our righteouſneſs, then it is Chriſt who is our righteouſneſs, and not faith ſtrictly and properly taken, much leſs largely, as comprehending all other graces: for, if it were our righteouſneſs, properly, there needed no imputation of Chriſt's after our believing, except it be ſaid, as ſome Papiſts ſay, that it is imputed to make up our defects, and to make our holineſs acceptable; and ſo it were our faith and works that ſhould be juſtified by the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, and not our perſons: which is contrary to ſcripture. 2. This is, upon the matter, the ſame with what we ſaid, as is hinted: for, ſuppoſe a debtor to be purſued, he pleadeth abſolution, becauſe his cautioner hath paid, and he produceth the diſcharge given to him, wherein that is acknowledged; his pleading ſo, and producing of that diſcharge, may be ſome way called the ground that giveth him right in law to have that payment of the cautioner's imputed to him, yet his abſolution floweth from the complex buſineſs, not of his pleading ſimply, but of the cautioner's paying, his pleading of that payment, and the law's accepting of that defence, and imputing of it to him; and ſo from all theſe together his abſolution floweth. Juſt ſo it is here, our juſtification floweth from Chriſt's ſatisfaction, being accepted and reſted on by us, and imputed to us by God. And therefore, *Thirdly*, Though faith properly be the condition upon which Chriſt's righteouſneſs is imputed to us, I had rather call it the mean by which it is apprehended, yet it followeth not, that therefore faith, properly taken, is our righteouſneſs, and as ſuch, is imputed to us, and accounted ſo, ſeeing ſtill this preſuppoſeth the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs in order of nature to intervene betwixt our believing and our juſtification: and, therefore, that his righteouſneſs imputed, muſt be properly our righteouſneſs, ſeeing we, upon that account, and conſidered as ſuch, (viz. as having Chriſt's righteouſneſs imputed to us) are juſtified, and upon that righteouſneſs imputed, juſtification is immediately grounded. Yet, *Fourthly*, All this doth ſay nothing for faith largely taken, as comprehending all goſpel duties: for, though faith, ſtrictly taken, be neceſſary for having right to Chriſt's righteouſneſs, or having it imputed to us, yet are not actual works ſo, by any means; but, through the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, we are firſt accepted, and then bring forth theſe good works; which ſheweth, that they do not go before that imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, or our juſtification, but that rather they follow thereupon: for, if we cannot do good works, till we be ſanctified, and if none be ſanctified, but ſuch as are juſtified, and theſe two cannot be ſeparated; no, not for an inſtant of time; (for it cannot be ſaid that a man is ſanctified, but not yet juſtified, *aut contra*) then it will follow, that a man is juſtified before he hath actual works, it is of ſuch we debate, and not of habitual ſeminal holineſs) for he may be, and is ſanctified before he

can have them, much more ere he perſevere in them, and ſo conſequently, actual good works cannot concur to juſtification as faith do, or be the condition thereof; but the former is true and clear: therefore ſo is the latter alſo: which is the thing that was in queſtion. *Laſtly*, We ſay, if faith properly, and largely taken according to their meaning, or yet ſtrictly, be imputed to us for righteouſneſs, then either Chriſt's righteouſneſs is not imputed, but our faith only, or Chriſt's righteouſneſs and our faith properly taken alſo; but neither can be ſaid: not the firſt, viz. that the righteouſneſs of Chriſt is not imputed to us, but faith only; that I ſuppoſe is not intended: neither can the latter be ſaid, viz. that faith is imputed to us for righteouſneſs, and Chriſt alſo: for then, Chriſt is either imputed for our total righteouſneſs, and ſo faith cometh not in, or, as a partial righteouſneſs, and that is abſurd. Again, either his righteouſneſs is imputed to us before we believe, (and ſo before our faith can be imputed) which is falſe: for that would make Chriſt's righteouſneſs to be ours before we were in covenant internally; or, it is imputed to us after we believe, and ſo after our own faith is imputed to us and accepted for righteouſneſs; but that cannot be; for then we would be righteous, before the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs; which is abſurd; or, *Laſtly*, Both muſt be imputed together; which alſo cannot be; for if both be imputed together, properly, then both in the ſame ſenſe or kind of caſualty, or in divers ſenſes: the firſt cannot be ſaid; for that would make both meritorious, which is diſclaimed: if the laſt be ſaid, then it muſt be ſo as the one is imputed to us for our legal righteouſneſs, viz. Chriſt's ſatisfaction, and the other as our evangelic, viz. faith; but, 1. That is the thing already ſpoken to, and doth divide Chriſt and our goſpel-righteouſneſs; or, 2. It turneth to this, that Chriſt is the thing that ſatisfieth juſtice, but faith is the ground or mean by which we come to have title to that ſatisfaction; which is the thing that is granted, and we ſuppoſe is the thing that by ſome is intended: and is, in ſum, that to which others give the name of the inſtrumental cauſe. And, if ſo, there needeth not be contending for words: for both are acknowledged, viz. that by Chriſt's righteouſneſs, only as the meritorious cauſe, we are juſtified, and that there is no right to plead juſtification by that, except by faith, or upon condition of believing, by which actual right to Chriſt, and by him juſtification is certainly obtained.

Further, It cannot be ſaid, that they are imputed jointly: for then, 1. Either that imputation muſt be an inſtantaneous act, at the firſt believing, or exerciſe of faith; and ſo juſtification muſt be an inſtantaneous act alſo; which they will not grant: becauſe the faith that is imputed, according to them, is faith and the exerciſe of holineſs perſevered in; for which cauſe, juſtification to them is a continued act. 2. It muſt be inſtantaneous, but not imputed, till faith and holineſs be perſevered into; and by this neither Chriſt's righteouſneſs, nor faith is imputed to the perſon, nor can he be accounted in friendſhip with God, or to be in Chriſt, or righteous, till his life be cloſed: for, he cannot be accounted ſo, till he be juſtified; and he is not juſtified, till theſe be imputed to him for righteouſneſs. Or, 3. That imputation muſt be a continued act, from the firſt cloſing with Chriſt till the end. But how can that be? For, 1. It is hard to conceive the act of the imputation of our faith to be continued, but more hard to conceive the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs to be a continued act: for Chriſt's righteouſneſs, at the firſt is perfect, and it is to be imputed to the believers; if therefore one may be called a believer, it is to be imputed to him inſtantly. 2. Imputation being a judicial word and act, it ſuppoſeth an inſtant ſentencing of ſuch a righteouſneſs to belong to ſuch a perſon, as it were, and to be accepted for him: for, if he hath not a perfect right, there is no legal imputation to ſay ſo; but if it be perfect, then it is an inſtantaneous act. 3. If it be continued, then it is continued as if at firſt it were not a perfect imputation or perfectly imputed; but that were to ſay that it is not imputation: if it be continued as perfect, then it is ſuppoſed to be inſtantaneous, and paſt; and what was ſaid for juſtification, doth hold here. Indeed if the meaning be, that the goſpel doth continue to impute righteouſneſs, even after faith, till the believer be in heaven, and to account ſuch a ſinner juſt by virtue thereof; that is truth: but that ſpeaketh the changed ſtate of a ſinner, upon the account of an imputation and juſtification already: ſo, indeed, the word of the goſpel continueth ſtill to pronounce believers juſtified upon that account, and that imputation in its virtue never ceaſeth; but it cannot be ſaid, that

the word doth continue to juſtify, as juſtifying denoteth the changing of a perſon's ſtate, from a ſtate of enmity to a ſtate of friendſhip: even as an abſolved rebel, or debtor, once pronounced free by virtue of ſuch a perſon's interceſſion, or cautioner's payment, doth continue to be declared free; that is, his abſolution continueth in force; but properly, the act of freedom, or abſolving, doth not continue, but is inſtantaneous upon the production of ſuch rights.

To ſhut up this, we may illuſtrate the way of juſtification, which is more clearly expreſſed in the goſpel under theſe expreſſions, *Believe, and thou ſhalt be ſaved*, by comparing it with the more obſcure and typical expreſſions uſed under the law: for, it is certain, the ſubſtance is the ſame; and what is our legal righteouſneſs, was theirs; and what was their evangelic righteouſneſs, is ours alſo. Now, the terms or expreſſions of the Old Teſtament run thus, Lev. i. 3, 4. &c. *When a man ſinneth, he ſhall bring his offering*, &c. *and ſhall put his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering, and it ſhall be accepted for him, to make an atonement for him*, &c. In which words, there is an expreſs condeſcending upon the Lord's ſide, to propoſe ſomething as a righteouſneſs for a ſinner, which was to be accepted for him; yet, I ſuppoſe, no Chriſtian will ſay, that it was the external ſacrifice itſelf, that was to be accepted for ſuch, nor that it was the act of the faith of the offerer alone, that was ſo accepted: for then there needed no ſacrifice, but it behoved to be the thing typified by that ſacrifice, viz. the ſacrifice of Chriſt, looked to, apprehended and pleaded by the faith of the offerer, that was ſo accepted. Yet, the external ſacrifices in the Old, are as expreſly ſaid to be accepted for a ſinner's juſtification, or as an atonement for him, as faith is ſaid to be accounted for righteouſneſs in the New: and, as it cannot be ſaid, that by virtue of Chriſt's ſatisfaction, or the covenant with him, it was procured that ſuch performances and ſacrifices ſhould be accepted of themſelves, as the perſon's immediate evangelic righteouſneſs, though their ceremonial law was their goſpel; ſo it cannot be ſaid, that there is any ſuch bargain concerning faith in the New Teſtament: but that Chriſt apprehended by faith, is the righteouſneſs both under the Old and New Teſtament: which is the thing we intend.

Concerning Repentance.

REPENTANCE is much called for in theſe epiſtles, and that with peremptory certification of coming wrath, if the ſame prevent it not, as we may ſee, chap. ii. ver. 5. in the epiſtle to theſe of Epheſus, who look like a people real in the work of God, though under ſome decay: it is alſo called for from Pergamos, ver. 16. Yea, Jezebel hath a door of mercy opened to her, upon ſuppoſition of repentance, ver. 21, 22. This alſo is required of Sardis, chap. iii. ver. 3. and of Laodicea, ver. 21. For clearing of which places, and other truths concerning repentance, it may be inquired, once for all: 1. If repentance be ſimply neceſſary for preventing of wrath, and obtaining of the pardon of ſin? 2. In what reſpect it is neceſſary, and how it doth concur thereto? 3. If to a believer's recovery after his ſins the exerciſe of repentance be neceſſary? 4. If ſo, what kind of repentance.

For underſtanding of all, we would premit, that repentance may fall under a threefold conſideration: 1. It may be conſidered as ſomewhat previous in time to the exerciſe of faith and pardon of ſin. This is properly legal ſorrow, and is a common work of the Spirit, which may be in one, whoſe ſins will never be pardoned: it is therefore not of itſelf gracious, although the Lord may ſometimes make uſe thereof, for a ſinner's humbling and awakening before his converſion. This is not the repentance that is preſſed here.

2. It may be conſidered, as it doth not only follow pardon, but alſo the intimation thereof; ſo it is a melting of heart, and a ſelf-lothing that floweth from felt love, as the promiſe of the covenant is, Ezek. xvi. 63. and xxxvi. 31. This is the melting of heart, ſpoken of in that woman, Luke vii. *who loved much, becauſe much was forgiven her*, ver. 47. Neither is this that which is principally intended here.

We may conſider repentance as a work of ſanctifying grace, ariſing from the ſenſe of bypaſt ſin, and hope of future mercy, whereby the heart is both affected with indignation in reſpect of what is paſt, and warmed with deſire and love in reſpect of what it expecteth, and ſo differeth from the firſt, which ariſeth from apprehended future

wrath; and from the ſecond, which floweth from felt-received mercy. This repentance goeth alongſt with faith and the exerciſe thereof, for the attaining of the hoped-for remiſſion, which a thorough impreſſion of the freeneſs thereof, in reſpect of the perſon's felt ſinfulneſs. That is, the *ſorrow after a godly manner*, which is ſpoken of, 2 Cor. vii. 11. and it is that which is principally intended here, and in other places, where repentance is required in order to remiſſion of ſin.

In anſwer then to the firſt queſtion, we ſay, that repentance, underſtood in the laſt ſenſe, is ſimply neceſſary for the obtaining of the pardon of ſin, ſo that without it no unreconciled ſinner can expect peace with God; which we thus make out, 1. from ſeveral places of ſcripture, and firſt, by theſe places, where the command of repentance is prefixed to the obtaining of pardon, and preventing of wrath; and that by way of certification, that if it be not, remiſſion is not to be expected, as Acts iii. 19. *Repent that your ſins may be blotted out:* which doth imply, that without this, the blotting out of ſin is not to be expected: otherwiſe the propoſing of the blotting out of ſin could be no great motive to preſs the exerciſe thereof; which is the apoſtles ſcope; as alſo, Acts ii. 38. Acts viii. 22. And ſo in all other places, where repentance is preſſed as a mids for attaining of that end.

2. We may add theſe places where the connection between repentance and pardon is more peremptorily enforced, as Luke xiii. 2, 3. *Except ye repent ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh:* than which nothing can be more clear; and Prov. xxviii. 13. *He that covereth ſin, ſhall not proſper: but he that confeſſeth and forſaketh* (which is, upon the matter all one with repentance) *ſhall find mercy.*

3. It is confirmed from ſuch places as ground the cauſe of peoples ruin upon their not repenting, as in Leviticus xxvi. Amos. iv. Ezek. xviii. Revel. xvi. &c. and many ſuch places, is clear, where this, *they repented not*, is given as the cauſe of God's continued quarrel againſt them.

All theſe conſiderations we will find in theſe epiſtles, where the Lord doth not only require the exerciſe of repentance by command; but doth threaten judgment, except repentance prevent, ch. ii. ver. 5, 16, 22. and it is particularly marked to be the ground of his continued controverſy with Jezebel, ver. 21. that ſhe *did not repent*, and ſo chap. iii. 21.

In the ſecond place, this may be made out, if we conſider the promiſes of God's covenant, in which remiſſion of ſins is ſubjoined to the exerciſe of repentance, as neceſſarily antecedent; ſo that without it, there is no acceſs to any promiſe of pardon. See, firſt, Levit. xxvi. 40, 41, 42. *If they ſhall confeſs their iniquity, then will I remember my covenant:* which doth preſuppoſe confeſſion, and the exerciſe of repentance, and the humbling of the heart, to go before the application of the covenant. And leſt it ſhould be thought a legal covenant, it is expreſly ſaid to be the covenant with Iſaac and Abraham, which cannot be denied to be of grace. The like alſo may be gathered from 1 Kings viii. 47. where Solomon expreſly covenanteth for pardon on theſe terms: and 2 Chron. vii. 13. The Lord doth expreſly aſſent to theſe articles. Yet this is a covenant of grace, being a covenant for obtaining of pardon through faith in Chriſt Jeſus, whereof praying toward the temple and mercy-ſeat, was a type: and it is expreſly ſaid to be, upon the matter, God's covenant with David: which cannot be denied to be the ſame covenant of grace with that comprehended in the goſpel, ſeeing the mercies ſworn to the fathers Abraham and David, are the ſame mercies that are now conferred upon believers. And although there were ſome peculiar promiſes made to Abraham and David in reſpect of their own ſeed, and ſome other things; yet theſe peculiar promiſes were not the grounds of their own juſtification, much leſs are they to be pleaded by any other for that end. Now the covenant's end, as it holdeth forth remiſſion, and its eſſential promiſes muſt be common to all. It may be confirmed alſo from 1 John i. 9. *If we confeſs our ſins, God is faithful to pardon, &c.* Which ſuppoſeth that there is no engagement, to ſpeak ſo, upon God's faithfulneſs to pardon any ſinner but him who repenteth.

In the third and laſt place, the neceſſity of repentance may be confirmed, if we conſider the qualifications of ſuch perſons as God pronounceth pardon unto in his word; it is not to ſinners as ſinners ſimply, but to loſt ſinners, (that is, loſt in their own eyes) ſuch as are weary and loadened, ſuch as are broken in heart, grieved, wounded, &c. as appeareth from Iſa. lxi. 1, 2. and elſewhere. All which qualifications ſhew the neceſſity of repentance in a perſon that may expect pardon. It is

true, both repentance and remiſſion are Chriſt's gift, but in this method, he giveth firſt repentance, and then remiſſion, Acts v. 31. And though he came to call ſinners; yet doth he call them to repentance, as that which maketh way for their getting good of him.

From what is ſaid, we may gather theſe two concluſions in oppoſition to the doctrine of the Antinomians. The firſt is, that repentance is not legal duty unbecoming for a miniſter of the goſpel to preach, or a profeſſor thereof to exerciſe with reſpect to the obtaining of pardon; and that it is not only to be looked after, and to be preſſed, upon the account of the faith of ſins being already pardoned. Secondly, it followeth from this, that remiſſion of ſin is no immanent or eternal act of God; but is a tranſient act, and that after the committing of the ſin: for, if remiſſion preſuppoſe repentance, it muſt alſo preſuppoſe the ſin to be committed, becauſe repentance doth preſuppoſe that: and therefore it cannot be from eternity. This opinion of ſin's being remitted from eternity, doth ſtand and fall with the former, viz. of the needleſneſs of repentance for the obtaining of pardon; and therefore the overturning of the one, is the overturning of both. It is true, God's purpoſe and decree of pardoning ſin, is eternal, as all his decrees are; but this actual pardoning of a ſinner is no more from eternity, than his creating or glorifying men, yea, in the ſame decree, he hath propoſed the giving both of repentance and pardon, in the method laid down.

If it be ſaid, that thus it will infer, 1. That there is no difference betwixt the elect in reſpect of their eſtate before repentance, and reprobates. And, 2. That it will infer ſome change to be in God, if he ſhould behold ſin in a perſon immediately before his repentance, and not thereafter: both which, ſay they, are abſurd. For anſwer to the firſt, we ſay, that if we conſider an elect perſon before converſion, with reſpect to himſelf, and to the law and covenant of works, without reſpect to God's purpoſe, there is indeed no difference betwixt him and a reprobate, becauſe they are both as impenitent unbelievers without the covenant; without hope, and dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, as is ſpoken even of the elect, Epheſ. ii. 1, 2. 12. and both of them are under the curſe, ſeeing the law doth indifferently curſe all that have ſinned, and are not by faith in Chriſt. This is no abſurdity; but contributeth exceedingly to the humbling of the elect, and to the advancement of grace. Again, if we conſider the Lord's purpoſe, there is a great difference, although, as it is his purpoſe, it doth make no real change, except in the manner, time, and method in which he hath purpoſed it to be.

To the ſecond we anſwer, that this doth not infer any change in God's will, as if he now willed that which he would not before, more than to ſay, his will changeth when he glorifieth a perſon which he did not actually glorify before, although he purpoſed indeed to do the ſame. It only proveth, that there is a change wrought upon the creature, who is glorified, by that ſame unchangeable will of God, which did, before the world, decree that in due time to be done; ſo it is here, in time he pardoneth, and maketh a change upon the creature's ſtate, by that ſame will, and in the ſame manner as it was decreed. And this is no abſurdity: becauſe according to the rule, although God cannot change his will; yet he may will a change upon the creature; *et ſi deus non poteſt mutare voluntatem, poteſt tame velle mutationem.*

There is more difficulty in anſwering the ſecond queſtion, viz. in what reſpects repentance is neceſſary, for obtaining the pardon of ſin, and how it doth contribute to the obtaining thereof? As Antinomians give too little to it, on the one hand; ſo on the other, Papiſts, Socinians, and Arminians, give too much. To guard therefore againſt thoſe extremities, we ſay, againſt Papiſts, 1. That repentance is not neceſſary as having any efficiency in it for the expelling of ſin, by the inbringing of a contrary gracious quality; as light doth expel darkneſs: for, remiſſion of ſins, being to them the infuſing of habitual grace, and repentance being a part of that inherent holineſs, in this reſpect they account repentance neceſſary as a part of our formal righteouſneſs, by which ſin is expelled, and the perſon conſtituted formally and inherently juſt: this indeed is an abſurd overturning of the nature of true remiſſion of ſins, (which conſiſteth in God's not imputing the ſame to us, or in his blotting them out) and altereth the whole ſtrain of the goſpel.

We ſay, that repentance doth not concur for the obtaining of the pardon of ſin, as any material cauſe diſpoſing the ſoul for the receiving of a gracious quality, for the expelling of ſin; or, as

being, a pre-requiſite matter to God's working thereof in the ſoul. This we reject as abſurd, upon the grounds foreſaid: for, though we acknowledge the ſoul of man, yea, the whole man to be the object whom God doth pardon; yet pardon, being a judicial act of his grace, it can admit of no material cauſe.

3. Neither doth repentance concur for the obtaining of pardon by way of merit, as if there were any congruity or condignity therein for obtaining thereof. This marreth the freedom of forgiveneſs, and encroacheth upon Chriſt Jeſus his offices, who is the alone immediate and meritorious cauſe of our being accepted, and obtaining pardon.

4. Repentance doth not concur by way of ſatisfaction, as if the grief that doth accompany it upon our ſenſitive part within, were ſome ſatisfaction or recompence for the offence committed againſt God, and ſo had influence, as it were, to procure the eaſier terms from him: in which reſpect they do place whippings, faſtings, and ſuch like, as ſatisfactions without, concurring for the remiſſion of ſin, at leaſt in its temporal puniſhment, as this doth within. This alſo we abhor, as derogatory to the alone ſatisfaction of our Lord Jeſus, who, by his once offering up of himſelf, hath perfected for ever them that believe, Heb. x. 14.

5. Neither do we eſtabliſh a ſacrament of penance, thereby inſtrumentally to communicate remiſſion of ſins (that is, habitual grace, as they underſtand it) by the power of the keys, in the prieſt's abſolution, and that *ex opere operato*: this we diſclaim, as being without any warrant in the word, and certainly cannot be imagined to be the thing called for in the forecited ſcriptures.

Theſe ways are indeed pleaded for by the Papiſts, who thereby do overturn the whole nature of repentance, remiſſion of ſins, and the covenant of grace; and do enervate the conſolation of poor penitents, (as may be further ſpoken to from chap. ix.) but are diſclaimed by us in doctrine, and ought to be adverted to in practice, leſt the doctrine of the neceſſity of repentance be abuſed beyond that which is warrantable. We have for that cauſe diſclaimed theſe aſſertions explicitly; as alſo, that thereby many, and almoſt all the Antinomian arguments and calumnies may be anſwered and removed, who have nothing rifer in their mouths and writings than this, that the preſſing of the abſolute neceſſity of repentance is a point of Popery, a marring of the freedom of grace, a crying up of inherent holineſs, and ſuch like: which are moſt unjuſt, as ſaid is.

The Socinians and Arminians do alſo acknowledge the neceſſity of repentance; and although they give it no proper cauſal influence upon the remiſſion of ſins; yet do they miſcarry in reference thereto, in theſe reſpects, which we alſo diſclaim.

1. Albeit, Repentance be neceſſary; yet it is not neceſſary as any pre-requiſite qualification to be performed by us in the ſtrength of our own free will. This were, indeed, to make nature a ſharer in our converſion, and to give it occaſion of boaſting, contrary to the ſcope of the goſpel, which doth exclude that. It is indeed we who repent formally, and our will and ſoul is the ſubject wherein it is wrought; and to ſay, Chriſt is formally the penitent, we abhor; yet it is by the ſtrength of grace working in us to will and to do, Phil. ii. 13. that we do repent, and that our wills are enabled to illicit acts of true repentance: ſo that if we will conſider theſe acts of repentance, as they are acts ſimply, and are *in categoria actionis*, they are our acts, and performed by our wills, as the next formal cauſe producing them. But if we conſider them as ſuch; that is, as gracious, and acts of ſaving repentance *in categoria qualitatis*, they are not from us; but do proceed from the grace of God alone, ſweetly and powerfully determining the will in the bringing forth of them.

2. We ſay, Repentance hath no moving efficacy in it, ſo as to be an external impulſive cauſe, or, *ratio movens*, why God ſhould forgive ſins, as repentance, and reſenting of wrongs committed, have influence to move provoked men to forgive, and pity thoſe that have offended them. This ſeemeth plauſible-like to men, who caſt the way of grace in a mould of human and natural reaſon; and inadvertingly in practice may be fallen into by many, who, though they diſclaim a meritoriouſneſs in their repentance, yet are ready to conclude ſome prevailing perſuaſive efficacy to be in it: which appeareth by this, that when they are ſatisfied with their own repentance, they more confidently expect pardon; and when their ſenſibleneſs in repentance drieth up, they are ready to queſtion it, as if there were ſome weight in their repentance of itſelf to prevail with God,

and perſuade him, as it were, to pity. This, I ſay, is not to be admitted: becauſe God's will, being abſolutely pure, ſimple and ſovereign, is not capable of any *motus* from any cauſe without itſelf; and forgiveneſs being an act ſimply of grace, and ordered alone in all its manner of proceeding by his ſovereignty, there can no reaſon moving him thereto be imagined, although he want not reaſon in his acting, as they ſay, *Datur ratio voluntatis divinae, ſed non ejuſdem movens.* This alſo would propoſe the moſt high and holy One, as ſome way having paſſions to be wrought upon, like unto us; and would obſcure exceedingly the freedom and ſovereignty of grace, which hath always its riſe in his own boſom: therefore it is aſſerted by divines in this caſe, that properly it is not our repentance that maketh our ſins either actually to be remitted, or yet to be remiſſible, but God's grace alone: for if grace had not ordered the connection between repentance and remiſſion, upon grounds laid down by itſelf, no ſinners could have expected pardon, nor would their ſins have been remiſſible even upon ſuppoſition of their repentance, more than if there had not been repentance, if ſuch a ſuppoſition may be made.

3. We ſay, that repentance doth not concur for the obtaining of remiſſion of ſins, as it is a piece of our own new obedience, and of the condition of the covenant of grace, and ſo now to be imputed to us, with faith and the other graces for righteouſneſs, inſtead of the perfect holineſs which was the condition of the covenant of works; as, if now God, in the pardoning of penitent ſinners, their ſins ſhould reſpect Chriſt's imputed righteouſneſs as the immediate cauſe making them acceptable to him, but the very acts themſelves of faith, repentance, &c. and ſo the firſt covenant of works will be man's performing of all holy duties according to the commands perfectly; which covenant being now broken, and man made unable by ſin to perform the condition thereof, this opinion ſuppoſeth Chriſt's ſatisfaction to have procured (which yet Socinians deny, as any procuring cauſe of) a new covenant upon theſe terms, that ſinners, who are ſhort of perfect holineſs, and yet do believe, and repent of their ſins ſhould be accepted; and theſe acts of believing, repentance, &c. ſhould be accounted to them by virtue of that covenant, as if their obedience had been perfect. This way is not ſufferable, becauſe it ſhutteth out Chriſt's imputed righteouſneſs from being the next immediate and meritorious cauſe of our juſtification; and continueth the covenant to be in ſubſtance a covenant of works for its form; although it place no condignity of merit in theſe works; yet by this it is ſtill ſome work of ours that is the ground of our defence before God's juſtice; and ſo cannot be admitted; for even faith itſelf, in this caſe, cometh not in to be conſidered, but as it uniteth with its object, viz. Chriſt Jeſus in the promiſe, as hath been ſaid.

Theſe ways which are more groſs, being diſowned (ſo that there is neither ground to charge us with Popery nor Arminianiſm for our aſſerting the neceſſity of repentance) we come now to ſhow, poſitively, in what reſpect it is neceſſary.

1. We ſay repentance is neceſſary not only by neceſſity of precept, but alſo of mids, *neceſſitate et praecepti et medii;* that is, not only as a duty laid on by God; but as a mean appointed by him for attaining that end, viz. remiſſion of ſins: in which reſpect a penitent, or repenting ſinner, may be ſaid to be uſing the means how pardon is attained, and to be in the way of obtaining it, which cannot be ſaid of a ſinner that repenteth not. For although repentance, as abſolutely conſidered in itſelf, doth not make a penitent any nearer unto remiſſion; yet it being conſidered in reſpect of God's contrivance, and of the order which he hath laid down, and the promiſe which he hath ſubjoined to it, it may well be called a way and mean for attaining to pardon.

2. Beſide this, there is a kind of congruity and ſuitableneſs in this order which God hath laid down, by ſubjoining the promiſe of pardon to it, thus it is more ſuitable that a penitent ſinner ſhould have pardon, than an impenitent: becauſe he is a more congruous object (to ſpeak ſo) for grace to ſhew itſelf gracious upon, than if there were a continuing in ſecurity. Neither hath this congruity any caſualty or merit in it; but only doth ſhew God's wiſe contrivance in appointing a mids ſuitable to his end, which is the glorifying of his grace; and the making of himſelf to be precious to the ſinner.

3. Repentance concurreth in the obtaining of pardon, by qualifying the ſinner in reference to the promiſe, wherein pardon is propoſed: which is not to be underſtood, as if this qualification were a thing previous to a ſaving work of God's grace, or, as if it did diſpoſe the ſubject for receiving of any

inherent quality: or, *Laſtly*, As if there were any merit in it to commend the perſon ſo qualified unto God, for the attaining of pardon: theſe things we have already rejected; but it may be ſaid to qualify a perſon in theſe two reſpects: 1. That it putteth one within the reach of the promiſe, which ſpeaketh pardon to none but to ſuch who are ſo qualified: and thus it qualifieth the perſon merely with reſpect to the promiſe, and the qualification contained in it: and ſo a true penitent ſinner may be ſaid to be qualified for remiſſion, and may take hold of the promiſes that make offer of the ſame, which no other, not ſo qualified, can do: becauſe the promiſes are peculiarly holden forth to ſuch who are ſo qualified. 2. It qualifieth the ſinner in reference to the promiſe, as it doth diſpoſe him to accept the offered ſalvation freely, and to reſt upon Chriſt alone for that end. Thus it qualifieth for obtaining of pardon, as felt poverty qualifieth a proud beggar to receive willingly an offered alms, and to be thankful for it: neither is the alms the leſs free, that it requireth one ſenſible of poverty to receive it: but it is rather the more free, and acknowledged to be ſo, when it is conferred: even ſo it is here.

There is one thing more queſtioned, even among orthodox divines; that is if repentance may be accounted a condition of the covenant with faith; and if in that reſpect it be neceſſary, and do concur for the obtaining of pardon? For anſwer, (that we may not digreſs long in this) we ſhall lay down ſome aſſertions, after we have permitted this diſtinction. A condition may be taken more largely for any thing required as an antecedent for obtaining the thing promiſed: in this ſenſe, there may be many conditions. 2. It may be taken more ſtrictly and properly, for that upon which, the cloſing of the covenant dependeth, and that upon which, as ſuch, cannot be conſidered but as implying the cloſing thereof. 3. A condition may be taken, as it looketh to ſome conſequent following the cloſe, and is virtually implied therein. As for inſtance, in marriage there are ſeveral things neceſſary, as the hearing of the propoſal, the believing hiſtorically the truth of the thing heard, an eſteem of it, and a deſire to have it, with a lothneſs to offend the party propoſing it: theſe are ſuppoſed to be requiſite and neceſſary in one that is called to marry, that ſhe ſhould forget her kindred and her father's houſe, and cleave to the huſband, &c. Yet none of theſe reſolutions, or qualifications, are properly the condition of the marriage-covenant; but the parties conſent to accept the offered match upon the terms propoſed. The actual and poſitive ſolemn declaration whereof, in the approven way, is that which formerly cloſeth the match, and intitleth the party ſo accepting to the huſband, which none of theſe former qualifications did: after which, there followeth the performance of marriage-duties, the obligation whereof was contained in the marriage-contract. Yet cannot they be accounted properly the condition of the marriage-covenant, becauſe the performing of them doth pre-ſuppoſe the marriage: juſt ſo is it here, there are ſome things that in a large ſenſe are pre-requiſite to the cloſing of the covenant, or at leaſt do go alongſt with it, as conviction of ſin, repentance, hiſtorical faith, deſire of peace and union with God, &c. ſomething, viz. faith, doth actually cloſe therewith; ſome things follow thereon, as duties to be performed by one in covenant, as the duties of holineſs, and bringing forth the fruits of it, &c.

Now, to come to our aſſertions, the *Firſt* of them is this. If we take a condition largely, repentance may be called a condition of the covenant, as ſenſible poverty may be called a condition upon which alms is given; or, as the forſaking of the father's houſe, and cleaving to the huſband, may be called a condition of the covenant, becauſe it is ſuppoſed.

Yet, *Secondly*, We aſſert, that if we take a condition ſtrictly and properly, repentance cannot be called the condition of the covenant, but faith only, in that proper ſtrict ſenſe: becauſe,

1. In the oppoſition of the two covenants of works and grace, faith is put in oppoſition to works, and repentance is not ſo formally oppoſed, Rom. x. 5, 6, &c. And faith in that place is to be underſtood properly as diſtinguiſhed from other graces of repentance, love, &c. becauſe it is that faith which doth peculiarly juſtify in oppoſition to works, and as contradiſtinguiſhed from them.

2. Becauſe that which is the condition of the covenant of grace, and doth ſucceed to the condition of the covenant of works, muſt be ſomething laying hold on an external object without a man, viz. Chriſt's righteouſneſs: for the performing of the condition muſt be the ground of our expecting the thing promiſed; which only

Chriſt's righteouſneſs, laid hold on, can be reckoned to be. But repentance cannot act thus upon Chriſt's righteouſneſs, by taking hold of it without a man's ſelf, but it acteth upon an object within himſelf, viz. upon his own ſins, in turning from them to God, which yet it doth but imperfectly; and ſo cannot be oppoſed in reckoning with God, in place of the condition of the covenant of works: therefore repentance cannot be properly the condition of the covenant of grace, nor yet a thing that is merely inherent in us, and doth not ſo act upon Chriſt, whereof more was ſaid formerly.

If it be ſaid, that faith is an inherent grace, no leſs than repentance: the anſwer is eaſy, viz. That faith is not conſidered merely as an inherent grace, when it is called the condition of the covenant, but as it uniteth to Chriſt, and cloſeth with him offered in the goſpel: even as in a marriage conſent, willingneſs and contentedneſs to marry ſuch a man, although it be an act of the will; yet as it is an act of the will, it is not conſidered as the condition of the marriage-knot, but as it relateth to a propoſed match, and is the accepting thereof. And hence, though love, reſpect to the party, and other things be neceſſary to marriage, and in a large ſenſe may be called conditions thereof; yet are they not properly the condition which conſtituteth a perſon married to another, becauſe they act not ſo as to receive and cloſe with the propoſed offer.

3. Repentance is not that which formerly conſtituteth one a covenanter: becauſe one is not a covenanter as he is a penitent, but as he is a believer: for, the immediate ſatisfying ground of one's claim to the covenant is, becauſe by faith he hath received the offer; and therefore as ſuch he hath right to the covenant: it will not ſo follow from repentance, viz. upon this formal conſideration; he exerciſeth repentance: therefore upon that formal conſideration he is a covenanter. It is true, it is an evidence of the former, becauſe a penitent is a covenanter, but his being a penitent is not the *ratio formalis* of his being a covenanter; only it ſupponeth him to have by faith cloſed with the covenant. For we may conſider repenting as abſtracted from formal cloſing and covenanting, although we cannot ſeparate the one from the other: but we cannot conſider believing as acting on its object, but we muſt conſider it as cloſing with the covenant. Therefore repentance cannot properly be the condition of the covenant as faith is:

4. That which is properly the condition, doth of itſelf, upon its fulfilling, give one a title to the things promiſed, and doth become the ground of a right unto them: it was ſo upon ſuppoſition of fulfilling the covenant of works, and it is ſo in all covenants: but repentance cannot do ſo: therefore, &c. If it be ſaid, although repentance cannot ſo do it alone, yet faith and it may do ſo together. And ſeeing, by this opinion, faith is admitted with repentance jointly to the condition of the covenant, That argument cannot hold; becauſe it is not ſaid that repentance is the only condition. *Anſw.* The argument doth ſhut out repentance from being accounted any part of the proper condition, thus, if repentance cannot jointly, with believing in Chriſt, be put in as a piece of our righteouſneſs before God's throne, then it can be no part of the proper condition, becauſe the performing of the proper condition hath a ground in all covenants to plead for the performance of what is promiſed, and the abſolving of the party fulfilling the ſame, upon that account: but the former cannot be ſaid of repentance; for, our repentance can no way be alledged before God's juſtice as our righteouſneſs. *Ergo, &c.* This may be made out thus, If repentance may be tabled as any part of our righteouſneſs, then it muſt be either as a grace inherent in us, or as it acteth on Chriſt's righteouſneſs without us; but neither can be ſaid: not the firſt, becauſe no inherent grace is to be admitted in that reſpect, in whole or in part: not the ſecond, becauſe repentance hath no ſuch faculty of acting on Chriſt's righteouſneſs, as hath been ſaid, therefore cannot be ſaid to concur at all.

5. If receiving of Chriſt's offer be the formal and proper condition of the covenant alone, then repentance cannot be any part of the proper condition thereof, becauſe it is not by repentance, but by faith that we do receive him; but the former is true: receiving and cloſing with Chriſt by faith, is the only proper condition thereof. Therefore, &c. Beſide what is ſaid in the former diſcourſe, this appeareth thus, If receiving of Chriſt by faith, doth only formally entitle one to the covenant and all the promiſes thereof as ſuch, then it muſt be formally the proper condition; becauſe that entitling to the thing promiſed, is the great character of a proper condition: but faith only is ſuch; and therefore is the

righteouſneſs of this covenant called peculiarly the *righteouſneſs of faith*, and not *of repentance, love, &c.* Becauſe faith giveth a title to the righteouſneſs covenanted, which repentance doth not. And becauſe in the performing of the mercies covenanted in the way of grace, greater weight is laid on faith than on repentance, or any other grace. Again, that faith is the proper condition, may appear thus, becauſe it is properly and expreſly propoſed as the condition, Acts viii. 37. It is ſaid to the eunuch, *if thou believeſt thou mayeſt be baptized*; and Acts xvi. 30, 31. to the jayler, when the queſtion is expreſly propoſed, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved? Believe*, ſaith Paul, *and thou ſhalt be ſaved.* So anſwered the Lord, John vi. 28, 29. *This is the work of God to believe, &c.* Neither can it in reaſon be objected, that as theſe places do propoſe faith, ſo other places do propoſe repentance as the condition, as Acts ii. 38, &c. for it cannot be denied, but faith doth otherwiſe act on Chriſt's righteouſneſs and the covenant than repentance can do; and therefore faith is acknowledged to be principal: whereas, if that objection hold, repentance and works would be equalled with it. We therefore take it thus, where repentance is propoſed, there the whole way of turning to God more generally is propoſed: but where faith is propoſed, that which more properly and peculiarly doth ſtate our intereſt in God, is propoſed, as the conſideration of the formal actings of theſe graces will clear, and is wholly denied by none.

6. That muſt be the proper condition of the covenant which doth entitle God to the perſon, as the perſon to God. For the covenant being mutual, that which giveth men a right to God, and bringeth them within the compaſs of the covenant, muſt conſtitute them to be God's, and give him, alſo, a right to them, by virtue thereof; but it is not repentance that giveth God formally a title to a ſoul, but it is receiving of him by faith, and ſubmitting to his righteouſneſs. Therefore it muſt not be repentance, but faith, that is the proper condition. This is ſeen in a marriage covenant. For that is the woman's condition, upon her part, which doth entitle her to her huſband, as well as her huſband to her. Now, it is not repentance that giveth up one to Chriſt as his, as is clear, but faith, &c. that delivereth up a perſon to him, and is that whereby one taketh him and conſenteth to be his. And therefore it is faith that doth entitle Chriſt to be his. *Ergo, &c.*

7. If all theſe works were the condition of the covenant, then entry into the covenant were a ſucceſſive work, and not inſtantaneous; but this is abſurd. Therefore not theſe but faith alone is the condition of the covenant; for if an hour, yea, in an inſtant at a ſermon, a man may have his heart opened to receive Chriſt, and by that have a right to baptiſm as a covenanter, then it is not ſucceſſive; but the former is truth, *Ergo.*

8. If theſe works were the condition, and not faith only, then upon ſuppoſition of faith could not the ſacrament of baptiſm be adminiſtred; but it behoved to have antecedaneous to it, not only the purpoſe, but the actual performing of theſe works; becauſe, baptizing ſupponeth the accepting of the covenant: what therefore entitleth one in profeſſion, muſt, when it is really done, be the condition of the inward covenanting.

9. If faith be the proper condition, then repentance cannot be ſo; becauſe faith is not a condition of the covenant, merely as it is a grace, but as it is peculiarly qualified in its manner of acting. Now, repentance not being qualified with that manner of acting, cannot be a part of the proper condition, 1. Becauſe if ſo, then were graces of different actings admitted to concur in the ſame capacity and manner of acting contrary to their natures. 2. If ſo, then not only repentance but every grace, and all good works might be accounted parts of the proper condition of the covenant, as well as repentance and faith, if there were no peculiarneſs in faith's acting reſpected in this. And tho' this may be counted no abſurdity by ſome; yet to ſuch as plead only to join repentance with faith, it may have weight: and to others we propoſe theſe conſiderations, *Firſt*, That the evidence of light doth conſtrain the acknowledging of faith to be eminently the condition beyond all; yea, that it may be called the only condition of the new covenant, 1. Becauſe it is the principal condition, and the other but leſs principal. 2. Becauſe all the reſt are reducible to it, as neceſſary antecedents or means, &c. (ſo Mr. Baxter, Apho. Theſ. lxii.) and the formal and eſſential acts of this faith are acknowledged to be *ſubjection, acceptation, conſent, cordial covenanting, and ſelf reſigning.* Now, if faith be the principal condition, and that as acting ſo, in which reſpects no other grace can act, then certainly faith hath a peculiar property here, and that not as a grace ſimply, but in reſpect of the

formality of its acting: which doth confirm all that is ſaid. And thus, faith is not the principal condition, as being only ſo in degree (like a chief city amongſt many cities) but in reſpect of a different manner of acting, and an excellency, to ſay ſo, that is in it in that reſpect, ſuch acts being peculiar and proper to it, which are the proper characters of a proper condition: and if ſo, ſeeing all other things mentioned are acknowledged as neceſſary antecedents or means, or implied duties, &c. why ſhould there be a contending about words, and a new controverſy ſtated for the nature of a condition, when the church is almoſt ſuffocated with controverſies already? *Secondly*, If works be the condition equally with faith, then our being accounted covenanters muſt follow actual holineſs, and till then, none are indeed covenanters: which is abſurd, as was formerly ſaid: for ſo, none could otherwiſe have right to any thing in the covenant. If it be ſaid, theſe are ſeminally, and in purpoſe, at the entry, that will not anſwer it: becauſe it is not the purpoſe, but the actual performing of the condition that giveth right. Beſide, if a purpoſe ſatisfy for a condition in theſe, then either ſeminal faith, or a purpoſe thereof is to be admitted alſo, which is abſurd: or, if actual faith be required, and but other conditions in purpoſe, then it is actual faith, and not theſe that are the proper condition of the covenant. *Thirdly*, If theſe graces and good works be the condition of the covenant, then it is either in reſpect of their particular acts, or of perſevering in them; but neither can be ſaid. *Ergo*, *&c.* Not particular acts, becauſe the ſcripture hangeth the prize on overcoming, continuing to the end, &c. and not on acts. Nor can it be perſeverance: becauſe ſo, no benefit of the covenant could be pleaded till it were ended: for it is the entire condition and not a part thereof that giveth title and right: but it is abſurd that none ſhould have right to any benefit before perſeverance be ended, whereas perſeverance is a privilege that a covenanter may claim. Theſe may indeed be called ſomeway conditions of obtaining the poſſeſſion of the great benefit in the covenant, but not of the covenant itſelf; and are duties implied to be performed by a covenanter, but cannot be conditions upon which he is admitted. And tho' ſomewhat to this purpoſe was ſaid formerly, yet the matter being ſo like, there is no hazard nor prejudice from this coincidency.

Aſſert. 3. Although, in ſtrict ſpeaking, repentance be not the proper condition of the covenant; yet as to the naming of it a condition, or not, we conceive there is no great ground of debate: and if the matter be very well guarded, the expreſſion may be ſuffered; otherwiſe it is no ſtrife about words. We conceive that the guarding of the matter, doth require, 1. That theſe errors both of Papiſts, Arminians, and Socinians, formerly mentioned, be carefully eſchewed, and that, by giving it the name of a condition, we do not faſten upon it any of theſe ſenſes, eſpecially the laſt, to which it is moſt liable.

2. This would be guarded, that repentance be not ſhuffled in as a piece of our righteouſneſs, or that which we make an immediate defence and ſhelter againſt the juſtice of God: of which ſomewhat hath been formerly ſpoken.

3. This would be guarded, that repentance be not accounted to be a condition in that ſame capacity and formality of acting as faith is: becauſe that would either confound the nature of theſe graces, or wrong the way of the goſpel, wherein ever ſomething peculiarly is attributed to faith.

We come now to the third thing propoſed, that is, If repentance be neceſſary to a juſtified perſon for obtaining the pardon of ſins committed after juſtification, as well as before it. To which we anſwer ſhortly, that the ſcripture doth hold forth the ſame neceſſity in this caſe as in the former. 1. Becauſe there is the ſame order in the commands that are given, and the promiſes that are made to them for obtaining pardon, as may be gathered from the epiſtle to theſe in Epheſus, who may well be ſupponed to be believers; and the ground is general in this epiſtle to Laodicea, ver. 19. *Whom I love, I rebuke and chaſten*, ſaith the Lord, *be zealous therefore and repent:* where repentance is put in as a neceſſary mids for removing of God's rebuke and quarrel, even from them whom he loveth. 2. The promiſes made to believers run in the ſame terms, 1 John i. 9. *If we confeſs, God is faithful to pardon, &c.* Where John keepeth the ſame method in reference to pardon, even when he wrote to believers; and putteth himſelf in the roll. 3. Experience doth alſo confirm the ſame, as we may gather from David, Pſal. xxxii. 3, 4. *While I kept ſilence my bones waxed old, &c. but I confeſſed unto thee, and thou forgaveſt me, &c.* In which place this connection and order is clear. Neither can it be ſaid that David only obtained the ſenſe of pardon. 1. Becauſe he himſelf

doth account it pardon, and ſuch happineſs as doth proceed from the not imputation of ſin. 2. Becauſe, Rom. iv. the apoſtle maketh uſe of this experience for the deſcribing and confirming of juſtification itſelf: which could not have been, if the place had ſpoke only of the declaration thereof. And it cannot be otherwiſe, ſeeing the law curſeth every ſinner, and the goſpel abſolveth none but the penitent. It may be gathered alſo from Nathan's word to David, 2 Sam. xii. declaring his to be pardoned after his acknowledging, which ſuppoſeth it not to have been ſo before that time. So alſo it may be gathered from the Lord's dealing with Job's friends, Job xlii. with whom the Lord was angry, till they humbled themſelves before God.

Neither can it be well objected here, That this may hazard the perſeverance of the ſaints, ſuppoſing that ſome of them may die without actual repentance: for, 1. The doctrine and nature of the covenant betwixt God and believers, doth include a two-fold impoſſibility, 1. That a ſinful believer can be pardoned without repentance, becauſe the Lord hath appointed that order and method, and that wiſely and graciouſly for the ſcaring of believers from ſin, for the humbling of them under it, and for directing of them how to be freed from it. And there is need of this, leſt believers being in a great part corrupt, ſhould abuſe God's goodneſs.

The other is, that it is impoſſible for a juſtified perſon to die under ſin without repentance. And theſe two do not croſs one another: becauſe the firſt is conditional; no juſtified perſon, having ſin, if he repent not, can be pardoned: the other is abſolute, viz. no juſtified perſon can die under ſin without repentance: becauſe they are kept by the power of God to ſalvation, 1 Pet. i. 8. And he who hath ordered the end, hath alſo in his covenant ordered the mids neceſſary thereunto; ſo that they cannot but be again renewed unto repentance. And it is in this, as betwixt election and effectual calling: for, no elect can be juſtified till he be effectually called; ſo that if it were poſſible he ſhould die at age before effectual calling, he could not be ſaved; yet it is ſimply impoſſible that any of them can die before effectual calling; ſo muſt it be here in reſpect of the renewing of faith and repentance.

It will be difficult to clear the fourth thing, viz. What kind of repentance, to ſpeak ſo, is to be accounted ſimply neceſſary for obtaining the pardon of ſin; becauſe ſometimes perſons are not ſoon ſatisfied with the degree and kind of their repentance: ſometimes, again, even believers, after foul ſlips, are taken away without any ſenſible like work of repentance for the ſame. It may be queſtioned therefore, upon the former ſuppoſitions, what is to be accounted repentance? In anſwer to which, we ſhall firſt lay down ſome advertiſements concerning repentance in the general; and then ſome diſtinctions of the ſame: from which the anſwer may be eaſily formed.

1. It is no peremptory degree of repentance that is required, as ſimply neceſſary; it is ſincere repentance, having its native fruits, that is to be acquieſced in.

This ſincerity of repentance is not to be judged entirely by the ſorrow, horror, or grief that ſometimes do accompany it, nor by the continuance thereof in its exerciſe; becauſe repentance may be true where little of theſe are: and it may be unſound where much of theſe are ſenſible, and that for a long time's continuance, as experience doth confirm.

3. The ſincerity and ſufficiency of repentance therefore, is to be tried mainly by the riſe and effects thereof, &c. viz. If reſpect to God's honour affect the heart with the ſenſe of its ſin; and if it ſo affect, as ſin becometh hateful, the perſon is humbled in himſelf, and brought to eſteem of, and put a price upon, God's grace in Chriſt Jeſus, ſo as to be in love with the ſame. This is properly *turning*, and doth comprehend the eſſentials of repentance, whatever the degree of ſorrow be.

Theſe advertiſements being laid down, we would now conſider ſome diſtinctions of that repentance that is neceſſary for pardon, eſpecially in the regenerate, as they are, or may be held forth in ſeveral expreſſions, by ſeveral perſons.

Diſtinct. 1. Repentance is either expreſs and explicit; that is, when men both know ſuch things to be ſins, and themſelves to be guilty of them, and do expreſly acknowledge the ſame, and are affected with them; or, it is implicit, when men are generally affected for ſin, although they be guilty of ſome things which they do not know to be ſins, or know not themſelves to be guilty of the ſame. Of ſuch ſort may be the polygamy of ſeveral godly men: which is not altogether to be juſtified, at leaſt, in reſpect of the extent thereof, in all, as to

be ſo ordinary, to have ſo many wives, to have them of ſuch conſanguinity, as ſiſters, &c. Of ſuch ſort may be the errors which were maintained by many of the godly in the primitive times concerning meats, days, &c. which not being known by them to be ſins, cannot be ſaid explicitly to have been repented of; yet that they were impenitent, it cannot be ſaid. Under this alſo come in many matters of fact, which are forgotten, not obſerved, or conſidered, as appeareth from Pſal. xix. *Lord purge me from ſecret ſins.* The laſt is to be accounted neceſſary to pardon, viz, that they be penitent; but the firſt, viz. that repentance ſhould be explicit with reſpect to every particular ſin they are guilty of; this is not to be eſteemed neceſſary in this abſolute ſenſe.

Diſtinct. 2. Repentance is either actual, and that for particular ſins, as when Peter repented of his denial, and David of his murder, &c. or, it is interpretative and virtual, as when a man is heartily affected for ſuch and ſuch a particular ſin, and for the corrupt inclination and body of death that is in him, that is the ſeed of all, although there be ſome particular ſin, which is either not known to him to be ſuch, or is not actually in his mind; and ſo cannot be particularly and actually repented of: yet it may be ſaid, that virtually he doth repent of the ſame: becauſe, 1. He doth repent of all ſin in the root and ſeed thereof; and he may well be conſtructed to repent of, and to lothe all the branches and members, when he is ſeriouſly humbled under the impreſſion of the indwelling root and body of death. 2. Becauſe he repenteth of the ſins which are known to him, upon the account which is common to all ſin, as ſin, viz. its diſconformity to the law of God: and therefore may well be conſtructed to repent virtually of all the ſins he is guilty of; becauſe that which is the eſſence and form, to ſpeak ſo, of every ſin, is deteſted by him as it is ſuch: and, as it is ſaid, *a quatenus ad omne valet conſequentia.* This laſt it only pleaded for, as ſimply neceſſary, as the former inſtances do clear.

Diſtinct. 3. Repentance may either be conſidered intenſively; that is as it doth affect the heart with a high degree of ſorrow; or, it may be conſidered appretiatively; that is, when ſin is ſeen and acknowledged: and though there be no ſuch intenſe ſorrow, or ſo ſenſibly affecting the heart: yet ſin is accounted a thing to be ſorrowed for, and the heart is weighted that its ſorrow is not deeper; and the perſon reckoneth itſelf ſo far under the body of death, as it cannot be anſwerable to its light in the exerciſe of repentance. This laſt may have the native effects of repentance, viz. the humbling of a ſinner, &c. without the former; therefore, at leaſt, the former is not ſimply neceſſary. Mark here, that the uſe of this diſtinction is exceedingly different from the uſe which Papiſts make thereof, viz. for ſupporting a ruinous inherent tighteouſneſs, whereof repentance is a part: and becauſe they cannot find it in that intenſeneſs, as may ſtand before juſtice; therefore they coin a ſort of appretiative repentance, which to them is a deſire and endeavour in the utmoſt degree poſſible, to attain the former, that ſo they may underprop the other that is like to ruin; or put this in its room: but there is no ſuch thing here; for, as we underſtand the appretiative repentance, it is to commend grace, and humble us the more: but, as they do, it is to ſupport works; and can never give a conſcience quietneſs, becauſe it is ſtill defective, even in what it might attain, whereof we poſſibly ſhall ſay ſomewhat elſewhere.

Diſtinct. 4. Repentance may be conſidered as prevalent and taking upon the whole man: and this it carrieth with it a ſuitableneſs in a man's affections and actions, as may be ſeen in David, Pſal. li. or, it may be conſidered as in the renewed part, which may be lamenting ſin, and its own condition, in reſpect of the tyranny of the body of death, even while it is kept in bondage. It cannot be denied but in this reſpect Paul was exerciſing repentance, Rom. vii. when he allowed not that which he did, and was prevailed over by the law of his members; and no queſtion he was looked on as a penitent upon that account: and therefore, not the firſt of theſe, but the laſt, is to be accounted ſimply neceſſary, This alſo may be ſeen in Ephraim's *bemoaning himſelf*, Jer. xxxi. 18.

Diſtinct. 5. We may alſo conſider repentance, as it is known to be ſuch before men, or to the perſon himſelf by a palpable recovery: ſuch was the repentance of David, Peter, &c. or, we may conſider it, as it is known to be ſuch to God only, without ſuch ſenſible evidences to others, or, it may be, any ſenſible change to the perſon itſelf; yet may there be real repentance indeed before God. This may be ſaid of Solomon, of whoſe repentance and pardon we cannot doubt, as alſo of Aſa's; yet hath the Lord left them in his word under ſuch a

cloud, that their change had not been, at leaſt, very diſcernible: for, we find theſe high places, that were builded by Solomon, continuing unremoved for many generations thereafter: which doth certainly ſhew, that his repentance hath not had ſo palpable a change before men, as that of Manaſſes' had. And this is ordered by the Lord in deep wiſdom: partly, for a chaſtiſement of their backſliding; partly, to terrify others from the way of declining; and partly, to make all men ſober and ſparing to paſs ſentences upon the ſtate of others, however their condition may look before men, when they are removed: for, the Lord will have the ſovereign and infallible deciſion of their ſtate, viz. whether they be penitents and believers or not, left unto himſelf alone, who hath an inſenſible way of begetting faith and repentance, and alſo of recovering and renewing the ſame, when he pleaſeth.

If it be further moved, how, at the firſt exerciſing of repentance and faith, a man can be ſaid to be juſtified, that is, accepted as righteous, and pardoned of all his ſins; ſeeing his ſins after juſtification are not pardoned, until they be committed and repented of?

Anſw. Both are true: for future ſins are not actually pardoned till they be committed and repented of: yet is the man a juſtified perſon, and in a juſtified ſtate, having a ground laid in his juſtification for obtaining the pardon of theſe ſins that follow, ſo that they ſhall not overturn his former abſolution: for, God's covenant hath both fully in it, yet in due way to be applied. And it is, as if a company of rebels were ſubdued, and by treaty they are pardoned, changed from that ſtate of enemies to be natural ſubjects, and privileged with their privileges; ſo that if they fall in after-faults, as ſubjects may fall in, yet are they never again counted enemies; nor is their firſt freedom cancelled; but they are dealt with as native ſubjects, falling into ſuch offences; and have privileges that ſtrangers have not, nor can plead in the ſame faults; one of which privileges may be ſuppoſed to be, that they ſhall not be rigidly fallen upon, although their guilt deſerve death; but that they ſhall have means uſed to reclaim them, (and theſe ſuch as cannot but be effectual) and that upon recovery, they ſhall be pardoned theſe faults, and be preſerved from the deſerved puniſhments. It is ſo by the treaty of grace and juſtification, the believing ſinner is tranſlated from the ſtate of an enemy, to the condition of a friend; this is unalterable, he cannot afterward but be a friend: yet, becauſe a friend may be ingrate, and fail to his benefactor; therefore, by that treaty, it is provided, that there ſhould be a way to forgiveneſs by virtue of that covenant, yet ſo, as there ſhould be a new exerciſe of repentance and faith, for the commending of the way of grace: and ſo a ſinning believer is a ſinner, but not in the ſtate of ſin; nor is an enemy, as he was before juſtification, even as a faulty ſubject is guilty, yet is no enemy, nor rebel, nor can be puniſhed by death, when he becometh penitent, although he deſerveth it: becauſe the law of grace is ſuch to the ſubjects of that kingdom, that their pleading of their former treaty, and betaking themſelves to the terms thereof, is ever to be accepted as a righteouſneſs for them, in reference to any particular ſin following juſtification, as well as what proceeded. And this no ſtranger to God can plead, who hath no ſuch ground for his recovery from ſin; or, that God will give him repentance for it, much leſs that he will certainly pardon him. Yea, it differeth from a penitent's caſe at firſt converſion; becauſe a covenanter may expect pardon by virtue of that ſame covenant in which he is engaged, and to which he hath already right, and he hath *jus ad rem:* another cannot do ſo, but muſt conſider the covenant as offered only, and ſo expect pardon; not becauſe God is actually engaged to give it to him, as in the other's caſe; but becauſe God doth offer to accept of him on theſe terms, and then to pardon him.

Some general obſervations concerning Preaching, and eſpecially Application.

HAving now gone through theſe epiſtles, we may ſee how wiſely and ſeriouſly our Lord Jeſus, the prince of paſtors, (who hath the tongue of the learned given unto him) doth from heaven ſpeak to the condition of theſe churches, to whom they are directed: wherein we may have an excellent copy, according to which, miniſters ought to carry themſelves in diſcharging of their truſt. We conceive therefore it will not be impertinent to ſhut up theſe epiſtles with ſome general directi-

ons concerning the way of miniſters making application to hearers, which can hardly any where elſe more clearly, fully, and together be gathered: and although every thing may not be particularly pitched upon, which is neceſſary in preaching (that not being the Spirit's intent in the place;) yet we are ſure, that as his proſecuting of the reſpective caſes of theſe churches, is very comprehenſive; ſo it cannot be but moſt worthy of imitation.

1. In general we ſee, that miniſters in their application, ought to conform themſelves to the caſe of the church and perſons to whom they preach, to erroneous people (or ſuch as are in danger of error more convincingly; to the ſecure, more ſharply; to the afflicted and tender, more comfortably, &c. as may be ſeen in our Lord's dealing with theſe churches.

2. Miniſters ought, in their doctrine, to apply themſelves to all ſorts of perſons, viz. to rulers and people, to hypocrites and openly profane; yea, to the good, and theſe that have moſt tenderneſs; reproving all, convincing all, as there ſhall be cauſe: ſo that neither hopeleſneſs of profiting ſome that ſeem to be deſperate, nor prepoſterous affection to theſe who are tender and affectionate, ought to marr this manner of dealing. And thus we ſee our Lord Jeſus doth threaten profane and groſs erroneous Jezebel upon the one hand, and backſliding (though godly) Epheſus on the other. Sometimes it is more difficult freely and faithfully to reprove one that is godly, or to withſtand one Peter, than to threaten or contend with many that are profane: and yet both are neceſſary and profitable for edification.

3. This univerſal application to all ſorts, would yet, notwithſtanding, be managed with ſpiritual wiſdom and prudence, ſo that every one may get their own allowance. Hence the Lord doth ſo threaten the ſecure and ſtubborn, that yet he excepteth theſe who are not defiled; and ſo comforteth the faithful, as the profane may not have a ground to take the ſame conſolation with them. This is a main qualification of a miniſter of the goſpel, rightly to divide the word of truth, and not to follow all applications promiſcuouſly, and in heap together, in any auditory, without ſuch diſcriminating expreſſions as may guard againſt confuſion therein: eſpecially as to theſe four, 1. That a tender ſoul may be ſo ſtrengthened and confirmed, as a ſecure perſon be not more hardened; and that a preſumptuous hypocrite be ſo ſtricken at, as an exerciſed ſoul be not wounded 2. When both the good and profane are in one fault, the one is otherwiſe to be reproved and reſtored than the other: and we ſee Epheſus is more tenderly dealt with than Laodicea, according to the rule, Gal. vi. 1, 3. The faults of believers would be ſo reproved, as with theſe their ſtate, and what is commendable in their practice, be not condemned and rejected alſo: but that there be intermixed commendations, or approbations of what is approvable, leaſt godlineſs ſuffer, when the fault of a godly perſon is reproved; and leaſt the ſentence go beyond the maſter's intent, which is not to condemn the perſon, but to reprove the fault, as the Lord doth tenderly diſtinguiſh theſe in the caſe of Epheſus and Pergamos. 4. Times and caſes would be diſtinguiſhed alſo: and where outward affliction, or inward exerciſe have ſeized on a perſon or people, reproofs would be more ſparing and gentle, than where there is outward proſperity and a readineſs to ſettle in a formal diſcharge of duties, as by comparing the Lord's dealing with the churches of Epheſus, Smyrna, and Philadelphia, and his dealing with Sardis and Laodicea, is clear.

4. This application would be pathetic, pungent and weighty, according to the matter preſſed, ſo as it may have weight upon the conſciences of hearers. It is a main piece of miniſterial dexterity to make a plain, obvious, ordinary reproof, weighty in application, ſo as the matter may look ſerious-like to the hearers, and they be convinced that he is in earneſt: and for this cauſe, his convictions, reproofs, directions, &c. would not reſt in the general: for the Lord is particular in all theſe epiſtles. 1. In mentioning the ſins that he reproveth. 2. In giving the evidences of them, to ſhew that he beateth not the air; and the more to bear in the conviction in the application: for, as general truths will need their proofs; ſo will particular applications, leaſt the conſcience ſhift the challenge. 3. He rips up the heart, by chopping at inward ſins, viz. *falling from the firſt love; thou ſayeſt, I am rich, &c. thou haſt a name that thou liveſt, but art dead, &c.* It is a main part of ſearching doctrine, to repel the anſwers that a heart may have within againſt the power of godlineſs, though they be never expreſſed; and this is a main property of the word, to be *a diſcerner of thoughts*, Heb. iv. 12. And thus John did with his hearers, Matth.

iii. 9. *Think not to ſay within yourſelves*, &c. 4. The Lord himſelf is in his expreſſions ſerious, that the conſcience and inner-man may be carried alongſt in giving heed to the words ſpoken to the ear, and that the outward-man may ſee the ſcope of the word preached, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5, &c.

5. Application would rather be ſquared to the edification of the hearer, than ſimply and only regulated by the doctrine that it riſeth from: for, ſometimes there may be ſeemingly flouriſhing applications, when a miniſter ſpeaketh in the proſecuting of ſome truth, and in the preſſing of ſome point with reſpect to the matter that he is handling, which is in itſelf good; and yet it may be little uſeful to the hearers ſpoken unto, as not being pertinent to them. Our Lord here conformeth his application to theſe he writeth unto: ſo ſuch truths ought to be inſiſted on, and preſſed, as beſit the hearers.

6. The matter inſiſted upon is divers; ſometimes reproof, ſometimes exhortation, ſometimes it is in reference to corrupt doctrines, ſometimes to the inward ſpiritual caſe, &c. Which ſheweth, that a miniſter would not be addicted to, nor always dwell upon one thing; but would ſometimes convince gainſayers, and clear truths, ſometimes preach practical things, and that of divers ſorts; becauſe faith and practice is the end of preaching; and clearneſs in, and acquainted with truth, maketh hearers ſolid, and well-grounded in both; beſide, that in numerous auditories there are varieties of conditions, which call for variety of edifying doctrine.

7. In his ſtriking at errors, we find, 1. That he doth not inſiſt on queſtions of more remote concernment, ſuch as many were in theſe times; but on theſe that are in their nature more groſs, and in their conſequence more hurtful. 2. The errors that he toucheth were ſuch as were preſently troubling the church, and theſe churches in particular to whom he writeth. Old buried errors are not fit matter for ordinary preaching. 3. He purſueth theſe errors as moſt groſs and abominable things to make them odious and abominable unto his people; and for that end, compareth the promoters thereof unto Balaam and Jezebel. It was regretted by holy Mr. Greenham, *That ſome, by their triſling way of confuting error, made it but ridiculous, whereas they ought, by earneſtneſs and gravity, to have made it hateful.*

8. His practical matter is near the power of godlineſs, viz. marking the ſpiritual declining of the ſincere, preſſing the exerciſe of repentance, and the performing of holy duties upon all; and withal, moſt ſearchingly and convincingly ſtriking at hypocriſy, preſumption, and ſelf-confidence, as in the epiſtles to Sardis and Laodicea: thereby ſhewing what doctrine, eſpecially miniſters, ſhould inſiſt on in congregations: and if we look to our Lord's practice while in the fleſh, we will not find him more frequent on any ſubject than this, viz. that the way to heaven is narrow, that many were firſt that ſhall be laſt, that hypocriſy ſhould be guarded againſt, &c. as his parables of the ſower, fooliſh virgins, marriage-feaſt, and many other inſtances do demonſtrate.

9. The Lord doth not inſiſt upon the moſt high, ſublime, and obſcure things, either in his doctrines, reproofs or directions, ſuch as are the moſt obſtruſe queſtions of the ſchools, or the moſt ſpiritual experiences of grown Chriſtians, altho' this laſt, being well timed, hath its uſe; but he preſſeth the moſt plain, obvious, and uncontrovertible duties of religion, viz. Repentance, ſelf-examination, faith, zeal, &c. It is a great and main part; yea, the very life of application, to ſtir up to the practice of acknowledged-duties, and to reſtrain from confeſſed ſin: for, as mainly the life of religion lieth in the practice of theſe; ſo the moſt powerful preaching is in the preſſing of them. We may to this purpoſe ſee alſo in that ſermon of our Lord, which is recorded by Matth. in his 5, 6, and 7 chap. how familiarly he condeſcendeth to expound the law to direct in the exerciſe of prayer and faſting, and other duties, both in the firſt and ſecond table, wherein certainly he is ſtill preſſing ſpiritual ſervice.

10. In all theſe, the Lord ſo followeth the application, as he may imprint it on the conſcience, and leave ſome profitable fruit by it: and, in a word, he convinceth, exhorteth, reproveth, offereth counſels, &c. as they may be edified by it, and every word may gain its native end. Therefore we ſee when he convinceth of, and reproveth for ſin, he chargeth them. *Secondly*, He doth aggrege, theſe doth firſt point at the particular ſins wherewith he ſins by ſhewing the gultineſs and ſinfulneſs of them. *Thirdly*, He propoſeth weighty and ſad threatnings to ſcare them: and the more ſecure and ſelf-confident they be, (as in the epiſtle to Laodicea) he doth the more ſharply rip up the inſide, and the

more emphatically and significantly express his abhorrency thereof, and their hazard thereby. Again, when he exhorteth to duty, he doth, 1. Make the duty plain, that it may be known what he calleth for. 2. He giveth some helps for furthering of them in the performance thereof, viz. the remembring of what is past, or their examining of their own way, watchfulness and advertency for the time to come, and such like; which are both in themselves principal duties, and great helps in all the practice of holiness. 3. He presseth these exhortations to duties with motives which comprehend both the prejudice of neglecting them, and the advantage that cometh by the performing of them. Again, when he proposeth the offer of the gospel, and inviteth to believe, (as to the church of Laodicea) he doth, 1. Open their sinful, dangerous and hypocritical case, and batters down the ignorant self-confidence which they had in their own formal profession. And, 2. He proposeth the right remedy: viz. himself and his benefits, his imputed righteousness which can only cover their nakedness, &c. 3. He cleareth terms upon which that *gold* and *white raiment is* obtained, under these expressions of *buying*, *opening*, *hearkening*, &c. And, 4. He doth most sweetly, and yet most vehemently press it: partly, by condescending friendly to counsel and intreat; partly, by making his offer large, free, and particular to any man that will open, &c. and partly by urging his call weightily and rousingly with a *Behold, I stand;* as if after he had made the offer, and had knocked, he were now taking instruments, in the consciences of hearers; thereby, as with a nail to fasten his invitation upon them: and so, pressing their closing therewith, or otherwise assuring that he will leave this instrument upon record against them.

11. We find, whatever the case of the people be that he speaketh unto, the upshot and scope of his message, is, ever to persuade a closing of the treaty between him and them. Therefore, when he chargeth with sin, he leaveth not there, but commendeth unto them repentance; and giveth a promise of welcoming of them upon that condition: when he quarrelleth for hypocrisy and deadness in profession, he proposeth Christ, and adviseth to accept of him: when he exhorteth to duty, as to repentance and zeal; yet, even then doth he propose Christ's righteousness, as the only cure and cover of their nakedness (as in the last epistle is clear:) whereby we may see, 1. What a minister's scope should be, and whereat he should aim in conviction, reproof, &c. and where he should leave his hearers, viz. at Christ's feet, who is *the end of the law for righteousness*. And it is not unprofitable, even explicitly to make that the use and close of all. 2. We may see, that the law and gospel should be both preached and pressed together, and that so, as the one seem not to encroach upon the other. And especially this would ever be clear, that the weight of our peace with God doth not ly upon duties when they are pressed, but upon the righteousness of Christ. As it is a great practice in a Christian, to give the law and gospel their due place in practice; so it is a main qualification of a gospel minister, rightly to rid marches between the law and the gospel; this maketh so much insisting in the epistles to the Romans, Galatians, &c. to keep justification by faith in Christ, clear and distinct from works and duties, even when they were much pressed and practised. And it is no less dangerous to professors to rest on duties, than to omit them: and therefore the necessity of being denied to them in the point of justification, and of resting upon Christ alone, is to be cleared and pressed by preachers, as a most necessary and fundamental thing.

12. For this cause, the nature of the covenant, and justification by Christ, are especially to be cleared, where a church is formal, that is, free both of errors in doctrine, and gross scandals in practice, and resting there: wherefore we see, that in the epistle to the church of Laodicea (which is charged with neither of these) our Lord doth most especially insist on this: for, the beating down of error, and banishing of gross profanity, are but, as it were, the taking in the outworks of the devil's kingdom; therefore when these are gained, the main batteries are to be directed against self-righteousness, hypocrisy, presumption, self-confidence, &c. that the soul may be brought to receive Christ in earnest, and zealously and seriously to study holiness without which a formal profession will be but as a stone of stumbling.

13. We see that our Lord Jesus putteth together an entire mould of the whole doctrine and practice of godliness, giving, as at one view, a sight of our natural sinfulness and hazard, and of the way how these may be remedied; so that when he proposeth any quarrel, he leaveth not off till he propose also the remedy, press duty, and

close with some encouraging conditional promise. This is also profitable for a mixt auditory (especially at solemn times, and other occasions, wherein people are usually most serious and attentive) to give together a view of the doctrine of the gospel; so that when a conviction is pressed, and the hearer is made somewhat hot, he may have some present discovery of the way which he ought to take; and that he may either be informed, or, at least, be put in mind of as much of the gospel as may be a ground of his peace, if it be improven, though he should never afterward hear any more. This we see was the apostle's way in their occasional sermons in the history of the Acts, wherein the sum of the gospel is usually comprehended; and the Lord himself doth so with Nicodemus, John iii. And though there be difference now, in some respect, where the gospel is ordinarily and daily preached, so that this is not so necessary to be done always explicitly, as if they had never heard the gospel before: and although it becometh a minister to draw his doctrine from some particular text; yet considering that the generality of hearers are very ignorant of the series of the gospel, and others are weak and inadvertent, even in things which they someway know: and considering withal, that a minister may have occasion by way of reason, use, mean, motive, question, or otherways, to hint a view of the gospel, almost from any material doctrine, and that without any just imputation of impertinency, we conceive, that generally and usually it is expedient to follow this manner; especially on the Lord's day, which are most fit for gospel doctrines, (people being then, for that end, set apart and sequestered from their ordinary businesses) and when the body of the most ignorant people are gathered together. This way certainly, by God's blessing, would look more like a mean of conversion (and hath in experience been ordinarily found so) than when now one point, and then another, are distinctly handled; and so the one is either forgotten by the most part, before they hear the other, or, at least, is not so warm to them, although they have the knowledge thereof. And these things being the text of the bible, to say so, and the great subject and errand which ministers have to insist on, it ought not to be accounted grievous, because of men's nauseating and loathing of them from the frequent mentioning of them, seeing to the people they are profitable and safe, as Philip. iii. 1, 2. and even that loathing would, in the manner of proposing the same things, be guarded against: that itching and curious ears get no occasion of contemning the precious gospel, and thus but very few would be really able to discern that it is so.

14. In these epistles, there is a divine stamp bearing forth an efficacy in the manner of pressing all these things. And we will see, 1. Authority in what is spoken. 2. Evident plainness and clearness. 3. Seriousness and vehement earnestness in pressing what he presseth. Indifferency and coldness in speaking of weighty things, is most unsuitable in a minister. 4. There is love and affectionate tenderness to them to whom he speaketh; yea, even in the sharpest rebukes, he prudently intimateth the same, that he be not mistaken. Ministers have gained much, when hearers are convinced that they seek their good in the sharpest words; and their way would be such, as, without affectation, may evince that in the conscience of hearers. 3. There is much (O how much!) wisdom in his premitting commendations, in his differencing the guilty from the innocent, in his choosing such threatnings and motives as may gain most upon these he dealeth with respectively, and not using the same to all.

15. His stile of speaking is sweet and heavenly, yet plain and familiar: it hath a sweet stateliness in it, and is far from trivial expressions, which may make the matter spoken weightless; yet is it plain and equable; because now he is speaking to edification in practical things, therefore doth he abstain from the dark manner of expressions, which afterward he useth in the following prophecy. But, 1. His plainest words are most significant, massy, and apposite. 2. The titles that are given to himself are stately: weighty expressions and titles of God, and of Jesus Christ, become the preaching of the gospel well; and are useful to keep up the reverend estimation which hearers ought to have of him. It is suitable usually to name him so, as at the mentioning of him, it may appear that the heart is affected with the excellency that is in him; and that the man doth not speak of that glorious Majesty, as of other subjects: even as ambassadors should give honourable titles to their masters. 3. The similitudes are pertinent and grave, serving more to illustrate the matter and make it plain, than

to pleaſe the ear and tickle the underſtanding, as the comparing of Chriſt's righteouſneſs to *gold* and *raiment*, and the cloſing of the covenant, or believing on him, to *buying*, *opening*, &c. which manner is uſeful to people; and that way of ſpeaking in parables, was much uſed by the Lord, who alſo interpreted them to his diſciples, to make the ſignificancy thereof the more to appear. 4. He doth ever expreſs heaven by ſome notable, borrowed, and various expreſſion, thereby to commend the ſame: partly, becauſe it is a great advantage to have hearers in love with it; partly, becauſe more proper expreſſions will not always ſo clearly, fully, and to the life, ſuit, and hold forth the thing that is to be ſpoken of: whence it cometh to paſs, that ſometimes there is an allowance granted to uſe borrowed expreſſions in ſuch caſes.

16. We will find an orderly method in all the epiſtles. There is indeed no affected curioſity, neither are there any philoſophic terms made uſe of; yet, method being uſeful in itſelf, to clear the matter, and to help hearers to conceive and retain what is ſaid (and ſo, ſubſervient to edification) our Lord doth alſo condeſcend to that way. Therefore, in general, we ſee all theſe epiſtles have, 1. A preface, 2. A narration, 3. A concluſion; as if he had purpoſely caſten them in one mould, more particularly, we ſee, he beginneth them all with this, *thus ſaith he*, &c. Thereby to evince it to be his word. A main thing to be adverted to, as the foundation both of preaching and application, that it may be made out, at firſt, to be warranted by the Lord; and ſo to be his word, as, if he himſelf were ſpeaking. 2. He propoſeth in them all, ſome ſtately ſtile and title of himſelf; which is alſo a main thing to be adverted to in preaching, that at the entry, both miniſters and hearers may be affected with the majeſty of him, who is maſter of the ordinances, by ſome ſerious, grave and weighty inſinuation, thereby to diſpoſe both for the more fit ſpeaking and hearing. 3. He doth begin at theſe things which are more general, and belong to information, as in letting them know their caſe, and his thoughts of them: then he cometh to particulars. 4. In particulars he premitteth clear diſcoveries, and convictions of ſin, to exhortations, to duties, and offers of the goſpel: and he premitteth exhortations to motives, whereby he preſſeth them. And laſtly, he cloſeth with what is moſt pathetic and affectionate; either in way of threatning or promiſe, having that weighty admonition added, *he that hath ears to hear, let him hear*, &c. And ſo he beginneth by working them up to ſome ſerious compoſed frame of ſpirit, and cloſeth with ſome affectionate impreſſing of the thing upon them in the moſt pathetic manner. Although this here, be moſt in application; yet we conceive that this order of propoſing what is more general and doctrinal, and which ſerveth to the clearing of the judgment in the firſt place, and the ſubjoining of what is more convincing, pathetic, and affectionate, which is done by way of uſe and application in the laſt place, that thereby hearers may be diſmiſſed with ſome impreſſion of the thing; this order, we ſay, may be well gathered hence. And indeed, it is the moſt native and genuine order, firſt, to inform the judgment and thereby to make the readier way to work upon the conſcience, will, and affections. To this purpoſe ſee Acts xiii. how Paul doth there proceed and cloſe, ver. 38, 39, &c.

17. In all this, the Lord's way holdeth forth his great deſign of gaining them to whom he ſpeaketh: ſo as it ſatisfieth him not to exoner himſelf (to ſpeak ſo of him) in doing of his duty; but he is zealous to get his meſſage received; and, in ſum, to get them ſaved; therefore weightily doth he follow it, inviting, exhorting, preſſing and proteſting as unwilling to be refuſed. This indeed is a fountain-qualification of a preacher, to be travelling in birth till Chriſt be formed in hearers; and ſo to preach to them, as hungering and thirſting for their ſalvation, and not having only before him the propoſing of ſome profitable matter, or, the handling of ſome point exactly; nay, not only his own exoneration, and the juſtifying of God, by making the hearers inexcuſable; but a ſingle ſerious deſire to have them gathered and eſpouſed to Chriſt; that the proud may be humbled, the hypocrite convinced, and the word made the ſavour of of life unto life unto them according to their caſe. This, I ſay, is a fountain-qualification, from which many other qualifications do flow, it being ſeldom in any miniſter, but it putteth an edge and weight upon the word in his mouth, as the want of it maketh the moſt part want ſavour, and in the fineſt words, often to have but little weight.

18. We may gather here, That a miniſter ſhould hold forth the authority of the ordinance and word, and of him in whoſe name he ſpeaketh,

and ought to take it upon him, not from ſuppoſed weight in himſelf, or addition to it by his gifts; but upon this account, that it is the Lord's meſſage, *Thus ſaith he, &c.* being that which giveth himſelf confidence and boldneſs in the delivery thereof, and which ought alſo to make it have weight upon others; yea, it followeth from this, that whatever a miniſter be in himſelf, and whatever his thoughts be of himſelf, and of his gifts; yet being called to carry the Lord's meſſage, he ought ſo to carry in it, as not to leſſen the maſter's authority, by his fainting and diſcouraging apprehenſions of his own inability and unworthineſs, and by his heartleſs and languid way of ſpeaking; but to ſpeak it as the oracles of God ought to be ſpoken, and as having weight in itſelf, for the vindicating thereof, altho' he be weightleſs: and that therefore there ought to be an eye to him for weight thereto, and a thorough clearneſs that the thing which is ſpoken in the name of the Lord is his truth and meſſage, without which there can be no great confidence in ſaying, *Thus ſaith the Lord*, and with which a miniſter may boldly and authoritatively ſpeak.

19. As preaching would be undertaken and begun with an eye to God: ſo both in the carrying on thereof, and in the expecting of fruits thereby, the weight would be ſtill left upon the Lord: and miniſters would beware of attributing any efficacy, either to the warmneſs of their own frame in ſpeaking, or to their liberty in preſſing any point, or to the plainneſs and weightineſs in their manner of propoſing or preſſing the ſame, as if that had any influence, as from them, to give the word weight and authority upon hearers, but ſtill the efficacy would be acknowledged to be from the Holy Ghoſt, therefore is that word always at the cloſe, *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith, &c.* Whereby as at the entry, the inſtrument is laid by, and the Lord's authority held forth as only to be acknowledged by *thus ſaith the Lord;* ſo in the cloſe the miniſter, even when in the moſt affectionate temper and frame, is to leave what is ſpoken, as weight only upon this account, that it is the Spirit who ſpeaketh, and who only can make it effectual; and the more ſingly this be done, the more weighty will it be; and thus weighty preaching differeth from the moſt powerful rhetorick that can be. See ſomewhat to this purpoſe, chap. x. ver. 4.

20. In the general we may ſee, that application is the life of preaching; and there is no leſs ſtudy, ſkill, wiſdom, authority and plainneſs neceſſary in the applying of a point to the conſciences of hearers, and in the preſſing of it home, than there is required in the opening of ſome profound truth: and therefore miniſters would ſtudy the one as well as the other. Much of theſe epiſtles is delivered in the ſecond perſon, *I know thy works, I counſel thee to repent, &c.* for this end, that they might know it was them particularly that he meant. It is much for miniſters to get the word levelled at hearers, ſo as to make them know that it is they who are reached; and that it is not only theſe that at firſt it was written to, or theſe to whom Chriſt and the apoſtles did immediately preach that this word belongeth; but that equally it belongeth to them, even to them who now hear it. Hearers are often ready to ſhift by the moſt particular words, much more when they are more ſhortly and generally touched. Hence preaching is called *perſuading, teſtifying, beſeeching, entreating, requeſting, exhorting, &c.* All which import ſome ſuch dealing in application: which is not only a more particular breaking of the matter; but a directing it to the conſciences of the preſent hearers. And in this eſpecially doth the faithfulneſs, wiſdom, and dexterity of the preacher, and the power and efficacy of the gift appear. This is to fulfil or fully to preach the word of God (a very ſignificant and much uſed phraſe, Rom. xv. 17. Col. i. 25. 2 Tim. iv. 7. a a thing alſo deſiderated in Sardis, chap. iii.) or to make a full proof of the miniſtry, that is, when a miniſter extendeth himſelf to the uttermoſt in his pains, ſeriouſneſs and exerciſe of his gift, as to be at the yondmoſt of the peoples edification; and, as it is, Acts xiv. 2. to ſpeak ſo, *as many may be made to believe;* an excellent copy whereof is in Paul, Col. i. 28, 29. *Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wiſdom, that we may preſent every man perfect in Chriſt Jeſus, whereunto I alſo labour, ſtriving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.* And, 1 Theſſ. ii. 10, 11. *ye are witneſſes, and God alſo, how holily, and juſtly, and unblameably we behaved ourſelves among you that believe. As you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children.* We conceive therefore, that it would conduce exceedingly to make application weighty upon the conſciences of the hearers, if miniſters, after the more general part of their doctrine, and at their entry to make applica-

tion thereof, ſhould pauſe a little, and by ſome ſerious and grave advertiſement, put the people in mind, that even this word ſo applied, or to be applied, is the word and meſſage of God, to them in particular, and as neceſſarily requiſite to the office of a paſtor as the former general opening of the truth was: for, hearers are often ready to take more liberty in ſhifting of application, as if what were even ſo ſpoken warrantably, were not equally the Lord's word with the general truth opened up. Thus we ſee Paul, after his opening up of general truths, Acts xiii. when he cometh to make application putteth his hearers to it by this word, ver. 26. *Men and brethren, to you is the word of this ſalvation ſent*, &c. And as it is the main part of a paſtoral gift dexterouſly to feed by application; ſo are they the moſt thriving Chriſtians, who, as new born babes, drink in the word ſo applied, and take it home to themſelves, and their own conſciences, as they do receive the general truths by their judgments; which ſheweth that both miniſters and people have the greater cauſe to be watchful and ſolicitous concerning this main mean of edification, viz. particular application.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *After this I looked, and behold a door was opened in heaven; and the firſt voice which I heard, was, as it were of a trumpet talking with me, which ſaid, Come up hither, and I will ſhew thee things which muſt be hereafter.*

2. *And immediately I was in the Spirit, and behold a throne was ſet in heaven, and one ſat on the throne.*

3. *And he that ſat, was, to look upon, like a jaſper, and a ſardine ſtone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in ſight like unto an emerald.*

FOLLOWETH that part of this book, which is properly prophetical: for, John now hath a ſecond call *to come up*, that he may have *things which were to be hereafter ſhewn unto him.* Before we ſpeak particularly to the words, it will be fit to premit ſome things in reference to the prophetical part which followeth, for our more eaſy and clear uptaking thereof, and proceeding therein.

Firſt, It is to be remembered, that on chap. i. 19. we did divide this book in three ſorts of things, viz. 1. The things that then were. 2. The things which John had ſeen in his time. 3. The things which were to come thereafter. The firſt ſort of things have been already ſpoken unto in the ſecond and third chapters. That part of the prophecy which followeth, muſt then contain the other two, viz. the things which John ſaw in his time, and which were to follow after that: both theſe are comprehended under this expreſſion, *things which muſt be hereafter*, ver. 1. for that phraſe is not to be taken ſtrictly, as if all that followeth were propheſies of things and events following the time of John's having this revelation manifeſted to him; becauſe we will ſee in the ſixth and twelfth chapters the prophecy beginneth at the riſe of the goſpel, and the white horſe his beginning to conquer, and the woman's travelling under perſecution; both which came ſome length before this revelation was written. Therefore they are ſaid to be the things which were to be thereafter, not becauſe there was nothing of theſe events already come to paſs, or begun to be fulfilled, as the former reaſon cleareth; but becauſe the great part of them were of that nature, and alſo becauſe the events which John had ſeen to be fulfilled in their beginnings, were but in perfecting, and ſo, in ſome reſpect, might be ſaid to be to come thereafter alſo: upon which grounds, the whole book was called a prophecy, chap. i. 3. And ſo when this book is divided in two parts, the things which John ſaw, that is, the things which were in his time, are comprehended under one expreſſion with things that were to come. Again, when it is divided in three ſorts of things, as in chap. i. 19. things to come are taken more properly and ſtrictly, as comprehending only ſuch things as were for the time to be fulfilled. And this is the reaſon why ſometimes it is divided

in two, ſometimes in three parts, yet both to one purpoſe.

Secondly, The great ſubject and matter of all that is coming, is comprehended in this word, *I will ſhew thee things which muſt be hereafter;* which is not to be extended to all events that were to fall out to all the world, but to chief events that were to fall out in the church, as concerning her thriving, perſecution, &c. and what was to befal the enemies thereof unto the end of the world. Alſo, it is to be obſerved, according to the former advertiſement, that we are not to fix the beginning of theſe events at the time of John his having this propheſy revealed to him, but are to begin with the goſpel's riſe, and the firſt preaching thereof unto the Gentiles after Chriſt's aſcenſion, which we conceive is comprehended under that ſhort expreſſion, the things which John *had ſeen*, chap. i. 19. as was ſaid.

Thirdly, The prophetical part of this book, is ordinarily divided in ſix viſions, or ſix prophecies: for when it is divided in ſeven, the firſt three chapters are accounted one. Now, whether we call them viſions or prophecies, it is not much upon the matter; for, every viſion comprehendeth a diſtinct propheſy, and contrarily; ſo that it will come to the ſame thing. When they are accounted ſeven, they are thus reckoned: the firſt viſion is in chapters i, ii, and iii. The ſecond is in chapters iv, v, and vi. The third is in chapters vii, viii, ix, x, and xi. The fourth viſion is in chapters xii, xiii, and xiv. The fifth is in chapters xv, xvi. The ſixth is in chapters xvii, xviii, and xix. And the ſeventh is in chapters xx, xxi, and xxii. to the end of what is prophetical. But of this diviſion, we will ſpeak more particularly, chap. vi. lect. 1.

Fourthly, Theſe viſions or prophecies, that are to come, are again to be diſtinguiſhed in principal prophecies, and ſuch as are explicatory only: we call theſe principal prophecies of things to come, that are principally and primarily ſuch; that is, which hold forth diſtinct matter in themſelves, not holden forth in any former propheſy of that kind, and ſo, in reſpect of the matter contained in them, and time which they relate unto, they differ one from another: of this ſort are the prophecies of the ſeven ſeals, chap. vi. of the ſeven trumpets, chap. viii, ix, x, and xi. and of the ſeven vials, chap. xv. and xvi. for theſe have a dependency one upon another, carrying the propheſy of the eſtate of the church on from John's time unto the end of the world; and yet neither of them do expreſs what hath been contained in any of the other. Again, we call theſe explicatory prophecies, which contain no new matter, nor relate to any other time different from the former prophecies, but are explicatory of the ſame things contained in ſome of theſe principal prophecies under other types and expreſſions. Of this ſort is the third viſion, chap. xii, xiii, and xiv. which is explicatory of the firſt two principal viſions of the ſeals and trumpets; and the two other viſions, that are from chap. xvii. to the cloſe, which are explicatory of the vials, eſpecially of the laſt three: for the firſt of them explaineth the fifth and ſixth vials in chap. xvii, xviii, and xix. The ſecond is explicatory of the ſeventh vial, chap. xx, xxi, &c. So that, in ſum, there are three principal prophecies ſet down in one form, viz. of *ſeven ſeals*, *ſeven trumpets*, *ſeven vials:* and again, other three that are leſs principal and explicatory, which are expreſſed by other types, according to the diviſion formerly laid down: of which more may be ſaid when we come to chap. vi. already referred unto.

Fifthly, The form of this book, as to the manner of God's revealing theſe prophecies, would be obſerved: for, to make things the more clear and plain to John, that which was to come, is repreſented to him in viſion, as already acted; and, for this end, John in the Spirit is brought to heaven to behold this comedy, (to call it ſo) or tragedy: for, it may be called a comedy, in reſpect of the godly, whoſe affairs have a ſad beginning, but a joyful cloſe: but, in reſpect of the wicked it is a tragedy; for, they have a ſeeming ſweet, and pleaſant beginning, but a ſad and ſorrowful cloſe. And becauſe the Lord thinketh good to repreſent theſe things to John in this manner, there are ſeveral things in the progreſs of this propheſy, which are brought in for this very end, as the ſpeaking and acting of ſeveral perſons and parties, divers interludes and ſongs, &c. which are not ſo much for the bringing forth any diſtinct matter or propheſy, as to make up that form wherein the Lord thinketh fit to reveal this propheſy: for preventing therefore of exceſſive and too curious diving, to find out myſteries in theſe things beyond the ſcope, we would take notice of this advertiſement, which we may more particularly conſider in theſe inſtances.

Firſt, To all theſe principal prophecies, there are ſome things preparatory, wherein the Lord ſetteth

forth his majesty and glory; thereby to rouse up John and others to carry the more humbly and reverently in the search of these prophecies: such is this part of the vision, chap. iv. and v. which is preparatory to the prophetical part following: for, in them, the Lord, as it were, representeth the place where this great comedy is acted, describeth the actors, and showeth the nature of the things which are to be acted; but these preparations are not properly prophetical, as the visions themselves, which hold forth the things that are acted as they are; yet, the allusion, which may be gathered from such representations in their general strain and scope, is not to be despised.

Secondly, We will find plain words of doctrine mixed in with the darkest prophecies, as, *Blessed are they that die in the Lord; blessed are they that keep their garments clean*, &c. In which, and such like words, there is a plain doctrinal and comfortable meaning, the Lord thereby sweetening the darker prophecies, and giving his people somewhat to feed on in the search of these, as was once formerly hinted; yet, from the scope of such sentences, and their being inserted in such places, and such like, some light may be gathered for understanding of what is prophetical beside them.

Thirdly, There are some interludes of songs and playings upon harps, mentioned in several places, which are not properly prophetical in themselves, but as circumstances in a parable, they are brought to make the intended mould of this book complete, and to make a connection between the parts and prophecies thereof: these indeed are not to be abstracted from, or extended beyond their particular scope respectively; yet are they so wisely expressed by the Lord, that even they may be subservient to the understanding of the matter contained in the principal prophecies to which they belong. Of this same nature we take the representations of divers parties, as actors in this comedy, to be, as sometimes angels, sometimes beasts, sometimes elders, &c. which, no doubt, is wisely done by the Lord, and wanteth not signification; yet we do think that deep mysteries are not to be drawn from such expressions, except something, in the current and strain of the prophesy, evidence the same to aim at such things, as at least a part of their scope.

Fourthly, We will also find many expressions borrowed from the Old Testament, and from the manner of the prophets therein, especially from Daniel, Ezekiel, and Zechariah; yet often these expressions are to set forth a different thing from what was principally intended by them under the Old Testament; as by considering the particulars in the progress, will be clear.

We come now to the preparation of the first prophesy, in the fourth and fifth chapters: which also, in some respect, may be called preparatory to all the visions that follow. It hath two parts: the fourth chapter holdeth out the majesty of God the Creator, and expresseth his praise, considering him as such: the fifth chapter holdeth out the glory and majesty of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Mediator and Redeemer; this is not to be understood as if the Son were not honoured in the fourth chapter with the Father, or the Father with the Son in the fifth: for, that cannot be, seeing they are one God; and the honour that is given in both chapters is divine. But the works of creation and redemption, being the grounds upon which all creatures, especially the redeemed, are obliged to praise God, and the great evidences of his manifold glory; therefore both of them are explicitly spoken to, and the Lord, under both these considerations taken up, thereby to express him to be the more eminently and singularly glorious: so, when the ground of the praise is given in chap. iv. ver. 11. it is, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created.* Again, in the fifth chapter, the work of redemption is mentioned, as we may gather from ver. 9, and 12. yet so, as both are put together in the same thanksgiving, chap. v. ver. 13.

In this fourth chapter, beside some circumstances, making way to the vision, we have these three principal things: 1. A stately description of the majesty of God, who is described in his own appearance, as sitting upon a throne, like a jasper, and a sardine stone, &c. ver. 3. which doth set forth, to speak so, the posture wherein God appeareth to John, thus stately in Majesty. They are excellent expressions, and yet they come far short of the thing they represent, but, nevertheless, they are the furthest that men can win to, viz. by things known, to express, or some way to conceive an unconceivable thing. 2. We have a description of his train and attendants, set out at large

from the beginning of the 4 verſe to the 8. wherein God is deſcribed from all the royal attendants that wait on him, and the excellent and ſtately way he is waited upon. 3. From the midſt of the 8 verſe to the end of the chapter, we have a deſcription of the glory of God, from the work and exerciſe that theſe attendants are about: for, verſe 8. it is ſaid, *They reſt not day and night, ſaying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.* And the expreſſions of all the glory they gave him, are ſet out in ſeveral circumſtances to the end.

The ſcope is, to ſet forth to John, and all the church, the majeſty of God, the giver of this Revelation, the Creator of all things, he that guideth all this world, and ruleth his church; and at the entry, to put an impreſſion of the Majeſty of this God upon John, and upon all that ſhould read and hear theſe things that follow: for which end he began with ſuch viſions to Ezekiel, chap. i. to Iſaiah, chap. vi. and to John, chap. i. of this book.

To come more particularly to the words: There are in the firſt and ſecond verſes four circumſtances that make way to the viſion. 1. *After this*, that is, after the firſt viſion ſpoken of in the firſt three chapters; for though it is like (as chap. i. ver. 10.) John had all this revelation revealed to him in one day from the Lord; yet the Lord gave him ſome breathings between viſions. *Firſt*, Things preſent, and then things to come, being revealed to him; which is one cauſe why the prophecies and viſions of this book are diſtinguiſhed from each other.

The ſecond circumſtance obſervable is, The Lord's giving acceſs to John to ſee what he ſaw, *Behold, a door was opened in heaven:* what is meaned by heaven here, whether the church militant, which is often, in this book, and in ſcripture called heaven, or, whether the third heaven ſpoken of, 2 Cor. xii. 2. we ſhall not inſiſt on it: what John ſaw was concerning the viſible church; and for their behove and advantage: but it is like, the place where John ſaw theſe things in viſion, was even that which we call heaven literally, God extraordinarily making way to him, to look in where his glory was manifeſted; and it is called here *an opening of a door in heaven*, and there ſhewing him things to come concerning his church, which were afterward to fall out; yet this is now ſhown unto John in viſion, as if it were for the preſent time acted in a kind of comedy before him. And therefore may either be ſuppoſed to be revealed to him in heaven, or in a trance repreſented to him, as if it were there. And it agreeth beſt with the ſcope, that it be thus underſtood, viz. that heaven ſhould be in this manner opened to John, and things revealed to him there, which he was to reveal to the church.

The third circumſtance is, The voice which he heard, and what it ſaid, *And the firſt voice which I heard, &c.* that is, the former voice which I heard, chap. i. ver. 10, 11. The voice of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which ſaid there, *I am Alpha and Omega, the firſt and the laſt;* that ſame voice ſpeaketh again, and reneweth John's commiſſion to come and ſee, and write; and the voice biddeth him, *Come up hither, and he will ſhew him*, &c. to tell that a heavenly mind is a great furtherance to acquaintance with the myſteries of God, and earthly-mindedneſs is a great hindrance and obſtruction; and then he propoſeth what things he hath to ſhew him, *things which muſt be hereafter.* So that in the explication and application of this revelation, we are not to look back to the four monarchies, but to Chriſt's way with his church in the days of the goſpel, according to the firſt general which we premitted.

The fourth circumſtance is, ver. 2. *And immediately I was in the Spirit:* whereby it is like, there hath been ſome interval betwixt the extaſy he was in, chap. i. ver. 10. and this extaſy of ſpirit he is now in: and it is the ſecond way how our Lord Jeſus fitteth John to receive theſe following myſteries: *Firſt*, He carrieth up his affections, and maketh him heavenly, and then raviſheth him in the ſpirit, whereby (as chap. i. 10.) in an extraordinary way John is, as it were, taken out of himſelf, put in an extaſy, impreſſions of things to come made on his ſpirit, and palpably and viſibly made diſcernible to him in a ſpiritual way, as if he had ſeen them with his bodily eyes.

We come now to the viſion itſelf: and in it we have, 1. God's throne (to ſpeak ſo) ſet forth. 2. Himſelf ſitting on it. 3. A deſcription of his glory as he ſitteth upon it.

1. *Behold, a throne was ſet in heaven.* Theſe are borrowed expreſſions: for God needeth not a material throne, neither hath he any ſuch in heaven; but as among kings, thrones are uſed as ſeats

for judgment, and for places where they appear in their royalty; ſo the ſame ſimilitude is borrowed here, to ſet out the ſovereignty of God in heaven, and in earth, and in his church (eſpecially his goſpel church) which is called his throne, Jer. iii. 17. for in it he hath an abſolute dominion and government, and is continually exerciſing and acting that government as a king on his throne. It holdeth out, 1. Not only God's greatneſs and power: but, 2. His abſolute dominion and ſovereignty: and, 3. His actual exerciſing of that power and ſovereignty: which is further holden out, in the ſecond expreſſion, *one ſat on the throne:* the throne is not empty, but hath one ſitting on it, acting and exerciſing that power. Such words are frequent in ſcripture, Pſal. xi. 4. *The Lord's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eye-lids try the children of men.* It expreſſeth what is meant by his throne, viz. his abſoluteneſs and ſovereignty in government, and his juſtice, and ſeverity, being angry with the wicked every day. God in his glory and excellency is holden out, as ſitting on his throne, verſe 3. in other ſort of robes than ever were ſeen on the greateſt that ever were in the world; *he that ſat on the throne, was to look upon like a jaſper, and ſardine ſtone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in ſight like unto an emerald:* theſe are expreſſions, not of his form, (for he is purely ſpiritual and unconceivable) but borrowed, to ſet forth his ſplendor and glory; and becauſe that which men uſually think moſt excellent, is gold, and precious ſtones, theſe are made uſe of for this end. There are two ſtones mentioned for reſembling of his glory; the firſt is a jaſper, an exceeding precious ſtone; it was one of theſe precious ſtones that was put in Aaron's breaſt-plate, Exod. xxviii. 20. and it is among theſe ſtones wherewith the foundations of the walls of the new Jeruſalem are ſaid to he garniſhed, Rev. xxii. 19. And becauſe one ſtone is not ſufficient, even but to reſemble the glory and ſplendor of the majeſty of God, there is another added, viz. the ſardine ſtone; which is alſo precious as the former was. Theſe being unknown to us, we ſhall not inſiſt to deſcribe them; for, the ſcope is clear, viz. to point out this, that God is admirably and inconceivably excellent, even ſo excellent, that all the moſt precious things in earth, being put together, are but poor ſhadows, and infinitely diſproportionable reſemblances of that excellency which is in him.

A ſecond thing whereby this glory is ſet forth, is, *And there was a rainbow round about the throne, in ſight like unto an emerald.* In Ezek. 1. where the ſame deſcription is almoſt in the ſame terms; there is a firmament, a throne, one ſitting on it, and a rainbow; as the appearance of the bow that is in the clouds in the day of rain, ſo was the appearance of the brightneſs round about, the ſcope in both places, is, to ſhew the glorious majeſty of God, who, as he hath a throne attributed to him improperly, to expreſs his ſovereignty, ſo hath he this as a cloth of ſtate over his throne thereby to ſhew how far his ſovereignty and majeſty is beyond the greateſt monarch's on earth: for, he only *hath immortality, and dwelleth in a light that no man can approach unto, whom no eye hath ſeen, nor can ſee,* 1 Tim. vi. 16. Therefore is juſtly called the *only potentate*, verſe 15. All others being but ſlaves and worms in compariſon with him. And that this bow is compared to an *emerald*, is to ſhew that it was a more glorious thing than that rainbow in the clouds, which is viſible to us. This rainbow, chap. x. ver. 1. is ſaid to be upon his head; whereby it would ſeem, that it is ſomething which he doth, as it were, account his crown and diadem of glory: it is like, that reſpect is here had to that covenant, which the Lord made with Noah, that the waters ſhould not overflow the earth, whereof this rainbow was given as a ſign and ſeal for the confirmation thereof, Gen. ix. 13. and the mentioning of it here, and chap. x. is not to relate to that particular promiſe, that the earth ſhould not be drowned, but is to relate unto the covenant of God's grace through Chriſt Jeſus, with his true church: for when it is called *a bow, in ſight like unto an emerald*, it pointeth out an excellency beyond the ordinary rainbows: and ſo may be thought to relate to a more excellent covenant. And indeed, conſidering that this is an eminent piece of the Lord's glory, and, as it were, a crown, we can apply it to no other thing. In reference to the ſcope in theſe places, it holdeth forth, 1. That this glorious God, who is the creator of all, is a God who hath condeſcended to covenant with his people. 2. It holdeth forth, that this gracious condeſcending of his to enter in covenant with them, is a main part of his glory and majeſty, which he accounteth to be as a crown unto him. 3. It holdeth forth, that as the Lord doth not reveal his glory to

his people abſtractly but in the way of his covenant; ſo his people cannot win to the comfortable thoughts of the majeſty of God, nor ought to look on his glory, but as under that relation. 4. And more particularly, it is added here to confirm John in this, that tho' the church was to meet with many perſecutions and trials at firſt from heathens, yet ſhould ſhe not be overwhelmed with the ſame, more than the earth can be overwhelmed again with water: and tho' after that, Antichriſt and enemies within ſhould trouble her by errors and hereſies, yet ſhould ſhe alſo be kept from being drowned by them; and therefore when the Lord beginneth the conſolatory part of the ſecond principal prophecy, and cometh to comfort John againſt the trials of Antichriſt in the beginning of the x. chap. He doth there again appear with this bow upon his head, to ſhew that he is no leſs mindful of his covenant with his people, and of their preſervation from being overwhelmed by enemies, than he is of that promiſe which he made to Noah in the place formerly mentioned.

From the ſcope, *Obſ.* 1. The great neceſſity and advantage that there is for all that would know God, and the mind of God, to be rightly inſtructed what God is. It is the firſt leſſon, that all, whether miniſters or others, ſhould learn to have right thoughts and impreſſions of the majeſty of God, and a right conviction of that glory that is in him.

2. As this is requiſite to the uptaking of God's mind in any thing, ſo it is particularly applicable to this book: there can be no uptaking of the mind of God in theſe myſteries, till we be rightly inſtructed what God is, and have the impreſſion of his Majeſty on our hearts. 1. Becauſe it ſetteth out his abſoluteneſs and government over his church, whether in the times of bloody perſecution, or of prevailing errors: in all theſe God ſitteth on his throne governing. 2. That the faith of God's people may be confirmed, in expecting the performance of the promiſes to them, and the execution of the judgment here pronounced on their enemies, notwithſtanding of many intervening difficulties; the eyeing of God's abſoluteneſs and dominion, maketh for this. 3. The looking on God's abſoluteneſs is neceſſary at the entry to the part of this book, to ſtay our curioſity, and the needleſs vain ſearching that curious ſpirits may decline to, and ſo go a whoring from the ſcope, and turn aſide to vain jangling, whereby they obſcure rather than clear the meaning, We cloſe this, wiſhing for this impreſſion in our meddling with any part of God's word, and eſpecially in meddling with this prophecy.

Obſer. 3. Where God is rightly ſeen, he will be ſeen exceeding ſtately and glorious; O ſo wonderful! whom nothing can reſemble, whom no tongue can expreſs, nor eye behold, nor heart conceive! what were it to imagine thouſands of mountains of the moſt precious ſtones imaginable, and thouſands of ſuns ſhining in their brightneſs? Theſe are inconceivably ſhort of God, and the glory that is in him; what an excellent happineſs will that be to dwell with this God for ever? To behold his face, to ſee him as he is, and to be capacitate (to ſpeak ſo) to know him as we are known of him? Wonder and admire at him, who is glorious in holineſs, fearful in praiſes, doing wonders, terrible in majeſty, and in all perfections paſt finding out: to him be praiſe for ever. *Amen.*

LECTURE II.

Ver. 4. *And round about the throne were four and twenty ſeats, and upon the ſeats I ſaw four and twenty elders ſitting, clothed in white raiment, and they had on their heads crowns of gold.*

5. *And out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices: and there were ſeven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the ſeven Spirits of God.*

6. *And before the throne there was a ſea of glaſs like unto cryſtal: and in the midſt of the throne, and round about the throne were four beaſts full of eyes before and behind.*

7. *And the firſt beaſt was like a lion, and the ſecond beaſt like a calf, and the third beaſt had a face as a man, and the fourth beaſt was like a flying eagle.*

8. *And the four beaſts had each of them ſix wings about him, and they were full of eyes within,—*

THESE verſes hold forth the ſecond thing in the chapter, viz. the glorious attendants of this great God, who ſitteth upon his throne as great Sovereign of heaven and earth. Great

kings have their thrones, and their clothes of ſtate, the Lord is beyond them in both theſe: they have alſo their inferior judges and nobles, and counſellors waiting on them, as alſo, others to execute their orders and decrees; the Lord is brought in here as more eminently furniſhed with glorious attendants and inſtruments to execute his pleaſure, than any that ever was heard of.

Before we proceed, one thing is needful to be cleared, viz. whether the ſcope of this viſion be to repreſent the glory of God, as it is manifeſted to the church triumphant in heaven, and the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect? Or, whether it be intended to expreſs the glory of God, as ſhining in his ordinances, in the church militant? *Anſw.* We conceive neither of theſe is to be ſecluded, but both may be well included: for, to conſider God as manifeſted in his glory in heaven, agreeth well with the ſcope; as aiming thereby to impreſs the reverence and awe of the majeſty of God upon hearts: yet we ſay, that this is not only intended; nor is the other to be excluded: becauſe, 1. It alſo agreeth well with the ſcope, which is to ſet forth events concerning the militant church, and for that end to repreſent, as it were, a theatre and actors, for bringing about theſe events, whereof the majeſty of God is ſupreme governor, &c. Now, it conduceth more to the ſcope, and cometh nearer what is intended, to conceive this repreſentation as holding forth God's glory and way in his militant church. 2. It is alſo uſual in this book, to expreſs the viſible chuch under the title of *Heaven*, and things done in it, by ſimilitudes of things, ſet forth as acted in heaven, as in the progreſs we will ſee. 3. This preparation being conſolatory againſt the coming trials of the church, for which cauſe the Lord appeareth with his bow about his throne,) it will agree beſt to that part of the ſcope, to apply it to the militant church, by which his glorious preſence therein, his nearneſs thereto, his care and protection thereof, &c. will moſt manifeſtly and comfortably be ſet forth. 4. There is a reſemblance between the Lord's glorious preſence in his church, and that which is in heaven; for, he hath a glorious throne of grace in his church, as he hath one of glory in heaven; and what is more immediately manifeſted in heaven, doth ſomeway ſhine, by his ordinances amongſt his people. 5. If we conſider all the attendants mentioned in this, and in the following chapter, particularly, ver. 10. we will find it neceſſary to underſtand this, as reſpecting the church militant; becauſe ſome are ſpoken of, who are *redeemed, and are to reign upon the earth.* Whence, we conceive, it is not unſuitable to look upon this repreſentation, as expreſſing God's glory in his militant church: which is repreſented by heaven and the practice of perfected ſaints there, to ſhew unto them, where here, a copy of their duty in praiſing and thankſgiving, and in doing the will of God in earth, as it is done in heaven.

We come then to conſider more particularly this deſcription of the Lord's excellent train and attendants.

Firſt, Ver. 4. There are *round about the throne four and twenty ſeats, and upon the ſeats, I ſaw four and twenty elders ſitting, and they had on their heads crowns of gold.* By *elders* here, we conceive, are underſtood the true profeſſors of the militant church in the days of the goſpel: for, in the Song, chap. v. ver. 9, and 10. we will find that they are ſuch as are redeemed; ſuch, as by that redemption, are made kings and prieſts, as all believers are, chap. i. ver. 6. and to reign upon earth, which ſheweth that they are members in the church militant: and they being followers of the four beaſts, and privileged with ſuch privileges as are common to all ſaints, it appeareth that they are not officers or guides, but private profeſſors. They are called *elders* for the dignity which they are advanced unto beyond others, to be, as it were, elders and governors in God's houſe in a ſpiritual ſenſe: in which reſpect, they are called *kings and prieſts*, chap. v. ver. 10. or, as the word is uſually taken in the New Teſtament, they are accounted for ſpecial miniſters and ſervants, having a nearneſs to God, and to ſhare of his glory, which none elſe in the world had; and thus the Lord's people are called his *antients* or *elders*, Iſa. xxiv. ver. 23. they are ſaid to be *twenty-four* in number; which, we conceive, to be a definite number for an indefinite: it may be, there is an alluſion to the twenty-four courſes that David appointed for the ſervice of the tabernacle, 1 Chron. xxv. 26, 28, &c. To ſhew that the miniſtration of the New Teſtament is no leſs glorious. Alſo, ſeeing the church in old was reckoned by twelve tribes, who, it is like, had their twelve princes as elders and governours anſwerable to that number; ſo twenty four is mentioned here, to ſhew that the church, in the days

of the goſpel, ſhall be extended to a double and greater number of ſaints than was at that time: but on theſe we ſhall not inſiſt, ſeeing the general may be ſafely reſted in. Again, they are ſaid to be *clothed in white raiment:* which ſheweth, that their innocency is their greateſt glory, or their moſt ſtately robe, and the greateſt badge of their dominion: for, *white raiment* ſignifies either Chriſt's imputed righteouſneſs, or their begun ſanctification, as we heard, chap. iii. ver. 4. And is often elſewhere in this prophecy. The laſt thing ſpoken of theſe elders, is, they have *four and twenty ſeats, or thrones upon which they ſit*, and *on their heads crowns of gold:* both which, are to ſhew, 1. The ſettled and ſecure happineſs that theſe poſſeſs beyond all others in the world. 2. The ſpiritual dominion that they have begun in them here over their luſts and ſpiritual enemies: in which reſpect, they *reign even on the earth*, chap. v. 10. And, 3. It is to give a type of the glorious dominion that is laid up for them in heaven, when they, having been aſſeſſors at the judging of the world, ſhall be ſet down upon one throne with Jeſus Chriſt, as was promiſed, chap. iii. ver. 21.

In verſe 5. We have the ſecond thing whereby this ſtatelineſs is expreſſed, *and out of the throne proceeded thunderings, and lightnings, and voices:* it is an alluſion to God's manner of giving the law, Exod. xix. whereby he appeared ſo terrible, that even Moſes did exceedingly fear and quake; and, Deut. xxxiii. 2. it is ſaid, that from his right hand went a fiery law: the ſcope is, to ſhew, that tho' God appear without great outward ſplendour and terror in his ordinances in the days of the goſpel; yet is there in his church power and glory, whereby the mightieſt may be terrified and confounded: in which reſpect, the church is terrible as an army with banners, Song vi. 4, and 10. and the witneſſes, chap. xi. ver. 3, and 5. though prophecying in ſackcloth, are ſaid to have fire proceeding out of their mouths, and to bring on many other dreadful plagues. By this he would teach men to approach to him with fear; for, *he is a great God, and to be had in reverence of all that are about him*, Pſal. lxxxix. 7.

There is alſo a third thing obſerved in that fifth verſe, *And there were ſeven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the ſeven ſpirits of God:* by theſe we underſtand the Holy Ghoſt in his manifold and various operations, as we heard, chap. i. ver. 4. and by comparing chap. v. ver. 6. it is clear: for, theſe ſeven ſpirits are the *horns and eyes of the Lamb*, that ſheweth both the omnipotency and omniſciency of the ſame, and they are *ſent forth into all the earth*, which could not be, if the Spirit were not infinite and immenſe, and ſo cannot be underſtood but of the Holy Ghoſt; where, by the way, we may perceive the abſurdity of the application of doctor Hammond on this place formerly mentioned, who doth apply theſe ſeven ſpirits, as repreſenting the ſeven deacons of the church of Jeruſalem. Theſe operations of the Spirit are compared to *lamps*, becauſe of the ſhining light that floweth therefrom to the church: they are lamps of *fire burning*, that is, to point out that the ſaving operations of the Spirit have heat, and a purifying efficacy with their light, to warm the heart with love to God, and to conſume and eat up the droſs of corruption that is in the ſame: therefore it is ſaid of Chriſt, Matth. iii. 11. that he ſhould *baptize with the Holy Ghoſt, and with fire:* which laſt word expreſſeth the nature and efficacy of the former. They are called *ſeven lamps*, or *ſpirits*, becauſe though there be but one and the ſelf ſame ſpirit, yet there are diverſities of gifts, and differences of adminiſtrations and operations, as it is, 1 Cor. xii. 4, 5, &c. of which we ſpoke, chap. i. *Laſtly*, Theſe lamps are ſaid to be *before the throne*, to ſhew that as kings have their thrones and courts lighted with lamps and torches, ſo the Lord hath his church lighted by his Spirit, and hath the operations thereof, as if it were, ſo placed, as thereby light may be given to his church and elders that are round about him; this is a ſpecial part of the Lord's ſtatelineſs, and of the church's glory, that his Spirit is there; and by him it is covenanted to his church for their good unto the end of the world, according as the word is, Iſa. lix. 21. 'As for me, this is my cove-'nant with them, ſaith the Lord; my Spirit, that 'is upon thee, and my word which I have put in 'thy mouth, ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, 'nor out of the mouth of thy ſeed, nor out of the 'mouth of thy ſeed's ſeed, ſaith the Lord, from 'henceforth, and for ever.'

The fourth thing marked as before this throne, is in the beginning of ver. 6. *And before the throne there was a ſea of glaſs, like unto chryſtal.* A ſea,

is a great veſſel for containing of water, called *a ſea* for the bigneſs thereof, as 1 Kings vii. 23. It is ſaid that Solomon made a molten *ſea* for the uſe of the ſanctuary: the end thereof was, that therein the prieſts might waſh their ſacrifices, and alſo themſelves, in their approaching unto the altar: this was both for great uſe and ornament in that legal ſervice, and alſo, was typical of Jeſus Chriſt, by whom we, and our ſacrifices, are accepted in our approaches to God. By it here, may not unfitly be underſtood the blood of Jeſus Chriſt in its efficacy, which doth really that in the church, which was but typically performed by that *ſea* in Solomon's temple. Certainly all circumſtances will agree well to confirm this: for, 1. It agreeth well to the ſcope, to ſhew the glory of God in the church; for, it cannot be denied but this blood is one of the ſpecial ornaments thereof: hence, Heb. xii. 23, and 24. when we are ſaid to come to the heavenly Jeruſalem. which doth there expreſs the militant church, it is alſo added, that we are to come to God the Judge of all, &c. to Jeſus the Mediator of the new covenant; and that excellent ſociety is cloſed with this ſweet expreſſion, *and to the blood of ſprinkling*, &c. which intimateth this to be a main comfortable part of the glory and furniture, to ſay ſo, of the goſpel church. 2. Seeing the gifts of the Spirit are mentioned immediately before in their ſanctifying virtue, it is not unſuitable that the juſtifying virtue of the blood of the Lamb ſhould be underſtood by this, as joined therewith; for, they go well together: therefore, chap. xv. 2. this *ſea* is ſaid *to be mingled with fire:* which is to be underſtood of this fire of the Spirit here placed with it. 3. This will agree well with the reaſon why it is called the *ſea*, viz. to ſhew the fulneſs thereof, and the greatneſs of the efficacy of the ſame. 4. It is *before the throne*, to ſhew that God hath provided that blood to waſh ſinners, that they may approach him with boldneſs, as may be gathered from Heb. x. 19. and withal, that there is no approaching to him but by the ſame. *Laſtly*, It is ſaid to be of *glaſs*, *like unto cryſtal:* which, we conceive, is not to expreſs the brittleneſs thereof; for, the mentioning of it to be like *cryſtal*, contributeth nothing to that, but is to expreſs its excellency and fitneſs to contain and preſerve what is in it clean and pure: in which reſpect, it is of an excellency beyond that of Solomon's which was but of braſs. Yet, it may alſo ſignify how reverently and warily it ought to be made uſe of, leaſt by proud preſumption that blood be trode under foot, and deſpiſed, which is ſo tenderly reſerved, as is in a ſea of glaſs. This interpretation, we think, is agreeable to the ſcope, and alſo not inconſiſtent with that which is ſpoken, ch. xv. v. 2. of the ſaints their ſtanding on this *ſea* after their victory over the beaſt, which may well be underſtood to be their waſhing of their robes, and making them white in the blood of the Lamb, as the expreſſion is, chap. vii. ver. 14. which alſo relateth to the ſame perſons, and in the ſame condition: for, there is no obtaining of victory over the beaſt by any, nor yet a maintaining of the ſame, but by having footing upon Chriſt by faith, which will make the ſaints indeed to ſing as victors and conquerors over all, which is confirmed by chap. xii. ver. 11. *They overcame by the blood of the Lamb*, &c. I know it is ordinarily applied to the world, and its brittleneſs, which hath a ſenſe and application not unuſeful; yet, conſidering that this is mentioned as one of the ornaments which wait upon the Lord in his church, and as a ſingular evidence of his glory; and, conſidering that it is placed *before the throne*, even in that ſame room which *the ſeven ſpirits* of God have; as alſo, conſidering that it muſt be conceived to be within the guard of angels, mentioned, chap. v. ver. 11. we conceive it cannot agree to the world, taken as diſtinguiſhed from the church, eſpecially conſidering, that its being reſembled to a *ſea of glaſs*, and that not of common glaſs, but that which is as cryſtal, is not to aggrege the brittleneſs thereof, but clearly to commend and ſet forth its excellency, as being ſomething of more than an ordinary value. Beſide this word *ſea*, in this place, doth not look to theſe raging waters, which are called ſea, as contradiſtinguiſhed from the dry land, (the miſtake whereof may be the ground of this uſual application); but it expreſſeth a great veſſel made for uſe and ornament, and accordingly made uſe of in the houſes of great men, and was particularly mentioned among the ornaments of the temple and ceremonial worſhip, as was formerly marked, and is eſpecially for waſhing, or bathing therein. Now, theſe conſiderations will by no means ſuffer it to be applied to the world, as expreſſing the vanity and worthleſſneſs thereof; neither will there be any juſt analogy found betwixt the two, whereby the one may be found to reſemble the other.

The laſt thing mentioned here for the commendation of this glorious train, is *four beaſts*, which are largely inſiſted on, verſe 6, 7, and 8. That theſe beaſts are mentioned immediately after the ſea of glaſs, it ſheweth, that by *the ſea of glaſs* muſt be underſtood ſomething that tendeth to the commendation of God's preſence in his church, ſeeing it is placed in the midſt of the other commendations; for, that theſe beaſts are mentioned to ſet forth his glory, cannot be queſtioned. The word rendered beaſts, is in the original ζῶα, and might be well tranſlated living creatures, as it is, Ezek. i. or living wights. By theſe are not underſtood angels, as in Ezek. i. 10. becauſe, chap. v. 10. &c. they are among the redeemed, and verſe 11. are expreſly diſtinguiſhed from the angels, who are ſaid to be round about them: and indeed their following deſcription being compared with that of theſe living wights, or cherubims, Ezek. i. there will be found a great difference. Nor, ſecondly, by them can be underſtood any of the glorified triumphant church, becauſe of the reaſons that were given when we ſpoke of the elders; for, they alſo reign upon the earth, chap. v. 10. and the ſcope is, by them to expreſs ſomething of the church militant. We conceive therefore by theſe beaſts ſo deſcribed, are underſtood the miniſters of the church in the days of the goſpel, as being diſtinguiſhed from profeſſors, who are called elders, and as being deſcribed like angels, to ſhew their eminency in ſome reſpect beyond the other; for, 1. Theſe beaſts or living creatures, (for ſome of them are like to men) do ever go before the elders in the worſhip of God, as guides to them therein. 2. Becauſe they do invite, excite and inform others to and in their duties, as they ſay *come and ſee*, chap. vi. 3, 5, 7. 3. They are deſcribed as theſe cherubims or angels are, Ezek i. and yet being ſuch angels as are members of the militant church, they muſt be underſtood of the miniſters of the goſpel, ſeeing theſe are ordinarily deſigned by the title angel in this propheſy: it is therefore the more likely that they are deſcribed after the manner of angels, even as they get their name. 4. We will find all the particulars of the deſcription to be pertinently applicable to them; as, 1. They are ſaid to be beaſts or living creatures, to ſhew a ſpecial activity and fitneſs that is communicated to them even beyond others. 2. Their number is four; which is leſs than the number of the elders or profeſſors was, yet ſufficient to carry the Lord's meſſage to all the four corners of the earth; and, as it were, to be upon all ſides of the Lord's throne for the edification and overſight of his people, as the tribes of Iſrael marched with four ſtandards on all the quarters of the ark. 3. They are ſaid to be *full of eyes before and behind:* they've not one eye, but many eyes, becauſe they have many to watch over, and many ſnares to give them warning of. They have eyes before, that is, to ſhew their dependence on God, who being the great leader and captain that goeth before his people, theſe that are under-guides have their eye on him for direction in the way that they ought to lead their people in: and thus their eyes before, are mentioned before their eyes behind, to ſhew, that ere they give any direction to the flock that follow them, they will look to the maſter for his orders; and ſo have their eye upon him, as the eyes of ſervants look unto the hands of their maſters, for obſerving of their directions. Pſal. cxxiii. 2. they are alſo *full of eyes behind*, to ſhew that they are watchful over theſe committed to them, by pointing out that way to them which they had diſcovered from God, and by watchful obſerving how they follow the ſame as the word is, Pſal. xxxii. 8. *I will inſtruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou ſhalt go, I will guide thee with mine eye:* which is to expreſs the moſt tender way of direction and inſtruction. Alſo theſe expreſſions ſerve well to ſhew their particular watchfulneſs over themſelves, who have eyes before them, that importeth tenderneſs in the undertaking of any thing; and eyes behind, which reſpecteth their tender obſervation of their bypaſt failings. 4. Theſe beaſts are placed in the *midſt of the throne, and round about the ſame:* it may ſeem ſtrange-like to ſay they are both in the midſt of the throne and about the ſame; yet, in the ſcripture language, to be in the midſt of a thing is to be near it, or to be fully upon it; and this part of the deſcription ſheweth their nearneſs to God, and their dignity beyond others; for the elders had thrones, and crowns; but theſe beaſts and miniſters have the ſame throne with the Lord, as being nearer to him in reſpect of their ſervice, and as being of more eminent dignity, becauſe they are ambaſſadors for him, and act in his ſtead, and in his name, and by virtue of the ſame authority, 2 Cor. v. 20. They are *round about the throne* alſo: which is not to be underſtood as if they were (to ſpeak ſo) without the circle of the

throne; but it is to ſhew the Lord's wiſe way of diſpoſing his miniſters unto all quarters for his churches edification: ſo that all of them are not together, or upon any one ſide of the throne, but they are diſpoſed by him upon all quarters thereof, for edifying of the elders, or his people ſet out by them, which are round about the throne, as we formerly heard.

In the ſeventh verſe, we have a more particular deſcription of the ſeveral ſhapes of theſe beaſts, which is the fifth thing by which they are deſcribed: the firſt beaſt *is like a lion*, the ſecond beaſt *like a calf*, the third beaſt *had a face as a man*, the fourth beaſt *is like a flying eagle*. By this diverſity of forms, or ſhapes, is ſet forth the diverſity of gifts and furniture, which the one holy Spirit uſeth to diſpenſe unto the miniſters of the church, as 1 Corinth. xii. 4, 5, &c. and hereby the Lord ſheweth, that as private Chriſtians may be more eminent in ſome graces than others, ſo miniſters are ſome of them eminent in one gift, ſome of them in another, as the Lord mindeth to make uſe of them, (as we may ſee by comparing Barſabas, the ſon of conſolation, with Bonaerges the ſon of thunder) yet all theſe gifts work for the good of the one body of the church, that there may be no ſchiſm or defect in the ſame, as it is, 1 Corinth. xii. 25. In the deſcription of theſe cherubims or living wights, Ezek. i. every one of them hath all theſe properties and perfections, as their deſcription cleareth; becauſe the ſcope is there to deſcribe holy cherubims; but here, being applied to miniſters of the goſpel, not one of them hath all theſe properties; yet all of them jointly have them all: which ſheweth, that though the Lord furniſh not every miniſter eminently with all gifts, that yet he uſeth to furniſh miniſters, jointly conſidered, with what gifts are needful for his church's good; ſo that what one wanteth, another hath; that the hand, and the eye may acknowledge they have need of the foot, &c.

More particularly, the firſt beaſt is ſaid to be like a lion: which doth expreſs the zeal, undaunted courage and boldneſs wherewith ſome miniſters are eminently furniſhed in carrying on the work of the Lord, eſpecially in difficult times. Thus were the apoſtles furniſhed, and many others in after-times, who have adventured boldly upon ſuch hard work, as hath made the world to think them mad in ſuch undertakings; yet have they been carried through the ſame. And from this we may ſee how our zealous reformers have been ſet a work to purſue a reformation againſt ſo many difficulties, viz. it hath been by being made partakers of this lion like ſpirit. The ſecond beaſt, is like a *calf, or ox:* which though he be not ſo bold in attempts as the other, viz. the lion; yet is uſeful for his durableneſs and ſervice. By this are ſet forth miniſters furniſhed with patience, humility, and painfulneſs in labour, and ſubmiſſiveneſs in ſuffering; which is alſo no little gift. And as the former prove profitable to the church, in reſpect of their zeal and boldneſs, ſo do they with their patient and conſtant drawing in the Lord's yoke, even under the croſs; this is not to be underſtood as if the firſt wanted patience, or the ſecond courage; for there is a zeal and boldneſs in ſuffering, as well as in doing; and if boldneſs have not a readineſs to ſubmit to the croſs, it will not be approven: but the meaning is, that ſome miniſters, who have patience and endurance, are yet (to ſay ſo) predominant and more eminent in the exerciſe of their zeal and courage; and others who are ſtout and couragious alſo, yet, in God's providence, are called to vent the ſame in ſuffering, ſo as their patience and painful laborioufneſs appeareth to be predominant in them. The third beaſt hath *a face as a man:* this ſetteth forth ſuch as are furniſhed with reaſon, prudence, and wiſdom in an eminent manner, for managing the affairs of his houſe: which is not a human natural policy, but a gift of wiſdom and diſcretion beſtowed by God upon them, as it is, 1 Cor. xii. 8, 10. And by this wiſdom and prudence, they edify and build the church as others that are more obſervably zealous and couragious: tho' they ſeem not to keep the ſame manner of proceeding in all things with the former; yet is the ſame end purſued by them, and the ſame rule is obſerved in it, and the ſame Spirit acteth them all. Wherefore it would not be thought ſtrange, if divers miniſters, driving the ſame deſign, be yet thought different in their manner of following the ſame. The fourth beaſt is like *a flying eagle:* this ſheweth the deep reach and inſight wherewith God hath furniſhed ſome in the myſteries of the goſpel, as alſo a ſpiritualneſs in their gift and ſtrain beyond others, whereby hearts may be drawn from this earth to the purſuing after things that are above. Of thoſe we may have occaſion to ſpeak, chap. vi. Only now we ſee, how wiſely the Lord ſuiteth his ſervants for his work, and doth uſually time and tryſte ſuch and ſuch qualifications in mini-

ſters according to the ſtate of his church. It is ordinary for ſome to apply theſe four beaſts to the four Evangeliſts; but there is no ground for it: beſide, John being one of theſe Evangeliſts, cannot be thought to invite himſelf to come and ſee, as all theſe four beaſts do, chap. vi.

In the eighth verſe, theſe beaſts are further deſcribed. A ſixth part of their deſcription is, *And the four beaſts had each of them ſix wings about them:* this is borrowed from Iſa. vi. 2, 3, &c. where the ſeraphims are ſo deſcribed: (by which it further appeareth, that miniſters, the angels of the militant church, are repreſented by theſe beaſts.) Theſe wings ſhew their expeditenes and readineſs to obey God's will. And further, from Iſa. vi. we may gather the reaſon why they are called *ſix*, *Firſt*, Becauſe there is need of two to cover their face, who are admitted to ſuch nearneſs with God: this ſignifieth the impreſſion which they have of the holy majeſty of God, and that godly fear and reverence that ought to be in miniſters in their going about holy things: this is commended in Levi, Mal. ii. 5. that he feared God, and was afraid *before his name*. *Secondly*, The uſe of other two wings, is, to cover their feet: whereby is expreſſed the ſenſibleneſs which they had of their own ſinful infirmities: this is a thing well becoming a miniſter in his miniſterial duties, to be walking with fear and humility, as being ſenſible of his own ſinfulneſs, and the great diſproportionableneſs that is between God and him. This is Paul's word, 1 Cor. *I was with you in weakneſs, and in fear, and in much trembling*. And it is certain, that where the firſt is, viz. the right impreſſion of God's holineſs, there this will be alſo. *Thirdly*, The laſt two wings, are for their duty; for, with two they are to fly. Here is a good contemperature when miniſters walk under the impreſſion of God's holineſs, and of their own ſinfulneſs; and yet are not by theſe more indiſpoſed, but made more fit for his work, and chearful and ready in the performing of their duty. If the firſt four wings be not in exerciſe, the two laſt will not be very fit for their work; and it is ſpiritual wiſdom to keep all theſe in the right place.

The ſeventh qualification whereby theſe beaſts are deſcribed, is, *They were full of eyes within*. In the ſixth verſe, they were *full of eyes before*, which reſpecteth their dependency upon God; and *full of eyes behind*, which repreſenteth their care over their flocks: here they *are full of eyes within*, which holdeth forth their watchfulneſs over themſelves, in that they ſo look to others, as they do not overlook themſelves, but are ſeriouſly reflecting upon their own inward condition: ſo they are good miniſters, and they are alſo good Chriſtians in their own private walk; and their being good Chriſtians in having reſpect to their own ſpiritual thriving, is no little qualification for their diſcharge of miniſterial duties, and for their being admitted to ſo great nearneſs to the throne of God. Miniſters that have but eyes behind them, to look upon the way of others, and have not eyes within them, to conſider themſelves, are but in a great part blind guides, as Chriſt ſpeaketh of the Phariſees, Matth. xv. 14. This having of eyes within, as well as eyes without, is expreſſed by the apoſtle, 1 Tim. iv. 16. in that precept, *Take heed unto thyſelf, and to thy doctrine*; and Acts xx. 28. *Take heed unto yourſelves and to all the flock*, &c. Miniſters that look to others, would take their retirings to look upon themſelves, leſt they become ſtrangers to their own condition: and what is ſpoken of miniſters here, is a duty well becoming every Chriſtian.

LECTURE III.

Ver. 8.----*And they reſt not day and night, ſaying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*

9. *And when theſe beaſts gave glory, and honour, and thanks to him that ſat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever.*

10. *The four and twenty elders fall down before him that ſat on the throne, and worſhip him that liveth for ever and ever, and caſt their crowns before the throne, ſaying,*

11. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou haſt created all things, and for thy pleaſure they are and were created.*

IN this part of the chapter, we have the third part of this ſtately deſcription: wherein the majeſty of God is ſet out by the great work and taſk that theſe attendents of his, viz. theſe four

beaſts, and the four and twenty elders have: and that is the work of praiſe, whereby both, in their places, concur to have him exalted. In the latter part of the 8 verſe the four beaſts begin; and in the three verſes following, the four and twenty elders go on.

In the elders praiſe, we may conſider theſe two, 1. The uninterruptedneſs thereof, *and they reſt not day and night, ſaying*, &c. this is to ſhew, *Firſt*, The great matter of their praiſe that doth ſtill continue, they are furniſhed ſo with grounds thereof. 2. It is to ſhew their diligence and ſerioufneſs in letting no opportunity of praiſe paſs: for praiſe being an affirmative duty, we conceive that this practice is to be expounded according to the precepts of rejoicing alway, and praying evermore. 3. It may more eſpecially ſet forth the diligence and ſerioufneſs that the miniſters of the goſpel are ſaid to be furniſhed with, according to the word, Iſa. lxii. 6. *I have ſet watchmen upon thy walls, O Jeruſalem, which ſhall never hold their peace day nor night*, &c.

The ſecond thing in their praiſe is, the matter thereof; which is the aſcribing to the Lord three of his own glorious and eſſential attributes. The firſt is *holineſs;* which is thrice repeated, *holy, holy, holy, Lord God*, &c. This ſeemeth to be taken from Iſa. vi. 3. where the ſeraphims begin their ſong with the ſame expreſſion. This ſheweth, 1. How infinitely and inconceivably holy the Lord is, when once mentioning of this attribute is not ſufficient. 2. It ſheweth that no attribute of God will have more impreſſion upon a tender miniſter that is near him than his holineſs: this affecteth the very angels, and the more near any is admitted to him, the more will this affect them. 3. It ſheweth, that miniſters ought to be angel-like in their ſpeaking of God, and that it is a main part of their taſk to hold forth his excellency to others. The ſecond attribute is, the Lord's *omnipotency, Lord God Almighty*, &c. By which the Lord is conceived as infinitely above all, and able to do all things, as Job ſpeaketh, chap. xlii. 2. and it is both a notable ground of praiſe in reference to God, and a comfort in reference to his people, who have him, (who is able to do above what they can aſk or think, Eph. iii. 20.) covenanted to be their Almighty God, even under that ſame conſideration, Gen. xvii. 1. The third attribute mentioned, is, his *eternity*, in theſe words, *which was, and is, and is to come:* whereof often hath been ſpoken; and it is here mentioned to advance the glory of God infinitely beyond all created idols who have had their beginning, and are going on unto a decay, and will ere long come to be deſtroyed: but the portion of Jacob is not ſo, who in all the toſſings of the world, continueth the ſame, and of his years there is no end.

After this, followeth the praiſe of the four and twenty elders. The beaſts go before, becauſe they repreſented the miniſters and guides, as we ſaid. In it three things may be obſerved; *Firſt*, The timing of their praiſe, ver. 9. *Secondly*, Their practice, ver. 10. *Thirdly*, Their verbal expreſſions or ſong, ver. 11.

The time of the elders praiſe, is, *And when theſe beaſts gave glory, honour and thanks to him that ſat upon the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, they fall down, &c.* In which words we may ſee, *Firſt*, What the works of the beaſts are. This is ſet forth in three expreſſions; 1. To *give glory to God:* this is their acknowledging of the majeſty that is in him, and doth reſpect his own glorious excellency. The ſecond is *honour:* this reſpecteth the relation that is between him as Creator, and his creatures, who having their being from him, and ſtanding in that relation to him, ought, by that tye, to honour him. The third is *thanks;* which looketh to former benefits freely received from him, by which there is an engagement put on them to be thankful; which here they acknowledge to be due, when they can do no more.

The firſt thing in theſe words is, the riſe or the timing of this praiſe of the elders, viz. it is *when theſe beaſts gave glory and honour, &c.* Which is to ſhew, 1. The orderlineſs of the Lord's worſhip in his church, every one keeping their own place. 2. It is to ſhew that tho' every one be not a preacher, and in that reſpect admitted to ſuch dignity and nearneſs with God as others; yet all in the church have ground and matter of praiſe, and employment in their ſtations, ſufficiently to expreſs the ſame to the commendation of the Lord's grace. 3. It ſheweth alſo the ſweet harmony that ought to be between miniſter and people, by their joining in the ſame work. And, 4. It expreſſeth the great influence that miniſters example, faithfulneſs and diligence will have upon the quickning and upſtirring of

people to their duty: for when the beasts begin, then the elders follow: and it is like, the silence and dumbness of many ministers may also be the cause why many congregations are silent and dumb in this respect. And this may be a reason why ministers are expressed by this title of *living wights*, or *living things*, (as was formerly observed) because not only they ought to be lively and stirring themselves, but because by their liveliness they have great influence on others to quicken them also.

The second thing in the elders praise, ver. x. is their practice, set forth in three expressions, 1. Though these four and twenty elders be sitting upon thrones, yet, when they hear the beasts, or ministers, mentioning the holiness and excellency of the Lord, the word hath that weight with them as to make them quit their thrones, *and fall down before him that sat on the throne;* this is to shew, 1. Their high esteem of God, before whom they cannot be too vile. 2. It sheweth their humble estimation of their own grandeur, and their being denied to it, when any thing of the honouring of God cometh in competition therewith. And, 3. It sheweth their acknowledging of all to be from him, and their accounting of it their greatest honour not to sit upon thrones, but to be humble before him, and to have him high. The second thing in their practice is, *They worship him that liveth for ever and ever:* This is added, 1. To shew that their falling down is out of no astonishment, or confusion; but out of deliberation to glorify God. 2. To shew that the more humble saints fall before God, the more fit are they to worship him, and the better progress will they make therein. 3. It is to express the inward adoration of their hearts, as going along with their external humble condition. God is expressed by this, that they *worship him that liveth for ever and ever*, (even as it was in the former verse, in the beasts their giving praise) that thereby it may be seen that they worship no idol, but the living God, in opposition to the heathenish and Antichristian worshippers. And also to shew that they know whom they worship, and are not worshipping an unknown God. Further, it expresseth the reverent impression which they have of him, so that they cannot mention him but with such titles and attributes as prefer him beyond all others. The third thing in their practice, is, and they *cast their crowns before the throne:* this sheweth further, their great zeal to the glory of God, their great sense of the huge disproportionableness that is between him and them, their acknowledgment of their having their crowns from him, and holding them of him; and their great and only design to improve that honour and dignity to which they have been advanced, unto the honour of him that sitteth upon the throne, from whom they have the same: and that they account it their greatest dignity, if their honour might any way be a foot-stool for advancing, or extolling of his glory in the least.

The third and last thing in the elders praise is, their song, or verbal expression, ver. 11. when they are fallen down they say, *thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.* Wherein 1. We have their acknowledgment of God's gloriousness, and that praise is his due. 2. The reasons whereby they demonstrate this. In their acknowledgment we may consider both the matter and manner of their expression: the matter is in three words, 1. They acknowledge that *glory* is his due, this floweth from the essential excellencies that are in him. The 2. is *honour:* this respecteth the Lord's sovereignty, who, by his place, being head and Lord of all, ought to be honoured by all. The 3. thing acknowledged to be due to him is *power*, which is confirmed from the exercising of his omnipotency in the work of creation, as the reason following cleareth. Again, the manner of their acknowledgment is observable: for they say not, we give unto thee glory, honour, &c. but *thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, honour, &c.* which is done, not because of their unwillingness positively to ascribe the same to him; but because their hearts being warmed and affected with zeal to the thing, could not come up as they desired in the expressing of the same: and therefore (as it were) they say, altho' we cannot give thee glory, honour, &c. as becometh; yet thou art worthy of the same, and it is becoming that thou should have it, and we are so far convinced of the same, as by this acknowledgment, to put our seal to this truth that thou art worthy to have all praise, honour, and glory given unto thee. And thus they rather express their affection to that work of praise, than their satisfaction in attaining any length therein. In

which we have an excellent copy, of a heart affected with God's honour, viz. it is always desirous that he should be glorified, and yet never satisfied with its own glorifying of him.

They give two reasons to demonstrate the justice of this their acknowledgment that God is worthy of all praise; the first is, from his interest in, and superiority over all things, by his creating of the same, *for thou hast created all things;* and so he being the great master, and potter of all things in heaven and earth; there being nothing but that which hath its being from him, and there being much power, wisdom, goodness, &c. exercised in this work of creation, and to be read on the creature: is it not just to ascribe glory, and honour and power to him? and is it not most reasonable that that relation of his should be acknowledged by all? where we see, that though the work of creation be past many thousand years since, yet may it be, and ought it to be a fresh ground of praise unto the end of the world. Also, we see that where the work of creation is rightly considered, souls will never want ground of praise. And lastly, that these who are affected with the glory of God himself, will be discerning matter of praise and admiration in all his works, and in every creature which will be again turned about to his praise.

The second reason of their praise is in these words, *and for thy pleasure they are and were created:* which in sum is this, not only were all things created by thee, but when there was no tie upon thee to make them, thou, of thy good pleasure, thought fit to do so; and when thou might have done in this manner, or in another, by that same good pleasure of thine, it was concluded to be done, as it hath now come to pass, in which there was no other motive, end, or rule in proceeding, but thy own pleasure, and the setting forth of thy glory, for which end they are still sustained in the being that they have; and therefore it is most just and equitable that thou should have praise from all thy creatures, which for this end were created. This is a strong reason, taken not only from God's creating of all things, but from the end which sovereignly he proposed to himself in the same, viz. that his good pleasure, which had wisely moulded midses for his own glory, might be accomplished. This will or pleasure of God doth not only respect the work of creation in general, but it holdeth forth his end in the manner of the same, and in the events and effects that follow thereon; in all which God's will and pleasure is accomplished, as the word is, Prov. xvi. 4. *The Lord made all things for himself*, that is, for his own glory; *yea, even the wicked* that fight against God, and so bring upon themselves *an evil day*, whereby the same Lord created for the glorifying of his name. In this reason there is, 1. A clear assertion of the Lord's sovereignty over all his creatures, who hath no other rule in the ordering and disposing of them, but his own will and pleasure: for seeing that was the end for which he made them in such and such a manner, then there is no ground to enquire a further reason of him in respect of his decrees, but that it was his will and good pleasure so to do. 2. It appeareth from this, that men will never rightly praise God till his sovereignty over them be conceived aright, and acknowledged; and that his will and pleasure is enough to stop our reasoning, when we cannot come to satisfy ourselves in his proceeding. The want of this maketh carnal reason to fret, as if the Holy One was to be bounded and limited in his proceeding: whereas, if we did consider that he giveth account of none of his matters, and that it becometh not man to reason with God; Rom. ix. 20. nor the potsherds of the earth to strive with their maker, this would put all to silence. And upon this ground, many bold questions may be answered, as, Why did God make man mutable when he might have confirmed him in innocency, as he did the elect angels? Why was he made so, seeing he foreknew his fall? Why were so many created, and in such a posture as the Lord knew would bring upon themselves destruction? Why are not all saved by Christ? Why hath he made an absolute decree of reprobation concerning many? And such like. There can no other answer be given but this, *even so it pleased him to do*, and that which is in the text, *for his pleasure all things were created:* and this sovereignty of God, which carnal reason so much murmur against, is here a main ground of praise, and that whereby he is exalted, as being thereby glorious, and infinitely above all his creatures. 3. The asserting of this sovereignty of God, is a doctrine well becoming the church, whatever others think of it; and it is ever comfortable and refreshful to his people, and a ground of song to them, because there can be nothing more satisfying to them than his good pleasure. And we suppose, that the opposing or fretting at this doc-

trine of God's ſovereignty, will be found to be no great evidence of the diſpoſition of one who is a child of God, nor to proceed from that native and kindly reſpect to God, which ought to be in creatures, eſpecially in believers; the acknowledging and praiſing of which, is here a great part of the church's work.

The general ſcope of the viſion looketh to theſe two; 1. To ſhew ſomething of God. 2. Something in the ſervants of God.

Firſt, Something of God. And hence, *Obſ.* 1. His abſolute and ſovereign dominion in heaven and earth: which we gather from the ſimilitude itſelf, he ſitteth on a throne, and hath all theſe attendants waiting on him; and from the ſong, brought in to point at this as the ſcope, which ſheweth the great end God had and hath before him, in creating and preſerving all things. It is to ſhew himſelf glorious, from this ground of his abſolute dominion over all creatures.

2. Not only is he a ſtately King on the throne, but he exerciſeth his dominion; he hath made all, and he ſuſtaineth all for his good pleaſure, and ſitteth on the throne ever executing his pleaſure; and the world never wanteth a governor, as long as this King ſitteth on the throne: and as there is a ſovereign God, there is alſo a ſovereign providence in all the world, but more eſpecially in the church.

3. His being well furniſhed with means and inſtruments for doing his work, is held forth: therefore he is ſaid to have ſuch attendants, fitted with wings and eyes, and chap. v. 11. He hath ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and thouſands of thouſands of angels to execute his commands round about, and before his throne: theſe glorious ſpirits wait on directions from him, and are ready to do his commandments, in caring and providing for his church: and he hath alſo, beſide angels, his own almighty power, and thundering to execute his wrath on enemies, as well as for the creating of things; and for carrying on the work of grace, he hath ſeven ſpirits to ſpread the everlaſting goſpel.

4. The Lord's great ſhot in all this, is, to get praiſe to himſelf, and to give matter of a ſong to his attendants. Theſe four generals are clearly held out in the chapter, however we expound the words. And it is comfortable, that his praiſe, and our ſong, are ſo joined together, that what is matter of the one is alſo matter of the other.

Secondly, Something in the ſervants of God, is holden forth, however we look on theſe beaſts and elders, 1. Their nature and qualifications are here holden out, and how they are fitted with eyes before, and behind, and within, each of them with ſix wings, and with ſeveral ſhapes, ſome being like a lion, ſome like a calf, ſome having a face as a man, ſome like a flying eagle; in which their furniture for their work, and their activity in it, and their humble, ſerious, watchful and ſpeedy manner of going about it, is ſet out: which ſhould be a pattern to believers how to walk in all commanded duties, and pieces of ſervice.

2. There is here holden out the great dignity and happineſs of God's ſervants and attendants, however we expound the words, this is clear, that to be his ſervants, is a great privilege; they ſit on thrones, they wear crowns, they are clothed in white raiment, they are all kings and prieſts to God, chap. v. 10. they are as the angels, they attend on him, and have places amongſt them that ſtand by, Zech. iii. 7. It is the compleating of our happineſs, to have liberty to look upon God ſitting on his throne. The queen of Sheba ſaith, that Solomon's ſervants were bleſt that got liberty to behold his face, and hear his words; but O how much more happy are they who, day and night, reſt not, but are always taken up in beholding and praiſing God! for a greater than Solomon is here.

3. We are here taught what ſhould be, and is, in ſome meaſure, the great taſk and work of the ſervants of God, and of all that inroll themſelves under that title and name, that is, day and night to be taken up with magnifying of God, to be making his praiſe glorious, Pſal. lxvi. 2. which is to make it illuſtrious, and that by a native way of going about it. Again, here is holden forth the manner how we ſhould go about it, viz. with humility and reverence, with chearfulneſs and zeal, laying all we have before Chriſt's feet, acknowledging all we have received to flow from him, giving him the glory of it, implying all, ſo as may moſt contribute to make him great that ſitteth upon the throne.

Laſtly, There is the delightſomeneſs, and heartſomeneſs of this taſk; though they reſt not either day or night, it is not a weariſome work; for, it is ſinging: and his ſaying *they reſt not*, is not

to hold out any burden, yoke or reſtraint laid on them; but to hold out the bendedneſs of their ſpirit within, with love and joy, that they cannot reſt; it is, ſo to ſpeak, an eaſe to be venting it in praiſe. There is ſuch joy and chearfulneſs from that wine that cometh from under the throne, that they cannot hold their peace, but it is their continual refreſhment, night and day, to be ſpeaking and praiſing. In a word, it ſaith this, That it is a good thing to be Chriſt's ſervants, and that his ſervice is a ſweet work, and it will be known ere long how good a thing it was to be Chriſt's, and to be his ſervants; and how happy a life it will be to be praiſing him. It were good ſome touches of it were warming our hearts before hand, and that we had the proof and experience of it what it is. The Lord give us to know it.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *And I ſaw in the right hand of him that ſat on the throne, a book written within, and on the back ſide ſealed with ſeven ſeals.*

2. *And I ſaw a ſtrong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to looſe the ſeals thereof?*

3. *And no man in heaven nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.*

4. *And I wept much, becauſe no man was found worthy to open, and to read the book, neither to look thereon.*

5. *And one of the elders ſaith unto me, Weep not: Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to looſe the ſeven ſeals thereof.*

6. *And I beheld, and lo, in the midſt of the throne, and of the four beaſts, and in the midſt of the elders ſtood a Lamb as it had been ſlain, having ſeven horns, and ſeven eyes, which are the ſeven Spirits of God ſent forth into all the earth.*

7. *And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that ſat upon the throne.*

IN this chapter, the preparation to the following revelation goeth on: And in it he who was deſcribed in the former chapter to ſit upon the throne, is here repreſented as having a ſealed book in his hand, which none in heaven nor earth can unfold but Jeſus Chriſt the Mediator, who, for his church's good, doth the ſame, which is turned to be matter of praiſe, in the laſt part of the chapter. The ſcope of all tendeth eſpecially to theſe three: *Firſt*, To ſhew the abſoluteneſs, determinateneſs, and particularneſs of God's decrees in all events that concern the church: which with him are, as it were, written in a ſealed book. *Secondly*, To ſhew the ſpecial office of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who being upon his Father's ſecrets, doth reveal ſo much of the ſame to the church as is uſeful for her; and that without him there is no acceſs to the knowledge of the ſame. *Thirdly*, It is to make way to the more clear underſtanding of the prophecies following, according to the mould wherein they are revealed: for it could not be underſtood what were intended by the opening of the firſt, ſecond, or third ſeals, &c. were it not that here God is repreſented, as having a book with ſo many ſeals in his hand.

We may take up the chapter in theſe three parts: 1. There is a viſion ſeen, viz. *A book in the right hand of him that ſat upon the throne*, &c. ver. 1. 2. There are ſome circumſtances expreſſing both the difficulty and poſſibility of attaining to the underſtanding of what is written within the ſame: this followeth unto the eighth verſe. 3. From that unto the end, is ſet down a moſt excellent ſong of praiſe, as we will ſee in the words.

The firſt part, viz. the viſion of the book hath four things remarkable in it. As for the throne, what is, and who it is, that ſitteth thereon, we heard thereof in the former chapter; and therefore

may now proceed to these four things here set down *First*, It is called *a book*: this is not literally to be understood, as if God had use of books, more than he hath material thrones, or hands; but (as was shown in chap. iii. 5.) it is after the manner of men, to shew how particularly and orderly all things are determined by God, as if they were particularly inserted and recorded in a book. By this book here, is not understood God's providence in general, nor yet his special purpose in reference to his elect; but his decrees concerning the special events that were to befal his gospel-church. In a word, it is the same revelation: for what is afterward revealed to John, is by opening one of these seals, and the last seal will be found to comprehend both the trumpets and vials, as we will find in the progress. The second circumstance, is, that *this book is written within and on the backside*, that is, in a word, it is all filled up, there is no blank in the same: for, *known to God are all his works from the beginning*, Acts xv. 18. and no new occurrence, which is so as to men, doth put the Lord to take any new counsel, or to make any new decree (for, to say so, there is no blank in his register, to contain the same) but all things were concluded of old in his counsel, and accordingly in time are brought to pass. *Thirdly*, This book is said to be *in his right-hand:* which sheweth, 1. That there are none accessory to his counsel, but himself; for, he took counsel of none. 2. That he himself is master of his own purposes, and there is none that can alter his decrees, or change any of his purposes; for, the book is in his own hand. 3. It sheweth, that what he hath once in his wisdom concluded, he doth by his power proceed to execute, and that so as he cannot be frustrated of his end; therefore is he said to have it *in his right-hand:* which sheweth both his admirable dexterity and omnipotency that are exercised executing the same. The fourth circumstance is, this book is *sealed with seven seals: sealed*, that is, undiscernible and inconceivable to any, as the words following do clear, and as may be gathered from Isa. xxix. 11. Although all things be known to God, yet are they unknown to creatures, till they be particularly revealed by him, or in his providence brought to pass. Again, this book is sealed with *seven seals:* which is partly to shew the exceeding great depth of God's secret counsel, whereunto none can reach, seeing it is not only sealed with one seal, but with seven; and especially this number is so definite, because the following principle visions do so much consist of sevens: for, the number of the seals of this book doth distinguish the steps of this first principal prophesy. To clear it, we must know that in these times their books were not like ours now, but generally were long scrolls of parchment rolled up on a stick, as we may gather from the writings of the old Testament: in respect of which form, one part of the scroll might be rolled up, then sealed; after that, another part rolled up, and that likewise sealed, &c. Till there might be seven parts, and seven several seals: And therefore the opening of the first seal, would only admit one to read that part of the scroll, until he came to the second, and again there were no reading of what followed, until the second were opened, &c. Of this sort is this book mentioned here, for, chap. vi. we see that the opening of every seal giveth some new vision, and that there is no understanding thereof till the distinct and several seals be opened.

The second part of the chapter, which concerneth the opening of the book, and maketh way for expressing the honour of the Mediator, followeth in the next six verses. Wherein, first, there is a proclamation made, to find out some fit person to open the same, ver. 2. *Secondly*, There is a disappointment, ver. 3. *Thirdly*, There is John's exceeding great heaviness and weightiness therewith, ver. 4. *Fourthly*, There is consolation against the same, first, intimated, and thereafter seen, ver. 5, 6, 7.

The proclamation, ver. 2. is in these words, *I saw a strong angel, proclaiming with a loud voice, who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?* This proclamation is not made, as if there were an expectation to find any creature by whom this might be done; but by putting all creatures to it, (and thereby declaring their insufficiency) the greater way is made for the glory of Christ, the Mediator, the performer thereof. The party proclaiming, is, an angel: for even these admire God's way with his church, and desire the unfolding of the same. It is a *strong angel*, to shew the concernment of the thing proclaimed, and that even the most excellent angels count it their happiness to be serviceable to God, in the affairs of his church; also, it maketh the thing proclaimed more observable. By comparing this with the 5th and 6th verses, we may see that by beasts, are neither understood any

of the hosts of angels in general, nor some special angels, (as some alledge) of a more eminent degree: for they are opposed to this strong angel, who yet must be understood to be of eminency amongst them. Again, the matter proclaimed is observable, which is not, who is able to open the book, &c. but, who is worthy, or meet to do the same? And this, upon the one side, is to put a dash upon all creatures, as being unworthy and unmeet to pry into God's secrets immediately; and on the other side, it doth exceedingly commend the Mediator, who alone is found to be such. This is done with a loud voice, that thereby the mouths of all creatures may be stopped, and that this singular worthiness of the Mediator, and this his peculiar privilege might be afterward found to be the more unquestionable.

A second circumstance is, the answer of this proclamation, or the effect which followed upon it; which may be gathered from verse 3. *And no man in heaven, nor in the earth, nor under the earth, was able to open the book*, nay, *nor to look thereon;* this is plain, and sheweth that not one of all the creatures, even of the most excellent angels in heaven, none of the men in earth, nor devils in hell, can reveal God's secret counsel, till it be done by the Mediator: nay, *they could not look thereon:* which is an aggravation of their dulness and ignorance in that respect: for they were so far from opening this book, that they could not look upon the same. And if it be thus in the works of common providence, what could all creatures have attained to in the uptaking of the great mystery of godliness, *God manifested in the flesh*, &c. had not the Lord thought good to reveal the same?

The third thing, verse 4. is, John's heaviness, because of that apparent impossibility, *And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open, and to read the book, neither to look thereon.* Which doth set forth, 1. That John did esteem the understanding of what was within this book to be of great worth. 2. That he did exceedingly long to understand the same. 3. That he seemed now to be hopeless of attaining this. 4. That this disappointment was sad and heavy to him. It is not like that it was John's curiosity, which made him thus to weep; but conceiving the thing to be useful to the church, it did affect him much to see the fickleness of all creatures, and mens emptiness in particular, for all their boasting of their attaining to the knowledge of so great mysteries: yet there may be some infirmity in this excess, by his thinking the thing desperate, because it was impossible to creatures, and his over-looking the office and excellency of the Mediator, who can do when all others give it over: which is a fault too often incident to believers.

The fourth step is, verse 5. where the consolation beginneth: for the Lord suffereth not John to weep long, even though his infirmity had occasioned his own heaviness. The consolation hath two parts: the first is, by sending good news, or glad tidings unto John, verse 5. The second is, by making him a beholder of a comfortable sight, verse 6, and 7. wherein he seeth that to be performed, which was told unto him.

In these glad tidings we may consider, *First*, The carrier; *Secondly*, The comforter; *Thirdly*, The ground thereof. The carrier is one of the elders, that is, as was expounded in the former chapter, some private professor or member of the church, whom, in way of vision, God maketh use of to help and comfort John in this his heaviness and infirmity: and what is here in vision, may be often really performed in the church. From which we may gather, 1. That the strongest of God's servants may have their great fits of heaviness and weeping, and their mistakes of his dispensations, and be ready to count things much more desperate than they are. 2. The Lord is tender of his people's heaviness, even when it is out of infirmity. 3. His comforts are seasonable trysted, and often then they are most near and refreshful, when men think things are most desperate. 4. He may make use of an instrument for the comforting of another; and when the strong are overmastered with heaviness, he can stir up weak professors to prove comfortable to them. And in the last place, more particularly we may see, that weak professors may sometimes be more comforted in the use-making of Christ's offices, and in exercising faith on him, than great teachers: who, by seeking to exercise their light invention, and reason to satisfy themselves in things that are dark, may have many disappointments therein, and heaviness following thereon, so long as the Mediator is not employed; whereas, the simple tender believer, that at

firſt looketh to him for anſwering of all difficulties, may have much peace and chearfulneſs.

Secondly, The particular comfort is expreſſed, *weep not:* which ſheweth both that was not the duty which John was called unto, though for the time he did let out himſelf therein: and alſo that there was not ſo much ground for the ſame as he ſuppoſed.

And becauſe ſimple directions will not prevail to comfort theſe that are heavy. In the third place, he giveth the ground of this, *Behold*, ſaith, he, *the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book and looſe the ſeals thereof:* Which is, in ſum, thou mayeſt be comforted and ſtay thy weeping; for, though no creature be able to open the book, yet the Mediator can, and will, fully do that buſineſs. He beginneth this with a *Behold*, thereby to rouſe up John with the glad tidings that he was to tell him, and alſo to make what was ſaid to be the more to be obſerved, and the party ſpoken of the more to be admired. This party who opened the book, muſt be no mean perſon, ſeeing he doth what no creature in heaven or earth could do; and ſo is contradiſtinguiſhed from them. He is here expreſſed by two titles: the firſt is, *The lion of the tribe of Judah:* This ſeemeth to be taken from Gen. xlix. 9. where Judah is ſaid to *couch down as a lion, and as an old lion: who ſhall rouze him up?* And this is attributed to him, 1. To ſhew that he is of the ſtock and lineage of Judah, and the very Meſſiah, or Shiloh, ſpoken of there. 2. To point out the excellent qualifications wherewith our Lord Jeſus is furniſhed for the undertaking and proſecuting of the moſt dangerous exploits, if ſo his people's need call for the ſame. He is indeed ſuch a bold Lion as never drew back from a ſtrait: and as none can rouze him up but to their own prejudice, ſo none can expect otherwiſe to be dealt with, that riſe up againſt him. The ſecond word is, he is *the root of David:* this is taken, as would ſeem, from Iſa. xi. verſe 1. where he is called *a rod out of the ſtem of Jeſſe, and a branch out of his roots;* ſo that if we look upon Chriſt as man, and come of David, he is *a rod out of the ſtem of Jeſſe, &c.* or if we look upon him in a more ſpiritual and myſtical ſenſe, as he is God-man, Mediator, and head of his church, in this reſpect he is *the root of David*, becauſe ſo David, as a member, hath his being from him: in which reſpect, chap. xxii. verſe 16, the Lord doth ſtyle himſelf both *the root and offspring of David.* And this twofold conſideration of Chriſt, is the only way to looſe that queſtion which puzzled the Phariſees, Matth. xxii. verſe 42. *&c.* viz. how the Meſſiah could be both David's ſon and David's Lord. It is ſaid *he hath prevailed to open the book*, &c. which intimateth many difficulties that the Mediator had to overcome in the executing of his office; and yet withal, a moſt full victory, that now this courageous lion, by his dying, had obtained over them all, ſo there could be nothing alledged why he ſhould not poſſeſs the privileges that were due to the Mediator.

The other part of the conſolation is, by making John, in the viſion, to behold the performing of this, ver. 6, and 7. wherein, 1. John's *looking* is mentioned; and *I beheld*, ſaith he, that is having ſo good news told me I revived, as it were, again, and looked to him that ſat upon the throne, to ſee if there might be any hopes of that which formerly I ſuppoſed deſperate. 2. It is marked what he ſaw after he had looked; and becauſe the viſion is wonderful, there is juſtly a *Lo* prefixed unto it. This viſion is, in general, a viſion of Jeſus Chriſt the Mediator, whom now John ſeeth, to his great comfort and ſatisfaction, to be the performer of that which formerly he thought deſperate. And becauſe he is a ſingular perſon, he is ſeveral ways deſcribed in theſe two verſes. *Firſt*, He is called a *Lamb;* it is a title ordinarily given to Jeſus Chriſt in the goſpel of John: and we conceive, it is eſpecially for theſe two reaſons, 1. To expreſs Jeſus Chriſt his prieſtly office, and his offering of himſelf a ſacrifice for his people: therefore ordinarily, when he getteth that title, ſomething is added thereunto, as, *to take away the ſins of the world, to be ſlain*, &c. as even here in this ſame verſe; which expreſſions do palpably relate to his ſacrifice and offering. 2. It is to ſhew his mildneſs, to ſpeak ſo, in reference to his people: for although he be a lion, in the former verſe, in reſpect of his undertakings for them againſt enemies: yet, in his dealing with them, he is more gentle than any lamb; and this is mentioned as one of this High prieſt's properties, Heb. vii. 26. that he is *holy, harmleſs*, or illeſs, *&c.* which is no little commendation of him to his people. In a word, he is a Lion to purchaſe and conquer, and a Lamb in diſpenſing what he hath purchaſed to his people. *Secondly*, He is ſaid to be *as it had been ſlain:* ſo is here preſented to John in a viſion, that

it may appear by what means he thus prevailed to obtain ſuch privileges for his church's good, viz. it is by his dying, and giving his life for his ſheep: and upon this ground, John x. 17. it is ſaid, that the Father loveth him, that is, accepteth of him; approveth of him in the diſcharge of the office of the Mediator; and, as he as the Son of God, was neceſſarily beloved without reſpect to this, ſo we ought to eſteem much of what Chriſt hath revealed to us in the goſpel, and what he revealeth to us in the ſame propheſy; for, by his death he made way to have the ſame revealed unto us. *Thirdly*, This Lamb is placed in the *midſt of the throne*, that is, he is a partaker of the ſame glory, and dominion, and authority with the Father, as he is God, and is admitted to his right-hand, and to glory and majeſty, far above every name that is in heaven and in earth, as he is Mediator. And it is, in ſum, what is aſſerted, chap. iii. 21. Alſo, he is in the midſt *of the four beaſts, and four and twenty elders*: which is not for nought expreſſed; but as it doth ſhew, 1. His dignity and glory beyond them; ſo, 2. It ſheweth his preſence in the church, upon the ſame throne with the Father, that thereby his people may be the more bold in their approaches unto God by him, ſeeing they want not a friend always preſent in that court. For this end alſo, he is ſaid to be *ſtanding*, ſomeway to declare his readineſs to execute what may tend to his people's edification and conſolation; for, as a painful Shepherd, he ſtandeth to feed the flock, Mic. v. ver. 4. *Fourthly*, He is ſaid to have *ſeven horns and ſeven eyes*, and theſe again, are expounded to be the *ſeven ſpirits of God, ſent forth into all the earth*; by theſe, no created thing can be underſtood; for that which is the Lamb's power or horns, muſt be omnipotent; that which is his eye, muſt be omniſcient; and that which is through all the earth, muſt be omnipreſent: this therefore muſt be underſtood of the third perſon of the holy Trinity, as was expounded, chap. i. 4. and chap. iv. 5. Here he is called, in reſpect of his manifold operations, *ſeven horns* and *ſeven eyes* of the Lamb, becauſe of that order of operation that is among the perſons of the bleſſed Trinity, whereof we ſpoke in the places formerly cited. The laſt part of the deſcription recorded here, is, in ver. 7. where the Lamb's advancing, as it were, to him that ſitteth upon the throne, and his actual taking the book out of his hand to open the ſame, is expreſſed, *And he came and took the book out of the right-hand of him that ſat upon the throne*: this could not but be a comfortable ſight to John, who having formerly given over the caſe as deſperate, doth now ſee this lovely Lamb proceed ſo far in the diſcovering of what was contained in this book. And here we have, *Firſt*, The three perſons of the holy Trinity diſtinctly holden forth: for there is, 1. One upon the throne with the book in his hand: 2. There is the Lamb. 3. There are ſeven ſpirits of God diſtinct from the former two, and all theſe on the ſame throne. *Secondly*, We may ſee the three offices of Mediator holden forth here: for, 1. That he is a Lamb ſlain, ſignifieth his prieſtly office. 2. That he is upon the throne, and hath horns and power, doth hold forth his kingly office. 3. That he taketh the book to open, and to reveal God's mind to his church, is an expreſs evidence of his being prophet.

From all that is ſpoken, two things are mainly to be obſerved: 1. That the Lord hath a ſpecial over-ruling providence over all things that concern his church. There is nothing that falleth out, which is new to him, but what he hath determined, and is written down, as it were, before the beginning of the world. This is a great conſolation to his church, there is no enemy that doth riſe up againſt her, nor any hereſy that breaketh out among her members, nor any event that occaſionally ſhe ſeemeth to meet with but theſe were fully determined by the Lord, before the beginning of the world.

In the ſecond part of the words, we ſee of what excellent worth the Mediator is beyond all creatures in heaven and earth, how great need there is of him; and how wretched and miſerable we would be without him. All the moſt glorious creatures in heaven beſide, and all the fulneſs of the earth, could not give us ground of comfortable worſhipping before God, if there were not a Mediator. We may ſee alſo the great cauſe of his people's heartleſſneſs is, that he is not acknowledged in their ſtraits. O how excellent a one is the Mediator! and O how happy a thing were it continually to be improving him! Lord teach us that: and to him be praiſe for ever Amen.

LECTURE II.

Ver. 8. *And when he had taken the book, the four beaſts, and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of ſaints.*

9. *And they ſung a new ſong, ſaying, thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the ſeals thereof: for thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.*

10. *And haſt made us unto our God, kings and prieſts: and we ſhall reign on the earth.*

11. *And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beaſts, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and thouſands of thouſands;*

12. *Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing.*

13. *And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and ſuch as are in the ſea, and all that are in them, heard I, ſaying, bleſſing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*

14. *And the four beaſts ſaid, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worſhipped him that liveth for ever and ever.*

THIS is the third part of the chapter, and expreſſeth the main ſcope of what went before, viz. the exalting of the Mediator. This is caſt in betwixt his taking of the book out of the hand of him that ſat upon the throne, and his proceeding actually to open the ſame, that this ſingular work of the Mediator may be made the more obſervable. The occaſion of the ſong is in the beginning of verſe 8. *And when he had taken the book, &c.* that is, when by this appearing of the Mediator in his office, they had ground to expect the opening up of the within contained myſteries, then they praiſe.

The praiſe itſelf may be taken up in three parts, according to the ſeveral parties that take part therein: for, 1. The redeemed church begin, and they ſing, in the laſt part of the 8th verſe, and in the 9th and 10th verſes. Then 2. The angels follow, verſe 11, and 12. In the third place, all creatures are brought in joining in this ſong, verſe 13. And becauſe the redeemed have moſt intereſt in, and obligation to the Mediator, whoſe praiſe is peculiarly expreſſed here; therefore as they begin, ſo they cloſe, verſe 14.

In the firſt part, *Firſt*, The redeemed church are deſcribed in reference to this work, ver. 8. *Secondly*. Their praiſe is expreſſed, ver. 9, and 10. In their deſcription they are called *four beaſts, and twenty four elders:* whereof we ſpoke in the former chapter, and ſhew that by them, moſt probably is holden forth the miniſters and profeſſors of Chriſt's militant goſpel church; and this place doth confirm the ſame: for, they are contradiſtinguiſhed from angels, ver. 11. and are ſaid to be redeemed and made kings and prieſts unto God, which agreeth to all believers even upon earth, as ch. i. v. 6. Again, their work here is, not only to praiſe, but to pray; for they have vials full of odour, as well as harps, ver. 8. And they are ſaid to be ſharers of Chriſt's ſpiritual dominion, and to be prieſts to him, even on earth; yea, their ſpiritual prieſthood will moſt properly agree to that, according to the uſual application thereof in ſcripture. Theſe redeemed, are ſaid *to fall down before the Lamb:* which is to ſhew their humble and reverend way of going about this work of praiſe, and was ſpoken of, chap. iv. verſe 10. *Laſtly*, They are furniſhed for this work, *Having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odours*, or incenſe, *which are the prayers of the ſaints;* this ſheweth their fittedneſs and readineſs for the work; and it is done in expreſſions borrowed from the ceremonial worſhip under the Old Teſtament, when yet the ſcope is to expreſs the ſpiritual worſhip that is given to God under the goſpel; by harps, are underſtood inſtruments for praiſe, as is frequent in the Pſalms; and we will find the ſaints in their

chearful condition, chap. xv. 2. ſo deſcribed. This ſheweth a warmneſs and bendedneſs of heart, ready to burſt out in the praiſe of the Mediator, and to make melody thereby within themſelves before him; which is more acceptable to him, and comfortable to them, than the ſweetneſs of any material inſtrument whatſoever, as Eph. v. 19. and Col. iii. 16. where we are commanded to praiſe with *grace in our hearts*, which may well be the thing ſignified by theſe harps. Beſide this, *they have golden vials full of odours*, or incenſe. Incenſe was uſed in the ceremonial worſhip, when the people approached to offer up their requeſts to God; therefore we have the word, Pſal. cxli. 2. *Let my prayer be ſet forth before thee as incenſe:* vials are veſſels wherein theſe were offered; ſo *vials full of odours*, will ſignify a ſpiritual fitneſs with the ſpirit of grace and ſupplication, as is promiſed, Zech. xii. 10. to pour out the heart to God in prayer, as well as in praiſe. They are two notable qualifications of believers; and it is ordinary both in the old and new teſtament to underſtand, by ſacrifices and offerings, the moral duties of praiſe and prayer in the days of the goſpel. As to the laſt part, this is confirmed in the words following, *which are the prayers of ſaints:* where two things are anſwered, 1. Would we know who theſe beaſts and elders were who have theſe vials? It is anſwered, They are ſaints, that is, believers, members of the militant church, according to the uſual acceptation of the word: And this confirmeth the former expoſition which we gave of theſe parties. Again, Would we know what theſe odours are which are in the vials? The text ſaith, they are *the prayers of ſaints*, that is, theſe odours repreſent the prayers of ſaints: which may either be underſtood indefinitely, as interpreting what is meaned by odours in the general, and ſo all the prayers of all the ſaints on earth in general may be called odours and incenſe; or, we may take it with a ſpecial relation to this place; and ſo the odours here will ſignify the prayers of the ſame ſaints who had the vials in their hands: and thus they bring not properly the prayers of others to offer up to God (which yet were not abſurd, conſidering that theſe officers were living ſaints on earth,) but, they bring their own prayers, even as by harps is ſignified their own expreſſions of praiſe, or the praiſe expreſſed by themſelves, as the ſong following will clear. This therefore hath no affinity at all with the popiſh doctrine of the interceſſion of ſaints departed, which is utterly croſs to the ſcope of this place. It is to be obſerved alſo, how different this phraſe is from that which is attributed to Chriſt, chap. viii. verſe 3. where he alone offereth the prayers of all ſaints, adding incenſe thereunto.

Their ſong followeth in the 9, and 10, verſes: where, 1. There is the expreſſion of their praiſe. 2. The ſole grounds or reaſons thereof. Their ſong is ſaid to be a *new ſong;* and *they ſing a new ſong.* 1. Becauſe the matter was ſo great and excellent, that no former expreſſion of praiſe could, as it were, reach the ſame: for which cauſe, Pſal. xl. 3. David ſaith, *He had put a new ſong in his mouth*, when, by a new and ſingular mercy, he had given him matter thereof. 2. It is new as contradiſtinct from the more obſcure expreſſions of praiſe that were under the old teſtament. Now, the office of the mediator being more clear, and he having made himſelf more known to his people, they accordingly expreſs his praiſe in a new ſong. The matter expreſſed, is, 'thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the 'ſeals thereof,' that is, in ſum, thou art worthy to be Mediator, and to execute what belongeth to that office. This looketh not to be very much, at the firſt, yet there cannot be more ſaid. For, if we will conſider, 1. This expreſſion putteth him beyond all creatures; for, none of them was found worthy; and ſo by this, they acknowledge him to be beyond all. 2. This expreſſion hath in it an acknowledgment of his worthineſs and fitneſs to be Mediator, and in all things to have the pre-eminency, and a name above every name that is named, which is the greateſt conferred glory that is conceivable, and more than angels and men are capable of, or can comprehend. 3. This expreſſion implieth their hearty aſſent to God's conſtituting of him in that office, and their exulting to ſee him proſper and glorified in the executing of the ſame: which is a thing well becoming a member of Chriſt's body, and a ſubject of his kingdom; and is the greateſt length they can come at, viz. to be aſſenters by their acknowledgment of his worth to God's advancing of him to this dignity.

The grounds of the praiſe follow in three ſteps, the laſt being always more particular than

the former, and an effect thereof. The first, is, *for thou wast slain*, that is, in the execution of thy office, and in obedience to the Father's will thou hast submitted thyself to death, even to a violent death, and accordingly hath suffered the same, and so *thou wast slain*. This dying of an accursed death, is the great article and condition required upon the Mediator's side of the covenant of redemption, upon the undertaking, and undergoing of which, all privileges promised to him therein, are grounded, and from this, all the works of redmption flow; therefore here it is made the reason of his worthiness, to administer the office of a Mediator in every thing, and why he cannot but be thought worthy to do the same, and to be praised by his people, because he was slain, and so hath performed what was undertaken by him.

The second ground, is, *and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.* In this there is a very sum of the gospel and work of redemption, and it is the more particular application of the former ground, and the effect thereof, as was said: and this enforceth the former reason. We have reason (say they) to praise thee for thy death; for, by it, we that were lost and sold under sin, are redeemed unto God, &c. To consider the words more particularly, we must follow the similitude of redemption, as is used amongst men, and in this case is made use of to help us to understand somewhat of this great mystery of the gospel. And here is implied, 1. That God had a peculiar right to these that praise in this song, before ever they came to be sold or mortgaged; so, to redeem a thing amongst men, supponeth a man once to have had a right to such a thing: there, we take God's right to these redeemed, not only to be that interest which he had in them by creation, for that is common; but that which he had from eternity by his purpose and decree of election: in which respect, the elect are called his singularly, and John xvii. 6. *Thine they were, and thou gavest them to me*, &c. Where these that were elected and given to Christ, are in a peculiar manner said to be God's; and this is implied in the phrase *Thou hast redeemed us to God*: for, it supponeth, that by Christ's purchase, as it were, access is made for them again to be the Lord's possession, according to his former right. 2. Here is implied, that even these to whom God had this peculiar right, are before this redemption someway mortgaged, or as we use to say, wodset; and yet so as the former right was not fully dissolved: for, if there had not been some mortgaging and alienation, there had been no need of redemption; and if there had been a total dissolution of the former right, there had been no access to redeem. This mortgaging in scripture is clearly expressed to be that spiritual bondage under the law, wrath, and curse of God, whereby even the elect by their sins have inthralled themselves; and because of that, are lying under the curse of God till he be satisfied, and his honour repaired, which suffered by their sin: this is largely expressed, Rom. iii. Ephes. ii. and Gal. iii. beside many other places. The tye which, notwithstanding, stands betwixt the Lord and these, is, that purpose of election, (for even then in that respect they are his, as was said) for, election being founded on nothing in the creature but on God's free will, purpose and good pleasure, there can nothing in the creature dissolve the same. 3. Here is implied, that before these elect can be freed from the curse, there must be a price laid down as it were in compensation for the same: this is clearly implied in the word redemption, which importeth some equivalent satisfaction given to the party offended, or to the party for whose behove such persons were justly mortgaged; and without whose prejudice they could not be set free, except an equivalent price were payed; end this is called redemption. Now, the party offended, for the vindication of whose honour the elect for a time are imprisoned, and put under the keeping of the law, &c. is the Lord; and therefore in reason ere they can be freed, there must be some equivalent price for his satisfaction, which may glorify him, and vindicate his honour as much as the keeping of them in prison, or under the former mortgage; and this is called satisfaction or redemption. 4. The scope of this redemption, is expressed in that word, *Thou hast redeemed us to God*, that is, that the elect may be admitted unto God's friendship and favour, and communion with him, and to the enjoying of the title that stands betwixt him and them, as freely as if they had never had sin, or had never been under such a mortgage. 5. They express who this Redeemer is; *Thou hast redeemed us*: O blessed Thou! This cannot indeed but affect; Thou the Lamb; Thou, the Lion of the tribe of Judah; Thou, the

Son of God, that hath eyes like a flame of fire, &c. Thou haſt redeemed us, Chriſt is called a Redeemer; becauſe when the elect had nothing to free themſelves from the captivity and mortgage which they had brought upon themſelves, when the juſtice of God by virtue of the law and curſe (to ſay no more) did call for a ſatisfaction and price before they could be admitted to freedom; then he undertook, and was content to pay what they were due, either in the ſame kind, or in the equivalent, that ſo they, who were as a mortgaged poſſeſſion detained from the right owner, might be reſtored freely to him again. 6. The price by which he redeemed them is mentioned, thou haſt redeemed us by thy blood. It was wonderful that he who was ſuch a perſon, ſhould be the Redeemer; but, O how wonderful, that he ſhould perform this redemption by laying down ſuch a price as his own blood! And in this we may ſee, *Firſt*, That ſeeing the threatning againſt ſin includeth death; *(that day thou eats thou ſhalt die)* ſo the Redeemer condeſcended to undergo death for ſatisfying that. *Secondly*, When it is ſaid, thou haſt redeemed us by thy blood, there is imported a teſtimony of the ſingularity of his worth, and alſo of his love: for no blood of goats, nay, nor of men, nor of meer creatures, could make this redemption, (for no man can redeem his brother, Pſal. xlix. ſo precious is the redemption of ſouls that it ceaſeth for ever, viz. in reſpect of created redeemers) yet then thou condeſcended to do it, even with thy blood, which (Acts xx. 28.) is the blood of God. *Thirdly*, This redeeming by his blood, doth expreſs his death to be purpoſely and formally laid down by him, and accepted of by God, as a price and ſatisfaction in the room of theſe elect, for the obtaining of their redemption, otherwiſe the whole ſtrain of this ſcripture will be to no purpoſe, except Chriſt be acknowledged to be the Redeemer, and his blood and ſuffering to be the price which is laid down as a ſatisfaction to God's juſtice in the room of the elect ſinners, that thereby they may be ſet free. And Chriſt's blood, in this reſpect, is ſaid to be a ſatisfaction equivalent before juſtice, becauſe by his undertaking that debt, and ſubmitting to pay the ſame, and God's actual exacting it of him, the holineſs and ſpotleſs juſtice of God is more gloriouſly manifeſted, than if theſe themſelves had been kept ſtill in the priſon, who were yet never able to have paid one farthing, whereas now the Redeemer hath paid to the uttermoſt. 7. There is here the object of this redemption, viz. *us*: Thou haſt redeemed us; and theſe are (to ſay ſo) two ways qualified. 1. In reſpect of the extent of this object; it is not ſome of one family, city, nation, or kindred, &c. but it is extended to every kindred, tongue, people, and nation. And this, it ſeemeth, is done, to ſhew the univerſality (to ſay ſo) and extent of Chriſt's church under the goſpel, in oppoſition to what it was under the law formerly. Now ſay they, the church is not included within one family or nation; but the goſpel being ſpread, the elect are gathered in out of all nations, kindreds and tongues; and we who are not of the ſtock of Abraham, but are of ſtrange nations, have reaſon to praiſe for this goſpel, and to bleſs the Mediator who hath purchaſed it unto us. Again, altho' this object in ſome reſpect hath been extended to all nations, kindreds, &c. without diſtinction or diſcrimination, yet ſomewhat is added to qualify and reſtrict the ſame, that it may not be underſtood collectively of all of every nation, language, &c. but diſtributively of ſome of theſe nations, kindreds, and tongues: for, the redeemed, their ſong is expreſſed in theſe terms, *Thou haſt redeemed us out of every tongue, and kindred, and people, and nation.* And certainly there is a palpable difference between theſe two, viz. to ſay, Thou haſt redeemed all kindreds, tongues, and nations; and to ſay, Thou haſt redeemed us out of every tongue, kindred, and nation, whereby the redeemed are contradiſtinguiſhed from the reſt of the kindred, tongue and nation, out of which they are redeemed; and yet it cannot be thought, but that all who are redeemed do concur in this ſong: therefore the other, contradiſtinguiſhed from them, cannot be ſaid to be redeemed. Beſide, this peculiarneſs of redemption is a ſpecial ground of the redeemed's praiſe, viz. when they were lying under the curſe with others, Chriſt hath redeemed them from among them. Further, all this ſong doth agree to any perſon that hath been redeemed by Chriſt's blood, they that are redeemed are alſo made kings and prieſts. And ſeeing all cannot praiſe for this mercy, as experience ſheweth; therefore can it not be ſaid, that they are comprehended under the former. And, if we will remember what was juſt now ſaid, viz. that redemption doth import a peculiar right to theſe that are redeemed be-

ſide others, viz. a right by election; then it will follow, that no other can be ſaid to be redeemed but the elect that were given to Chriſt: and ſeeing all men are not God's by this peculiar right (for, to be God's in this reſpect, and to be given to Chriſt, and ſo to be actually redeemed, are of equal extent) therefore can it not be ſaid that all are redeemed.

The third reaſon, or ground of their praiſe (which is alſo the effect of the former) will confirm this: and it is contained verſe 10. *And haſt made us unto God kings and prieſts, and we ſhall reign upon earth:* ſo that if it be aſked, what are the advantages which they reap by Chriſt's redemption, which make them thus to praiſe? They anſwer, they are very great, for, not only are they freed from the former bondage they were under, and ſet at liberty, as in the former verſe, but they are honoured and bleſſed with many excellent privileges exceedingly commended in four words. 1. Thou haſt made us kings; this reſpecteth that ſpiritual freedom that the believers have from their former enemies, and that ſpiritual dominion which they have over them, and that eternal glory whereof they ſhall be partakers when they ſhall ſit upon one throne with the Lord Chriſt. This is a great privilege, that all the redeemed who were formerly ſlaves, ſhall be made kings. 2. They are made prieſts; this was alſo a title and office of great dignity under the law, and by it is ſignified, that by Chriſt Jeſus, all the redeemed are honoured to have acceſs unto God with boldneſs, and to offer up their own prayers and praiſes unto God by him, with hope of being accepted: which privilege is founded upon Chriſt's redemption, and without this there had been acceſs to no ſinner to pray or praiſe acceptably, and with any comfort before God. But now (ſay they) we are prieſts, and may offer our own ſacrifices; yea, now under the goſpel, we are not tied to any typical ſervice, nor to one place or temple, nor to ſeek a prieſt to offer our ſacrifices unto God for us; but we ourſelves may approach therewith unto him. 3. It commendeth and ſweetneth this privilege, that they are made prieſts to our God; which implieth, that now by Chriſt's purchaſe they may worſhip and ſerve God as in covenant with them, and as their own God: which doth make all the ſervices they can be put to, very light and eaſy, and ſtrengthens them againſt all the difficulties they may meet with therein, ſeeing it is no idol, nor ſtrange God whom they worſhip, but their own God, who will pity them in their ſervice, as a father pitieth his ſon. *Laſtly*, They ſay, *And we ſhall reign on the earth;* which is ſet down, not only to ſhew the ſpiritualneſs of this kingdom, which being on earth, and common to all the redeemed (many of whom have a poor being here) can be no otherways underſtood than of his ſpiritual dominion; but mainly, we conceive, it is mentioned here, as the ground of their ſong, that not only have they a hope of reigning, and being freed from ſin in heaven; but that, in ſome meaſure, they are made partakers of the virtue of Chriſt's purchaſe in the ſubduing of their ſin, and the mortifying of their luſts, whereby they are keeped from the dominion of ſin, becauſe they *are not now under the law, but under grace*, according to the promiſe, Rom. vi. 14. and this is a kindly evidence of a redeemed perſon, and a convincing ground of praiſe to a truly gracious ſoul, viz. to have ſanctification thriving, the body of death born down; and even before they come to heaven, to be looking heaven-like, and to be brought ſomeway to triumph over their ſpiritual enemies; than which, as there is nothing that will be more deſired by them, ſo there will be nothing more acceptable to them, even thus to be privileged and dignified, to reign ſpiritually on the earth. And we may ſee, that as this is a great mercy to be ſanctified, ſo it is a fruit of Chriſt's death, and floweth from his purchaſe, even as juſtification doth: in which reſpect, he is our ſanctification, as well as our righteouſneſs, 1 Cor. i. 31.

The ſecond company who join in this ſong, is, the angels: who are deſcribed, verſe 11. and then their ſong is expreſſed, verſe 12. They are deſcribed, *Firſt*, By their title and number, they are angels, that is, glorious *miniſtring ſpirits*, Heb. i. 14. called ſometimes in ſcripture *the hoſt of heaven;* and becauſe of their excellency, *the ſons of God*, Job xxxviii. 7. And they are many angels, *The number of them was ten thouſand times ten thouſand, and thouſands of thouſands;* this is a great number, it ſeemeth to be taken out of Dan. vii. 10. *where thouſand thouſands* are ſaid *to miniſter unto him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſands to ſtand before him;* yet the expreſſion is but put for an indefinite, to ſhew the innumerable company of glorious and mighty angels, which the Lord hath waiting on him, as ſervants and miniſters to

do his pleaſure in any part of the world; as it is, Pſal. ciii. 21. The ſcope is to ſhew how glorious he muſt be, who is thus waited upon. *Secondly*, The place where they are ſeen, is obſerved, *They are round about the throne, and the beaſts, and the elders:* by which, it ſeemeth they have the outmoſt rank of all the attendents that (Chap. iv. ver. 4, 5, &c.) are mentioned, and ſaid to wait upon this throne; and we may conceive it thus, upon this throne is the majeſty of God, of which dignity the Lamb, and the ſeven ſpirits, are alſo ſaid to partake, ver. 6. Next unto them are the four beaſts, or miniſters, upon the ſeveral corners of the throne; then are the four and twenty elders or the profeſſors, round about the throne; and again, about them are the hoſts of the angels, as is expreſly aſſerted here. This is not to ſet forth the prerogative of the church militant beyond angels ſimply; or, as if angels were at a greater diſtance from God than they; for, it is the great privilege of ſaints glorified, to be like angels, and to have a place among them that ſtand by: but, this ſheweth the infirmities and difficulties which the ſaints militant are ſubject to, and the Lord's tenderneſs and carefulneſs of them, who hath his hoſts of angels encompaſſing them for their defence and protection, according to the word, Pſal. xxxiv. 7. *The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.* There is no mention here neither of the ſea of glaſs, nor of the ſeven ſpirits, ſpoken of, chap. iv. ver. 5. and 6. The reaſon is, as we ſuppoſe, becauſe by them is underſtood the ſame that is expreſſed by the Lamb ſlain, with ſeven horns, and ſeven eyes, ver. 6. of this chapter. And however conſidering that the ſea of glaſs hath the ſame place with the ſeven ſpirits of God, viz. before the throne, and ſo betwixt the throne, and the elders; we cannot conceive of either of theſe, but they muſt be within this guard of angels, even as the reſt are. And ſo it is comfortable that the people of God have no leſs guard and army waiting upon them, than the Lord hath angels waiting upon him, they being all of them *miniſtring ſpirits, ſent forth to miniſter for them who ſhall be heirs of ſalvation.*

Their ſong followeth, ver. 12. They ſay *with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain,* &c. That this is done with a loud voice, it ſheweth their ſerioufneſs and affectionateneſs in this work: what they aſcribe to him, is, upon the matter, what was aſcribed to him by the redeemed, ver. 9. and what was aſcribed to God, chap. iv. verſe 11. It is, *Firſt*, In the general, an expreſſion of his worth, *worthy is the Lamb*, &c. which is their putting to their ſeal to the acknowledgment of his worth, and carrieth alſo, as implied in it, an acknowledgment of their being unſuitable to expreſs what was due to him: and therefore the expreſſion is, *he is worthy to receive power*, &c. which doth inſinuate, that the work is beyond them, as was obſerved, chap. iv. 11. And when angels are at a ſtand in the Mediator's praiſe, what muſt be our unſuitableneſs in expreſſing of the ſame? Then, in the ſecond place, they mention many things which are his due, in ſeven comprehenſive words, 1. *Power*, becauſe he is furniſhed with authority, and commiſſion, ample and large for the diſcharge of his offices; in which reſpect, John xvii. 2. he is ſaid to have *power given him over all fleſh.* 2. *Riches*, that is, a royal poſſeſſion, becauſe he made himſelf poor, to purchaſe a ſeed to himſelf by a great price. 3. *Wiſdom*, becauſe he hath dealt prudently in the executing of his office, as, Iſa. lii. 13. and with great wiſdom doth he manage the truſt committed to him. 4. *Strength*, becauſe he hath bound the ſtrong man, and carried away the prize, *ſpoiling principalities and powers, in making a ſhew of them openly*, Col. ii. 15. 5. *Honour*, this reſpecteth the glory and majeſty of his place, who, being made head over all things, ought ſo to be honoured by them, 6. *Glory*, that is, the acknowledgment of the excellency and majeſty of his perſon, with the dignity and pre-eminency of his office, and doth import alſo his being God, to whom only glory is due. The ſeventh word, is *Bleſſing*, this looketh to the many advantages that come by him: ſo that when hearts can do no more, they bleſs him; which implieth, not only an acknowledgment of his being bleſſed, but alſo the ardent deſire that they have to have him ſo, as in all the former words reſpectively. By all theſe put together, is underſtood, that every thing which may contribute to ſet forth a perſon to be glorious, and to make him to be acknowledged ſuch, is in the Mediator.

If it be aſked, *How the angels come in to praiſe the Mediator upon this conſideration of his being ſlain as is expreſſed in the ſong? Anſw.* This is done, not as if they were equally ſharers in the benefits of redemption with the redeemed: for, the

elect angels, being never under sin, nor at a distance with God, cannot be said to be reconciled by Christ's death; therefore we will find, that though both mention him, as slain in the song, yet there are these differences, 1. The redeemed do expressly acknowledge this benefit of redemption to come by his blood, and do derive their privileges of being kings, priests, &c. from that, as the meritorious cause, which is not to be found in the song of the angels. *Secondly*, When the redeemed mention Christ's death and purchase, they look on it as intended for them; and therefore do apply the same in the song, as claiming a special interest therein, and acknowledging a special obligation to lie upon them beyond others, because of the same. And therefore they say, *Who hath redeemed us by thy blood, &c.* whereas the song of the angels is more general, it appeareth then, that though they agree in giving praise to the same object, viz. the Lamb, yet they differ in respect of the particular grounds on which they proceed. The grounds then of the angels praise may be conceived, 1. To be the excellency of our Lord Jesus his person and office, and the wonderful glory of grace, love, goodness, &c. that kyths especially in his humiliation and sufferings. And it may be justly looked on as admirable and praise-worthy, even to angels, to see God manifested in the flesh, as it is, 1 Tim. iii. 16. and yet more, that he was content to die for satisfying the justice of God, and vindicating of his glory. 2. Although angels cannot be said to have reconciliation by him, yet according to the judgment of many worthy men, they have confirmation through him, in which respect to them, he, as Mediator, is head of the elect angels. And though we will not enter upon this particularly; yet we suppose, that there is great accession to the joy of the elect angels by Christ's incarnation and suffering, as having thereby a more clear discovery of the glory, majesty, and goodness of God; so that in this respect he is said to be seen of them, 1 Tim. iii. 16. and thereby they discern his manifold wisdom in the way of the gospel, as it is, Eph. iii. 10. for which cause they sing at his birth, Luke ii. 13. as being glad to be the declarers of such glad tidings: and, no question, many there be who are in this delighted and rejoiced, and so have good ground to praise. 3. This suffering of Christ's and his redemption, bringeth with it the salvation of the lost elect, who are many; and their salvation being a thing that glorifieth God, and relieveth such as have been loved of him from eternal woe, it cannot but be delightsome to them; for even the elect angels have a kind of sympathy with elect sinners who are given to Christ, for which cause, they are said to have joy over a repenting sinner, Luke xv. 7. 10. and therefore they may be conceived to praise upon the account of Christ's dying, because that redoundeth so much to the good of the church. 4. Christ by his death hath obtained a name, even above principalities and powers, unto which God hath highly exalted him, Phil. ii. 9, &c. for which cause it is said, Heb. i. 6. *When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him.* So that in praising him that was slain, they give obedience to God's ordinance in adoring him who is the Son of God, and who, by his death, hath not lost any thing of the glory due to him, but thereby hath declared himself to be worthy of the same: and therefore it is particularly worthy to be mentioned to his commendation.

The third company that praise, ver. 13. is, *Every creature which is in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, &c.* This looketh to the reasonless creatures that are contradistinguished from the redeemed, and from the angels, called sometimes the whole creation, which by sin is made subject to vanity, and is said to groan under the same, Rom. viii. 20, 21, 22. These are brought in, not as if formally they could express praise; but, 1. To shew the gloriousness of this object to whom praise is due. It will be a task and employment to all creatures to praise him. 2. It sheweth some advantage, that by Christ's death, some time is to redound to them, when they *shall be freed from the bondage of corruption, and brought unto the glorious liberty of the children of God*, Rom. viii. 21. In reference to which, it is said, they groan and travail, as desirous of this change, ver. 22. and according to this they may be said to praise here, as they groan there. The words wherein they express their praise are four, viz. blessing, honour, glory, and power, which were formerly spoken of. There is some difference in the object of their praise, as to the expression thereof, from these who went before: for, *they ascribe it to him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever*, whereas the Lamb only was mentioned formerly. Yet indeed there is no differ-

ence: For when the Lamb is mentioned, who is Mediator, God that ſitteth on the throne is underſtood as dwelling in him. And by this we may ſee, 1. That the glory and worſhip which is given to the Lamb here, is divine and ſupreme, becauſe it's that ſame which is given to him that ſitteth on the throne. 2. We may ſee, that it is the ſame worſhip, and that, whether God or the Meditor be expreſſed, they are both worſhipped in the ſame act: for it cannot be ſaid that this is any other worſhip than what the redeemed or angels gave in the former verſes; nor, that there is any different object worſhipped here, ſeeing that it is the ſame worſhip which is aſcribed in all the ſongs. Neither will any think that he that ſitteth on the throne, was leſs worſhipped in the ſong of the redeemed, and of the angels, where he was not formerly mentioned, than in this. If any ſay that the Lamb is ſaid to be worthy *to receive glory*, &c. which ſuppoſeth this to be a communicated glory? *Anſw.* We may ſee the inconſequency of this, by conſidering what is ſaid of him that ſitteth on the throne, chap. 4. ver. 11. and we may acquieſce in the interpretation thereof that is given.

In the laſt place, when all the creatures have done, the redeemed again come in, v. 14. and they cloſe this ſong; becauſe their intereſt is moſt, and their engagements deepeſt. 1. The four beaſts ſay *Amen*. Thus the miniſters begin. What they ſay, is in this word *Amen*, which is a word that uſually cloſeth prayer, and doth import ſome clearneſs of faith and confidence in the thing aſſerted, and ſome vehement deſire of attaining the thing prayed for. Here it is ſet down as the expreſſion of hearts, who are indeed paſſionately deſirous to have the Lord's praiſe glorious, and yet convinced to be utterly inſufficient for the ſame, and therefore they cloſe in a manner when they begin, and they are beginning when they cloſe, and all is but rather an aſſenting to the glory that is given, and an acknowledging that all is due to him, than a real performing of any thing in their own eſtimation. In the laſt place, the four and twenty elders follow, and they have nothing to ſay, but, *fall down and worſhip him that liveth for ever and ever;* the beaſts ſay not much, they expreſs nothing, but fall down ſilent, as being overcome and infinitely out-reached by the glorious and incomprehenſible excellency of the bleſſed object; yet, is praiſe no leſs acceptable to God, than if there were many expreſſions: becauſe ſilence, both in prayer and praiſe, doth often ſpeak more and louder than great noiſe of words. And here we ſee, that where the heart is inwardly weighted with the convictions of God's goodneſs, and one's own need; and bended with love, or overwhelmed in a manner with holy fear and reverence, that it can expreſs nothing; yet even, then, there may be an acceptable worſhipping of God. Yea, this ſilence is marked as the yondmoſt ſtep, or greateſt length of praiſe that they did, or could attain unto.

Obſerve, 1. That our Lord Jeſus, and in the execution of his offices, there is much ground of praiſe, ſo much as may take up all creatures, and an infinite deal more; and it ſhould be the taſk of all creatures in heaven and earth to be ſetting forth his praiſe: all of the companies ſay, *Worthy is the Lamb, &c.* It is a wonder, when this is their taſk, that ſo few are taken up with it. From the occaſion, *Obſerve*, 2. That the opening of this revelation, is a ground of praiſe. 3. That many excellent things come by Chriſt's purchaſe to the redeemed. Theſe cannot be ſoon numbred. O! what are they beholden to him? *Obſerve* 4. That it is praiſe to Jeſus Chriſt, and it is even almoſt all that believers come to in the work of praiſe, to be telling over, to his commendation, what he hath done. *Obſerve* 5. The faith of intereſt in our Lord Jeſus his purchaſe, is the moſt kindly motive, to make folks bleſs and praiſe him that is, when they can ſay, *Thou haſt redeemed us.* *Obſerve* 6. That as it is a life that hath many rich advantages, ſo there is no ſuch heartſome life in all the world, as to be among the redeemed; they have an uninterrupted ſong, and will continue to have it when all others will howl. *Obſ.* 7. From Chriſt's taking the book and opening of it; from his doing this, and the redeemed their praiſe. *Obſ.* Chriſt doth all, we enjoy all, and therefore ſhould praiſe for all; it is an eaſy taſk that the redeemed have in reſpect of that which Chriſt had. *Obſerve* 8. There is a ſweet conſent here, no different note, they have all one ſong, no different opinion, no contradiction, no divided praiſe, nor prayers, nor faſts, no ſeparating in this worſhip of one of the redeemed from another, all concur, which is not one of the leaſt advantages, once they will all meet and ſweetly agree together. *Obſ.* 9. It is but a mint, at the beſt, that the ſaints make at the Lamb's praiſe: their praiſe is but a beginning to

it, an assent to the work, or a conviction of their duty: when they begin, they say only, *he is worthy to have it*; and when they have undertaken, they must sing, *Who can shew forth all thy praise?* Psal. cvi. Therefore here *Amen*, it is the first word, and they fall down silent; praise overmastereth them, it is the greatest duty: and these that praise till they think they have done enough, they understand it not, it is right in this respect to leave it as we begin. *Observe* 10. All their song is, Worthy, worthy is the Lamb, as if they said, if we could praise thee, thou art worthy to have it, and that is all we can attain to, to acknowledge praise is thy due, *Observe*, When folks have gone their yondmost in the matter of praise it is rather to say and think it should be, than any way to rest as tho' it were. The reason is, because God, who is to be praised, is far above all blessing and possible praise, Neh. ix. 5.

Concerning the Nature of Christ's death, or if it be properly a Satisfaction.

BESIDE what observations have been already hinted at and held forth from this chapter, there are two more; which being clear of themselves from the words, and contributing much to the clearing of two concerning truths, in these days not a little controverted; we may insist a little more in speaking to them as the place giveth ground; the one is concerning the nature, the other is concerning the extent of the merit of Christ's death. The first observation is, that Christ's death and sufferings are properly a price and satisfaction for sin, and were purposely offered unto the justice of God as such. So that when the majesty of God, to say so, was wronged by the sin of man, and when (at least, by the necessity flowing from the established law and curse) there behoved to be a satisfaction to justice, before any sinner could be freed from the sentence, then our Lord Jesus did offer himself to suffer in the room of the elect for the satisfying of justice; which accordingly was afterward performed by him, and upon that account, accepted by God. The scope of this doctrine, is, to shew, first, that not only Christ's death and sufferings were for the confirmation of the doctrine he preached; nor yet, in the second place, only to give thereby a pattern of obedience to us; for, these two may be, and are in the death and sufferings of many martyrs; and to attribute no more to the death of Christ, is blasphemous: nor, in the third place, only to procure to himself this prerogative of forgiving sinners their sins freely: for Christ, being God, had power with the Father to forgive sins before his becoming man: and even this pretended end doth imply Christ's death to be a price for making of a purchase, seeing it supposeth, that he, by honouring God, and doing what was pleasant to him, did procure this privilege to forgive others freely; which certainly doth imply, that these sufferings of his had a meritorious and satisfying virtue before God. But these ends of the Socinians, being such as destroy the Godhead and personality of our Lord Jesus, as the second person of the trinity; and being purposely moulded for the supporting of that blasphemy, we need not stand much upon the disproving of them; but we say, beyond these our Lord Jesus his death was purposely intended by him, and actually accepted by Jehovah, as a proper price and satisfaction.

To clear this a little, when we speak of satisfaction, these things shortly are intended. *First*, That as a man had made himself liable to the curse for provoking of God, and (to speak after the manner of men, as most of all this must be understood) thereby had wronged the majesty of God, by daring to disobey him, and to slight his authority; so there is, in Christ's taking on of that debt, and humbling of himself to suffer for the same, a proportionableness and an equivalency for the vindicating of the glory, of the holiness, justice, and sovereignty of God; and to make these shine more, than if the sinner had been actually put at for satisfying in their own persons: for that the Father's *fellow, equal and only begotten Son* should humble himself, and become man, and in that nature suffer; and that the majesty of God should make his sword awake against him, and smite him, *&c.* doth much more abundantly declare and set forth the justice of God that will prosecute his threatnings, and his sovereignty and authority, in that he is obeyed and submitted unto, by such an excellent person, as his only begotten Son, than if either men had not sinned, or he, who is but a wretched creature, should have been casten into hell: for by this, justice had never been satisfied, nor had the authority of God been manifested by such a glorious instance as the obedience of the man Christ Jesus. So that we are to

conceive of satisfaction in this matter, as that word useth to be understood amongst men, that is, when an injured, or wronged person, is appeased and satisfied in reference to the party that hath done him injury, by the interveening recompence and satisfaction of some other, purposely, by such an equivalent compensation, intending the same. *Secondly*, When we speak of satisfaction in this case, it doth respect God's purpose and intention in designing the death and sufferings of the Mediator for this very end in the covenant of redemption: so that when there was no imaginable satisfaction to be expected from creatures, whereby there might be a vindication of God's justice, that so way might be made to pardon elect sinners; for this very end, a body was designed and prepared for the Mediator, as it is, Isa. liii. 6. *The Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all*, and in his counsel and decree did appoint him who knew no sin, to become sin for others, and thereby as a cautioner to be liable to their debt. *Thirdly*, This also is intended, that the Mediator, in his accepting of the offer, and in laying down of his life, did purposely intend thus to satisfy: for when sacrifices and burnt-offerings, &c. could not please God, nor satisfy him in this respect, then did the Son willingly undertake *with delight to God's will*, as it is, Psal. xl. 6, 7, &c. And it is on this ground that Christ is called Cautioner, Heb. vii. 22. because he undertook the satisfying for our debt; and upon this ground was there access in justice to exact it of him, though he himself knew no sin. For which, see Isa. liii. 7, and 10. 2 Cor. v. 21. In the fourth place, this is included, that by the Lord Jehovah, the offended party, this death and willing suffering of our blessed Lord Jesus, was actually accepted, as satisfactory and well-pleasing to him, in the room and stead of these who had offended, so that thereby he, in the order agreed upon, doth lay by quarrels at the offending party, as men do discharge the principal creditor the debt, when the cautioner hath satisfied in his name. Hence the Lord pronounceth often, that in his beloved Son he is well pleased, and that he hath found a ransom, Job xxxiii. 24. and from this it is, that his death is caled a propitiation, as being acceptable to God, when other sacrifices could not be. That in these respects Christ's death is truly a satisfaction for sin, may from this text thus be made out:

First, If by Christ's death we be redeemed, if the effect flowing from his death be a redemption, then is his death (under which all his sufferings are comprehended) a proper price and satisfaction for sin; but the former is true, therefore, &c. there is a double strength in this argument to make out the connection, first, in the word redemption: which, (as we shew in the exposition) beside other things, do imply, 1. That sinners, by sin, are sold and mortgaged, and the law and curse have obtained a right over them. 2. That, at least, in respect of that established law and curse (*that day thou eatest, thou shalt die*) there was no dissolving of that right, but by some interveening satisfaction: otherwise the Lord, who pronounced it, might be thought not to be just and true in his threatnings. 3. This is implied, that when men and creatures could give no price, our Lord Jesus did actually undertake, and accordingly did pay, therefore it is a freedom that was bought; and he is a redeemer, because he did buy it, and satisfy for it: and this expression, being borrowed from the manner of men, will infer no less, as is said. The second part of the strength of the argument is in this, That this redemption is attributed to his death and blood, *thou hast redeemed us by thy blood;* and these put together, make it exceeding strong; for the very price of the redemption is thereby clearly held forth. So, if it be asked, Why is Christ called a Redeemer? *Answ.* Because he redeemed us. If again it be said, wherewith did he redeem us, or, with what price? It is answered, with his blood; and indeed there can be no other reason why so frequently our redemption is attributed to his death, but because his death cometh in a peculiar respect thereunto; so that when we (as once Isaac was to his father) were lying obnoxious to the stroke of God's justice, he offered himself in our room (as there was a Ram provided in the place of Isaac) that thereby we might escape, as it is, 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. iii. 13, 14. he redeemed us from the curse, being himself *made a curse for us;* which must be understood to be in our stead.

Secondly, Which is almost one with the last branch of the former, it is clear by this, that all the good that cometh to the redeemed, is still reckoned as the effect and purchase of Christ's suffering; which must respect the merit and efficacy of his blood, as by the same way of satisfaction procuring the same. And in this respect it may be said singularly of the Mediator, the second person of the

Godhead, that he hath procured this redemption, otherwiſe than can be ſaid of the firſt and third perſon of the bleſſed Trinity. Therefore alſo we are ſaid to be *loved by him, and waſhen by his own blood*, chap. i. 5. but of this argument was ſpoken in the former.

Thirdly, This is brought as the ſong of all the redeemed, and as that which will agree to all of them, when the congregation of the firſt-born ſhall be brought together: now what other influence can the blood of Chriſt have upon theſe who were redeemed by him, from the foundation of the world, and before his death, when the example thereof could have no effect, or upon young ones, upon whom his ſufferings can have no moral influence by opening or confirming to them doctrinally the way to heaven? and yet both theſe may well be capable of the efficacy thereof, as it is conſidered as a ſatisfaction: now, conſidering that all the redeemed, are equally, and in the ſame reſpects, obliged to Chriſt's death for their life, and for that cauſe do jointly concur in the ſame ſong of praiſe; we muſt either ſay, that none ſuch as have been formerly inſtanced, are ſaved; or, we muſt ſay, that they are all ſaved without any reſpect to his ſufferings, both which, are falſe and abſurd: or, *Laſtly*, We muſt acquieſce in this, that, by Chriſt's ſufferings, as by a ſatisfaction, this was procured to them; and therefore conſequently, that his death is to be conſidered as ſuch, ſeeing no otherwiſe it can have influence on their redemption. And there being but one redemption, and one way by which it is procured, viz. Chriſt's death: and one ſong, comprehending the acknowledgment of all the redeemed; and ſeeing, to ſome, it muſt be a ſatisfaction: therefore it muſt be eſteemed to be ſo, in reference to all others alſo, who are, or ſhall be partakers thereof.

Fourthly, This fruit of his death, viz. redemption, is peculiar to ſome of all kindreds and nations, and is not common to all. It muſt therefore be conſidered as flowing from his death, as a ſatisfaction meritoriouſly procuring the ſame: otherwiſe the effects which may follow, upon his confirming his doctrine by his death, giving an example to others, &c. are common indifferently to all that are hearers of the goſpel: for in theſe reſpects he is ſo, and doth ſo to all. This therefore being peculiar to ſome, (as the next doctrine will further clear) muſt be underſtood as qualified by the covenant of redemption to be for the ſatisfying in the room of ſuch and ſuch, and not of others; which conſideration doth plainly bring it to the notion of a ſatisfaction.

Fifthly, There is a ſpecial emphaſis and ſignificancy in this, that *thou* haſt redeemed us by *thy blood*, &c. Which doth reſpect the excellency of the perſon who did lay down his blood for making of this purchaſe. It is *thou*, who art the firſt and laſt, who was dead and is alive, and liveth for ever, who art the Son of God; yea, who art God, Acts xx. 28. as was more fully cleared, ch. i. 4, 5. for *thou* and *thy* relate to the perſon deſcribed by ſuch titles, in the former part of this propheſy. This doth give ground for this argument, if the purchaſe made by the blood of Jeſus Chriſt be ſuch as could be made by none, but by the blood of him who was, and is God, Then his death and ſufferings, for that end, muſt be a ſatisfaction, and by their merit and efficacy procure the redemption purchaſed; but the former is true. Therefore, &c. The reaſons of the conſequence are, becauſe, *Firſt*, All the other ends of ſuffering may be in the ſufferings of a meer man. *Secondly*, There were not need of ſuch an excellent price, if the merit and worth thereof did not concur, by way of ſatisfaction, for obtaining of this redemption. *Thirdly*, This reſpect to the excellency of the perſon, ſheweth where from mainly their redemption doth flow, viz. that the perſon dying, was of ſuch worth; and that therefore his death and ſufferings are accounted of great price before God. And *Laſtly*, There is here a clear oppoſition, *thou* haſt redeemed us by *thy* blood, that is, Thou, who art God, haſt condeſcended to lay down thy life, and ſhed thy blood for us who were of little worth; which doth import, that his ſufferings were eſtimated in the ſtead of what ſhould have been otherwiſe exacted from them.

Theſe arguments will be the more clear, if we conſider that oppoſition which is made by the apoſtle, Rom. v. betwixt our bleſſed Lord Jeſus, the ſecond Adam and the firſt Adam, of whom men have their ſinful being: for, in that compariſon and oppoſition, Chriſt is not only made the author of life to theſe that are by faith his ſeed, as the firſt Adam was the author of death to theſe that deſcended from him; but alſo, and eſpecially in this, that as by diſobedience and tranſgreſſion of Adam, death was brought upon his poſterity, as being procured by the guilt and demerit

to ſpeak ſo, of that offence; ſo by the obedience, righteouſneſs, and ſufferings of the other life, and freedom from the dominion of ſin is purchaſed, and that by way of merit and ſatisfaction equivalent to the former offence: for, as by Adam's fall, the holineſs and juſtice of God were wronged, ſo by the obedience of the ſecond Adam, they were wonderfully made to ſhine. And this being the apoſtle's ſcope, to compare theſe two Adams together, both in reſpect of the oppoſite effects that flow from them to their ſeed, and in reſpect of the oppoſite means by which theſe are procured, this which is aſſerted muſt neceſſarily follow.

It is alſo obſervable, and doth exceedingly confirm the truth laid down, and diſcover the horridneſs of the oppoſite blaſphemy, that the denying of Chriſt's death to be a ſatisfaction, and the denying of his bleſſed Godhead, are knit together, that the aſſerting of the one, doth infer the other. Therefore theſe wretched Socinians, who deny the eternal Godhead, and the perſonality of the ſecond perſon of the Godhead, muſt alſo deny the merit and excellency of his obedience in his death, without which it could not be a ſatisfaction; but, on the contrary, the redeemed, who have the right thoughts of Chriſt's Godhead, have alſo this impreſſion of his death, that it is a ſatisfaction laid down in their name; upon both which grounds, they praiſe in this ſong, viz. that ſo excellent a perſon ſhould redeem them by ſo excellent a price as the blood of God: and this doth demonſtrate their engagement to him, that when (upon ſuppoſition of the threatned curſe, at leaſt) there was no other that could undertake their debt, or ſatisfy for them, but he who was God, that even then he, who was the Son of God, did undertake the ſame. We are perſuaded, that all whoever ſhall ſhare in this ſong, ſhall acknowledge both theſe truths, and heartily bleſs the Son of God for making ſatisfaction by his blood. And conſidering that the abettors of this blaſphemy do, by this, deny the Godhead of our bleſſed Lord's perſon, and altogether make void the efficacy of his ſacrifice and prieſtly office, ſo that neither his perſon nor his offices are acknowledged by them, which yet are the two great and ſolid foundations of Chriſtianity; therefore they are not worthy to be diſputed with, nor accounted Chriſtians; but rather to be joined with, and reckoned among heathens, or the followers of Mahomet, and the receivers of his Alcoran. For which cauſe, Chriſtians would guard againſt this moſt horrid error, as being moſt blaſphemous againſt the Mediator, and moſt deſtructive to their own ſalvation; for, by theſe grounds, they can neither have a Redeemer, nor a redemption. It is reported of Socinus, (the great patron of this blaſphemy, by a learned man, viz. Cameron, who writeth that he had it from one of his diſciples) that he privately denied the world to be made of nothing, leſt thereby he ſhould be neceſſitated to acknowledge the infiniteneſs of God's power; which afterward was more publicly avowed and contended for by ſome of his followers. What horrible things are theſe, that men's corruptions will not conceive and foſter? And what height or depth will not the devil drive men to, where he getteth liberty? Theſe things have ever been abhorred as moſt deteſtable, even as to the very mentioning of them; yet this horrid blaſphemy wanteth not its patrons in this ſpring-time of error: and therefore men ought to walk the more circumſpectly in reference to the ſame.

Concerning the extent of the merit of Chriſt's death; or, if it may be accounted a ſatisfaction for all men.

THE ſecond doctrine that we propoſe from theſe words, is, that tho' the death and ſufferings of Chriſt, be properly a ſatisfaction to the juſtice of God for ſin; yet is not this intended by Chriſt, nor accepted of by God, as a price and ſatisfaction for the ſins of all men, and for the procuring of redemption to them, but only for ſome peculiarly choſen of God, and by his decree of election ſeparated from others.

It is true, that Chriſt's death, being conſidered abſtractly and materially in itſelf, in reſpect of the perſon, who died, and in reſpect of the manner of his performing this obedience with ſo much chearfulneſs, reverence, &c. may be, and by divines is ſaid to be, of an infinite value; ſo that if it had been ſo intended and tranſacted in the covenant of redemption, it might have been in the former reſpects accounted, and accepted as a price for many more; yea, for all: becauſe, ſuch ſuffering, performed by ſuch a perſon, is equivalent unto, and, in reſpect of his excellency who ſuffers, beyond the eternal ſufferings of all meer creatures. But Chriſt's

death, being conſidered formaliy, as a price and ſatisfaction, with reſpect to the tranſaction that is made in the covenant of redemption, it muſt be qualified and underſtood, with reſpect to the Lord's propoſing of the terms, the Mediator's condeſcending thereto, and his intention in undertaking and executing the ſame; as alſo with reſpect to the Lord's accepting of the ſame as ſuch. Therefore it is not to be enquired here, what Chriſt's death is in itſelf abſtractly? nor what it might have been, if the ſovereign Lord had ſo thought good? but it is to be enquired, if the Lord's purpoſe, in giving of his Son to die, and the Son's in obeying the ſame, was to have that death, and theſe ſufferings laid down as a price and ſatisfaction for all? we ſay, that in that reſpect, it was neither intended by the Son, nor accepted by God, as a ſatisfaction for all, but allenarly for ſuch as he had choſen, and by his purpoſe had ſeparated to himſelf out of all kindreds, tongues, and nations: which, by ſeveral arguments, may be ſtrongly concluded from this place.

Argument 1. Chriſt's death and ſufferings were not intended as a price and ſatisfaction to buy or redeem any, but ſuch as were propoſed by God to the Mediator in the covenant of redemption to be redeemed by him; but all and every one were not ſo propoſed. Therefore Chriſt's death and ſufferings were not intended as a price and ſatisfaction to redeem all and every one. The major of this argument, doth not only appear, at the firſt, to be very reaſonable, but doth neceſſarily flow even from the emphaſis of this word redeeming: which doth ſuppoſe, firſt, that man, being under a kindly relation to God, did, by ſin, fall from the ſame. *Secondly*, It ſuppoſeth, that man, by ſin, is made obnoxious to God's curſe, and alſo, that he is unable to extricate or expede himſelf therefrom. *Thirdly*, It ſuppoſeth the Lord's condeſcending to think of the redeeming of ſome from the curſe; and for that end, to propoſe and accept of ſuch a ſatisfaction, for ſuch perſons, and on ſuch terms, as himſelf ſhould propoſe, or had propoſed: and therefore any redemption doth firſt preſuppoſe the Lord's condeſcending to admit of ſuch a bargain in the general; and it being an act of his ſovereignty, there can be no other rule but his good pleaſure, whereby either the perſons to be redeemed, or the terms upon which, or the time when, ſuch a ſatisfaction is to be made for ſuch perſons, &c. are to be regulated: we muſt therefore look to his propoſing of the ſame, as the foundation whereby all that followeth is to be ſquared: for, this phraſe redeeming, being borrowed from the manner of men; doth hold forth the Lord upon the one ſide, as the party offended, making offer to accept of ſuch a ſatisfaction for ſuch offenders; and on the other ſide, it repreſenteth the Mediator as Buyer and Redeemer, accepting of ſuch an offer in all the circumſtances thereof, viz. to engage to be a Redeemer to ſuch and ſuch perſons, to conſent to lay down ſuch and ſuch a ſatisfaction and price for their redemption, and to perform the ſame in the time and manner condeſcended upon by the Lord. And it is the conceiving of this great tranſaction of the elect's redemption under this form, viz. as having ſuch an offer upon the one ſide, and ſuch an acceptation upon the other, that maketh it get the name of a covenant in ſcripture; becauſe ſo it is repreſented as a mutual bargain, in the manner as bargains uſe to be tranſacted amongſt men: which yet is done for the helping of us to underſtand this myſtery, and is not beyond this ſcope to be extended. From all which, it doth appear, that the Father's propoſal, to ſay ſo, or his intention and purpoſe, moſt regulate this whole buſineſs of redemption; and therefore muſt the extent of Chriſt's death, as it is a ſatisfaction, be underſtood according to the ſame. Hence, the Lord Chriſt, doth ſo frequently aſſert, *that he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that ſent him, and to finiſh his work, and to give eternal life to as many as God hath given to him*, and ſuch like. Whereby it is evident, that the Lord hath particularly ordered the work of redemption according to his good pleaſure, in the reſpects formerly mentioned; and that the Mediator's death and ſufferings are to be looked upon as regulated and qualified in reſpect of their effects, according to what hath been propoſed to him. This firſt propoſition, we ſuppoſe, is now clear, and may be yet further confirmed: for it cannot be ſaid that God intended to have any redeemed, but theſe whom he did propoſe to the Mediator: again, it cannot be ſaid, that any were by him intended to be redeemed, whom he did not thus propoſe in the covenant of redemption, and give unto the Mediator for that end: and, in the laſt place, it muſt be ſaid, that all whom he did propoſe in that bargain of redemption, were deſigned by him actually to be redeemed: otherwiſe many abſurd concluſions (reflecting upon the Lord's ſerious manner of proceed-

ing in that buſineſs, and upon his wiſe manner of contriving the ſame, as alſo upon his effectual way of bringing about what he hath intended) will follow; which without horror cannot be imagined. Therefore it will follow, that the Son's actual bearing the iniquities of ſuch as are redeemed, and the Father's propoſing of ſuch and ſuch to him for that end, muſt be of equal extent.

Now as to the minor propoſition of the argument, it is certain, that all and every one were not propoſed (much leſs all indifferently) by the Lord JEHOVAH to the Mediator, to be bought or redeemed by him; and may be made to appear thus, 1. Becauſe the Lord did never intend that all ſhould be glorified, and actually partake of redemption, he having decreed the glorifying of his juſtice on ſome, as the manifeſting of his mercy upon others; and therefore it cannot be ſaid that the Lord did intend ſuch to be redeemed by the Son, or that he did, for that end, propoſe them to him.

If it be ſaid, that though he did not intend their ſalvation, as he did intend the ſalvation and redemption of the elect, yet may it be ſaid, that he did intend their redemption conditionally, and ſo propoſe them to the Mediator to be redeemed on theſe terms, that is, if they ſhould believe. *Anſw.* Of this we may afterwards ſpeak a word; yet here we ſay, 1. That this doth attribute to the only wiſe God a moſt derogating intention to his own glory: for it cannot be denied but he foreknew the event, and that ſuch a conditional intention would not be ſufficient to thorough the ſame: and to ſay, that he intended what he knew would never come to paſs, or to apply ſuch means as he knew could not be effectual to the end, cannot but with horror be thought upon. 2. We ſay, that the ſcripture doth only mention one kind of propoſing and giving to Chriſt, which is to be given abſolutely to him to be redeemed; and the oppoſition betwixt this giving of ſome to Chriſt, and the not giving of others, is not as it were betwixt two givings of divers kinds, viz. one conditional, and another abſolute, but it is ſuch an oppoſition as is betwixt giving and not giving, or paſſing by; and therefore that former twofold giving, or propoſing to Chriſt, cannot be admitted. 3. We ſay, if there be ſuch a conditional propoſing of the reprobate to Chriſt to be redeemed, it will not be eaſy to conceive the terms of the covenant; for there is but one covenant mentioned, wherein, to ſay ſo, the bargain with the Mediator is concluded: this will infer two, viz. one abſolute in reference to the elect; another conditional in reference to the reprobate. Again, it will be difficult to determine whether Chriſt were to pay ſo much for them as for the elect; for it ſeemeth not juſt that he ſhould pay as much for theſe who are but conditionally redeemed, (and for whom he doth not purchaſe the condition, and whom he hath not intended to make partakers of the benefits) as for theſe who are abſolutely redeemed, to whom the condition is purchaſed, and for whom the benefits are intended. On the other ſide it will be difficult to ſay, that a leſs price is required for this conditional redemption; becauſe ſo it were no redemption at all: for if the redemption muſt be at ſuch a price, then what is leſs cannot procure the ſame. Further, there is but one covenant of redemption mentioned in ſcripture; and the elect, or theſe who were given to Chriſt and propoſed to him, are ſtill mentioned as the object about which the bargain is tranſacted: we cannot therefore think of a conditional propoſal, except we can ſee a diſtinct bargain and covenant concerning the ſame; which yet will be no covenant of redemption. But we may touch this afterward. *Secondly*, That all were not propoſed to Chriſt, or given to him, will thus appear; becauſe by theſe titles, viz. *theſe that thou haſt given me, &c.* ſuch are contradiſtinguiſhed from others, as from theſe who are not given to Chriſt: neither can there be any other reaſon why theſe are deſigned by ſuch a name, but that in God's purpoſe they were deſigned peculiarly to be redeemed, and accordingly were committed to the Mediator, and undertaken for by him in the covenant of redemption. Now, it cannot be ſaid, that any other were propoſed by God to the Mediator, but ſuch as were thus given to him; and ſeeing it is clear, that all were not thus given to him, (for ſuch are expreſly diſtinguiſhed from the paſſed-by world, John xvii. 6. 9.) Therefore all cannot be ſaid to be propoſed by God to the Mediator; and ſo conſequently (which is the concluſion of the main argument,) his ſufferings and death cannot be ſaid to be intended as a price and ſatisfaction for the redeeming of all and every one; nor, without the intention of the bleſſed parties contracting, can they be ſaid to be a price for any: for, the price muſt needs relate to what is propoſed to be redeemed or bought, this being the ſeries, the Mediator did redeem theſe for whom he engaged, and whoſe debt

he did undertake; again, he did undertake for theſe, and for theſe only, who are propoſed and given by the Lord to him for that end; but theſe were not all men, but ſome few, that were peculiarly given to him, as ſeparated from others; therefore from the firſt to the laſt it will follow, that not all men but ſome few, peculiarly choſen by God, and given to Chriſt, were redeemed by his death, and have theſe ſufferings, intended by the Mediator, and accepted of by the Lord JEHOVAH, as a price and ſatisfaction for their ſins.

Arg. 2. *Secondly*, It may be thus concluded, If theſe that are redeemed by Chriſt's blood, be not all of every tongue, kindred, and nation; but ſome out of every tongue, kindred, and nation, &c. Then all are not redeemed; for theſe are oppoſite in this reſpect, viz. *a whole nation*, or, *every perſon of a nation*, *and ſome of them only*: but the redeemed are not all of every nation, &c. but *ſome out of all tongues*, *kindreds and nations*, *&c.* as was cleared, ver. 9. Therefore all are not redeemed. And what can be the reaſon of this expreſſion here, *Thou haſt redeemed us out of every tongue*, *kindred*, *&c.* if it be not to diſtinguiſh theſe few redeemed ones of theſe nations, from the great number of the unredeemed in the ſame; and thereby to ſet out the peculiarity of God's love to them whom he redeemeth, who hath deſigned this benefit to them, when he hath paſſed by others to whom he was no leſs obliged, or rather to whom he is no more diſobliged in reſpect of any thing in men? Alſo, by this expreſſion, there is a clear difference put between the ſong of the redeemed (which is grounded upon Chriſt's death) and the ſong of a viſible church, which doth ariſe from a viſible church-relation: for, chap. xi. 17, 18, &c. the whole nations become the Lord's in that reſpect, and they praiſe him upon that ground; but the ſong of the redeemed is of *ſome out of every tongue*, *kindred*, *and nation*, &c. which doth expreſly inſinuate, that redemption by Chriſt's blood is not of equal extent with the viſible church, but is peculiar to the elect therein: and therefore much leſs can it be of equal extent with the whole world.

Thirdly, If this redemption of Chriſt's, and his laying down of his life for any, be the evidence of his moſt ſpecial and peculiar love, then it cannot be extended to all; becauſe his peculiar love doth not extend itſelf to all indifferently: for, if ſo, then it would not be peculiar but common; and therefore the effect thereof cannot be of more general extent: but the former is clear in this place, viz. that redemption by Chriſt's death is a fruit and evidence of his moſt peculiar love. Therefore, &c. That this is a ſpecial and peculiar favour, appeareth firſt from their being ſo affected in this ſong as having this mercy peculiarly to praiſe him for, viz. that he had *redeemed them by his blood*, which others had not. And, *Secondly*, that they mention this as a favour, beyond which there cannot be a greater, and which doth ſingularly engage them to him beyond all other favours that have been beſtowed upon them. *Thirdly*, The very expreſſions of their ſong bear forth their ſenſe of the peculiarneſs of this mercy, as *thou haſt redeemed us out of every tongue*, *kindred*, *and nation*, that ſheweth his taking notice of them ſingularly beyond others; and that he did this by his blood, ſheweth this to be an expreſſing of his love to them in a moſt wonderful and ſingular manner. *Fourthly*, If this mercy were not peculiar to them, then it might be ſaid that one perſon were no more obliged to praiſe for this redemption, and to be affected therewith, than another; and how inconſiſtent that will be with the ſcope in this place, and with the preſent frame and conviction of theſe that praiſe, may be eaſily diſcerned, ſeeing their ſcope is to hold out themſelves to be peculiarly obliged to be thankful for this mercy beyond all others. *Laſtly*, That this is a peculiar mercy, even the greateſt that our Lord Jeſus doth beſtow upon any, appeareth from other ſcriptures, as John xv. 13. *Greater love hath no man than this*, *to lay down his life for his friend*, &c. and Rom. v. 8, 9, 10. *God commendeth his love towards us*, *in that while we were yet ſinners*, *Chriſt died for us*, &c. All which ſhew, that the love of God cannot more ſhine to one in any thing than in this, that Chriſt hath died for him, and therefore it cannot be intended for any but ſuch as he doth peculiarly love, and whom he hath deſigned to be partakers of the moſt eminent and ſpecial effects thereof.

Fourthly, If all who are redeemed by Chriſt's blood be made *kings and prieſts unto God*, and be effectually called and made to *reign upon earth*, &c. and if the connection be certain between theſe, ſo that they who may claim to the one, may alſo claim to the other. Then Chriſt's death is not a ſatiſ-

faction for all, but for ſome; becauſe, in experience it is clear, that all are not made *kings and prieſts unto God*, &c. But the former is true, viz. all who are redeemed by Chriſt's blood, are made kings and prieſts, &c. Therefore, &c. The truth of this minor, or, of the certainty of the connection, of being redeemed by Chriſt's death, and being made kings and prieſts to God, is clear in the text: for, all, who ſay in the 9th verſe. *Thou haſt redeemed us by thy blood*, ſay in the 10th ver. *And haſt made us kings and prieſts unto God*, &c. which expreſsly importeth, that the one part of the ſong is of equal extent with the other. And if it were not ſo, then it might be divided, and ſome might ſay, *Thou haſt redeemed us, but we are not made kings and prieſts unto God;* which would look moſt unlike the language of a redeemed ſinner, and weaken exceedingly the conſolation of the redeemed, who could not be ſo comforted in Chriſt's laying down his life for them, as they are holden forth to be in this ſong, if it were poſſible that all the parts thereof could be divided. Alſo, it would marr the beauty of the inconceivable grace, and peculiar love that ſhineth in this ground of their praiſe, and no-way rouze the redeemed ſinner to praiſe, becauſe Chriſt had laid down his life for him, if it might be ſaid, that *thou haſt redeemed me by thy blood, yet am I not ſure if I ſhall be made a king and a prieſt unto God*, &c.

The force of this argument may be conceived theſe two ways, 1. Thus, if Chriſt's death, as it is a ſatisfaction, hath ever the juſtification and glorification of theſe for whom it is a ſatisfaction, following upon it, then Chriſt's death cannot be a ſatisfaction for all; but the former is true, viz. Chriſt's death hath ever juſtification and ſalvation following upon it, to theſe for whom it is a ſatisfaction: therefore, &c. That juſtification and ſalvation ever follow thereupon, appeareth, 1. From the text; theſe only, and all theſe who are redeemed by his blood, are alſo made kings and prieſts, and have alſo ſaving effects following thereupon, as was ſaid. 2. It is clear from the nature of the covenant; for, if Chriſt's undertaking to ſatisfy for ſome, in whoſe name he did become ſurety, did make him, in juſtice, liable to their debt, and to the payment thereof, ſo as he could not be conceived to be the cautioner according to the terms of the covenant, but alſo he behoved to have the imputation of their ſin actually following thereupon; ſo, on the other ſide, his ſatisfaction cannot but be equally effectual, for the procuring of actual freedom to theſe whoſe room he ſuſtained in the laying down of that ſatisfaction. Again, this effect, viz. the juſtification of theſe for whom he undertook, is, to ſpeak ſo, the recompence and ſatisfaction which is by the Lord engaged for, and made ſure to him for his ſufferings, and the travel of his ſoul, according to that word, Iſa. liii. 11. *He ſhall ſee of the travel of his ſoul, and ſhall be ſatisfied:* and if it be ſo, then there muſt be a neceſſary connection between Chriſt's ſuffering in the ſtead of any, and their obtaining of juſtification: otherwiſe it might be ſaid, that the Mediator, for that part of the travel of his ſoul, did want the promiſed and engaged-for ſatisfaction. And as we cannot conceive but both ſides of that covenant of redemption, muſt be fulfilled, and the Mediator cannot but be ſatisfied in his deſign; ſo we cannot but conceive the neceſſity of their juſtification and ſalvation, whoſe iniquities Chriſt hath born. This is alſo further clear in the following words, viz. *by his knowledge ſhall my righteous ſervant juſtify many: for he ſhall bear their iniquities.* Where theſe three things are clear, 1. What it is that Chriſt accounteth ſatisfaction for the travel of his ſoul; that is, to *have many juſtified.* 2. What the ground is, that procureth this juſtification: that is, *his bearing of their iniquity:* for this is the reaſon of the former, many ſhall be juſtified, becauſe Chriſt ſhall *pay for them and bear their ſin.* And if this connection were not certain and peremptory between theſe two, then this conſequence and reaſoning would be utterly brangled and made void, if it might be ſaid that Chriſt did bear the iniquity of any, who yet ſhould not be juſtified. 3. It is clear alſo from that place, what theſe many are, that ſhall be juſtified; viz. thoſe whoſe iniquities Chriſt doth bear; for, he ſhall juſtify many, becauſe he ſhall bear their iniquities; where, the many that ſhall be juſtified, in the firſt words, and theſe *whoſe iniquities Chriſt doth bear*, in the laſt words, are of equal extent: and this relative, *their iniquity*, doth expreſsly relate to the many ſpoken of before. Which words do ſtrongly confirm what is ſaid, viz. that there is an inſeparable connection between Chriſt's bearing the iniquity of any, and their obtaining of juſtification; for the prophet doth not only make them of equal extent, but he doth alſo draw the neceſſity and

certainty of the juſtification and ſalvation of many, as a conſequent from this antecedent, *That Chriſt hath born their iniquities.* And is, in a word, this, Chriſt hath born the iniquity of many, therefore it cannot be but theſe many muſt be juſtified: which reaſoning, being the reaſoning of the holy Ghoſt, muſt be ſure; and therefore none can be ſaid to be redeemed, or to have their iniquities born by Chriſt, but ſuch as come actually to obtain juſtification. *Laſtly*, The neceſſity of this connection between Chriſt's dying for any, and their obtaining of actual juſtification and ſalvation, may thus be made out, if the Lord beſtow the greater benefit upon any, then the leſſer cannot but be expected from him alſo; but the giving of his Son to death for any, is a greater mercy than actual juſtification and ſalvation: therefore he cannot but beſtow the laſt on theſe upon whom he hath beſtowed the firſt, Both parts of the argument will be confirmed from Rom. v. 8, 9, 10. and chap. viii. ver. 32. In the one place, the apoſtle reaſoneth thus, *While we were yet ſinners, God commended his love to us, in giving Chriſt to die for us:* therefore having obtained ſuch a mercy, we may *much more look to be ſaved from wrath through him.* And to deny the conſequent in the former argument, would enervate this reaſoning of the apoſtle. In the other place, it is *he that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?* where the apoſtle doth not only ſhew, that all things do follow where Chriſt is beſtowed; but alſo he doth it in ſuch a manner, as doth ſhew the abſurdity and unreaſonableneſs of thinking the contrary, viz. that it can be poſſible that God will beſtow ſo excellent a gift as his Son to be delivered up for any, and yet withhold any good thing from ſuch.

A ſecond way, by which we may conceive the force of the former argument, is this, which alſo, is a new argument of itſelf; that which would weaken the redeemed's conſolation, and enervate the grounds of their praiſe, contrary to the ſtrain and ſcope of this ſong, ought not to be admitted in the doctrine of redemption; but to ſay, that all are redeemed by Chriſt's death, yet ſo, that the greater part of them ſhall never be juſtified, nor partake of life thro' him, &c. doth exceedingly weaken the redeemed's conſolation, and enervate the grounds of their praiſe, contrary to the ſcope of this ſong: therefore, that doctrine of univerſal redemption, is not to be admitted, as being derogatory to the ſolid conſolation of the redeemed, whatever be pretended. That it derogateth to their conſolation, appeareth thus, if the juſtification, ſalvation, &c. of the redeemed be not neceſſarily and peremptorily knit unto Chriſt's laying down of his life for them, then were even their juſtification and ſalvation uncertain, and ſo none of them could heartily praiſe for the ſame, or comfort themſelves therein; much leſs could all do this: both which are expreſly contrary to the words and ſcope of this ſong. Again, If no redeemed perſon, believer, or child of God, can ſo comfort themſelves, by drawing concluſions from this doctrine, *Chriſt hath died for all, yet, all ſhall not be ſaved*, as they may be comforted and have their hearts cheered to praiſe from this, *That Chriſt hath not redeemed all, nor hath died for them, yet all for whom he died, and whom he redeemed, ſhall be juſtified and ſaved*, then muſt the former doctrine be exceedingly derogatory to the people of God their conſolation; but the former is true: therefore, &c. that this doctrine of ſuch an univerſal redemption, doth not yield ſuch comfortable concluſions to the believer as the other, will appear by comparing them together; for, the great conſolation of the believer is, upon ſolid grounds, to conclude an unchangeable intereſt in God; but the latter, and not the former, will yield this. For this is ſolid and comfortable reaſoning, theſe that are redeemed are made *kings and prieſts to God, and ſhall reign with him*, &c. becauſe there is an indiſſoluble and peremptory connection between theſe; but may one aſſume I am redeemed, therefore, &c. If this aſſumption be queſtioned, viz. whether I be redeemed or not? becauſe redemption is not univerſal, then it may thus proceed; all theſe that are ſpiritually kings and prieſts, and being made ſubject to Chriſt, are freed from the dominion of their corruption, and admitted with boldneſs to offer themſelves and their ſervice to God by Chriſt Jeſus, &c. theſe are redeemed, and ſhall certainly obtain ſalvation; but the conſcience, upon ſelf-examination, where there is ground for it, may aſſume it is ſo with me, therefore I am redeemed, and ſhall obtain ſalvation, &c. This is a comfortable and ſolid concluſion, and cannot fail where the promiſes are well grounded, becauſe of the neceſſary connection that is between redemption, juſtification, ſanctification, and ſalvation, ſo that one of them being evidenced, doth infer all: and ſpiritual-

ly to reign in ſome meaſure over the world, and a body of death, and ſpiritually to perform worſhip unto God, &c. being infallible evidences of ſanctification, and fruits of this redemption, they give good ground for a conſcience to make application of the former general truth: whereas, on the contrary, if we will loſe this connection, and ſay, that all are redeemed, or Chriſt hath died for them, and yet few will be ſaved, it cannot but ever leave the ſoul at an uncertainty under this moſt comfortleſs concluſion, altho' I be redeemed, yet I may periſh; becauſe many for whom Chriſt hath died, are never actually freed from the wrath of God; and thereby the ſoul ſhould be ſtill left in a comfortleſs condition, which is moſt unlike the nature of this redemption which Chriſt hath purchaſed, and moſt diſagreeable to the conſolation which is allowed to the redeemed by God, and wherein they comfort themſelves in this ſong. We conclude then, that it is more comfortable to a believer to reaſon from this univerſal, all *that are redeemed, and are kings and prieſts unto God, ſhall be ſaved*, where the conſequent and antecedent are of equal extent; than to ſay *all are redeemed, and yet few or none ſhall or may be ſaved.* And this being the way of the Lord, it cannot but be moſt comfortable to his people; and it is a vain thing for man to imagine by his carnal reaſonings, to mould a more comfortable doctrine: for though, at firſt, it look more plauſible-like to fleſh, to ſay, that all are redeemed, than to ſay but ſome; yet indeed it doth not prove ſo: for, even upon ſuppoſition that that ground were laid, no man could gather any ſolid conſolation therefrom, but upon condition of his receiving of Chriſt, and reſting upon him by faith: now faith in Chriſt being ſupponed, this ground, *few are redeemed, but all theſe who are redeemed ſhall be ſaved*, doth yield more ſolid conſolation than the former; becauſe it carrieth with it a certainty of ſalvation to ſuch: whereas the other ground, pretending to bear forth a poſſibility of ſalvation to all, or a ſalvability, doth indeed make it certain to none.

If any ſhall ſay that this is true indeed, upon ſuppoſition that one be by faith in Chriſt; then it cannot be denied but ſo to conclude, is more comfortable: but ſuppoſing one not to be a believer, is it not then a comfortable doctrine to ſay, *that all are not redeemed?* &c. becauſe it leaveth this ſtumbling-block before the perſon, that he knoweth not whether he ought to believe or not, becauſe he knoweth not whether he be redeemed or not: and this thought may alſo follow him, if he be not redeemed can his believing be uſeful to him? *Anſ.* There are ſeveral miſtakes in this objection, therefore we ſhall anſwer ſeveral ways thereunto: and *Firſt*, we ſay, That even upon ſuppoſition that one doth not believe in Chriſt, this doctrine aſſerted is more comfortable than the other: becauſe, 1. He hath no leſs warrant to believe in Chriſt and reſt on him, than if the other doctrine were ſuppoſed: for it is not Chriſt's dying for any that warranteth him to believe, or is the object of his faith; but it is God's call, requiring faith of him; and God's offer and promiſe knitting life to the performance of that condition of believing called for. Theſe are contained in God's revealed will, which is the rule of our practice, and the ground of our faith. And according to this doctrine, a hearer of the goſpel hath theſe grounds for his warrant; and there can no other be given, even upon the contrary ſuppoſition. *Secondly*, If he be brought to yield to his call, to receive his offer, and to truſt himſelf to his promiſe, he hath then more ſolid ground of conſolation (becauſe of the certain connection that is betwixt faith and ſalvation) than he can have by the other doctrine; which by the interwoven errors concerning free-will, the falling away of ſuch as ſometime have been true believers, &c. is wholly brangled. And ſo, ſuppoſing him not yet to have cloſed with Chriſt, he hath the more effectual motives to engage him thereunto; becauſe, by ſo doing, all is made ſure. 2. We anſwer, This doctrine of particular redemption, to call it ſo, doth never make ſalvation impoſſible to any that will receive Chriſt, and reſt on him: but on the contrary, tho' it deny that all men are redeemed, or ſhall be ſaved; yet doth it aſſert this univerſal, *That all whoſoever ſhall believe, are redeemed, and ſhall be ſaved:* which certainly doth make the expectation of life through faith in Chriſt, to be the more certain; and doth lay the more ſolid ground for a toſſed ſinner to caſt himſelf upon, when it ſaith, there was never a ſinner of any rank or quality that did believe, or ſhall believe in Jeſus Chriſt, but he ſhall be ſaved: from which he may conclude, then if I can, or ſhall believe in Chriſt, I ſhall alſo be ſaved: which concluſion will not follow from the other doctrine. And ſeeing this is the very expreſs letter of the goſpel, *Whoſoever believeth ſhall be*

ſaved, there is no ground left to queſtion the ſame, without manifeſt reflecting upon the faithfulneſs of God. 3. We anſwer, if any thing follow from this ground, *all are not redeemed*, it is this, therefore all ſhall not be ſaved; or, therefore, all will not believe: both which are true. And it doth only make ſalvation impoſſible to him who doth not believe in Chriſt: for to ſuch it ſaith, if thou believe not, thou ſhalt not be ſaved; neither in ſuch a caſe haſt thou ground to think thyſelf redeemed: and what abſurdity is in theſe? yea, upon the grounds of the other doctrine, there is none without faith that can promiſe themſelves life, or comfort themſelves in their pretended univerſal redemption, more than upon the grounds which we have laid down: therefore it can never be ſaid, that believing in Chriſt is uſeleſs, according to this doctrine: yea, it is aſſerted to be always uſeful and profitable; whereas, by the oppoſite grounds, it may be often without theſe comfortable effects following thereupon. In the fourth place, we anſwer, that this objection (as much more in this controverſy) doth flow from a miſtake of the true nature of juſtifying faith; for, it ſupponeth it to be the heart's receiving of, and cloſing with this as a truth, that Chriſt hath died for me in particular, and that his death was particularly intended for me. This is the more dangerous, becauſe it hath been entertained by many, and hath been the occaſion of miſtake, even to ſome great men, who have laid this for a ground, (as Cameron doth on this ſubject) *Chriſtus mortuus eſt pro te, ſi tu id factum credus*, that is, *Chriſt hath died for thee, if thou believe it ſo to be:* now according to that ground, it is impoſſible but to miſcarry, both in reference to this doctrine, the doctrine of juſtification, and ſeveral other moſt concerning truths. It is to be adverted then, that when we are called to believe in Chriſt, we are not called inſtantly to believe that Chriſt hath offered up himſelf as a ſatisfaction for us in particular; but we are to conceive it in this order.

Firſt, We are called to believe the truth of the goſpel, and way of ſalvation laid down therein, viz. *that there is no name under heaven by which a ſinner can be ſaved, but by the name of Jeſus*, and that yet all who believe in him, ſhall be juſtified, and ſaved, &c. Thus we may apply that word, Heb. xi. 6. *He that cometh to God, muſt firſt believe that he is*, &c. For, if this general truth be not acknowledged, ſaving faith wanteth the diſcovery of a ſufficient and fit object to reſt itſelf upon. *Secondly*, We are then called to receive this Chriſt, offered to us in the goſpel, and by faith to betake ourſelves to him ſo diſcovered, and there, as on a ſolid foundation to reſt for obtaining of juſtification and life by the virtue of his ſatisfaction, according to the offer that is made in the goſpel. This is the main act of ſaving faith, whereby a ſinner cometh to be entitled to Chriſt, and to the benefits of his death. Whereupon, *Thirdly*, followeth (our accepting of the foreſaid offer being ſuppoſed) a warrant to look upon Chriſt as ours, upon the benefits purchaſed by him as belonging to us; and upon ourſelves, as actually redeemed by him; none of which, before that, could have been warrantably concluded, but this being ſuppoſed, there is good ground for it; becauſe a ſinner by receiving of Chriſt, cometh to have intereſt in him, and ſo conſequently in all that is his: for, Chriſt and his benefits are not ſeparated; and therefore except there be ground to bear out this title to Chriſt himſelf, there is no warrant to believe that any of his benefits do belong to us.

Now, it is to be obſerved, that according to this foreſaid order, no hearer is ever called to believe what is falſe, becauſe theſe three are ever true, viz. *Firſt*, That life is certain through faith in Chriſt, and no otherways. *Secondly*, That one who is called to believe on him, ought to obey, and that God's call is a good ground for that obedience. *Thirdly*, This is alſo a truth, that one who hath yielded, may look upon himſelf as accepted of God, and redeemed by Chriſt Jeſus, becauſe, in the method foreſaid, there is warrant to believe all theſe; but if any will invert the order, and at firſt perſuade himſelf that the benefits of Chriſt's purchaſe do belong to him, as being particularly redeemed by his death, before he actually reſt on him by faith; this will prove but ſtrong preſumption, and never give title to Chriſt, or any thing that is his; but, on the contrary, greatly provoke the Lord; becauſe in all the word of God, there is no promiſe of juſtification, life, or ſalvation; or any benefit of Chriſt's redemption made to any perſon, but to him that believeth: and to do otherwiſe is, as, if a woman that were wooed for marriage, ſhould fancy herſelf to have title and right to all the privi-

leges of such a man's wife, before the marriage were actually consummated, or before she had given her formal consent thereunto. And so according to these grounds, we see, that all hearers are not simply and instantly called to believe that Christ did die for them; but, first, to receive him as their Saviour, and then to draw such a conclusion, which upon the performance of that condition, can never fail. From this also, we may see the fallacy and weakness of that much tossed vain objection, viz. that which every one is obliged to believe, that must be truth; but every one is obliged to believe that Christ did die for every one in particular must be a truth. This argument, I say, dependeth only upon the former mistake of faith: and this being denied, that all men are instantly called to believe that Christ died for them in particular, when therefore that Christ died for every one in particular they are called to believe in him for obtaining of life, the strength of it will evanish: because, supposing that many in the visible church (which experience doth put out of question) do never believe in Christ, or by faith rest on him for the obtaining of life; then it will follow, that many, even in the visible church, are never obliged to believe that Christ hath died for them in particular: because, none hath warrant to make that application, but such as have first betaken themselves by faith unto Christ: whereby the assumption of that argument is palpably false: for, it must be so assumed, every man that heareth the gospel, and hath received Christ, ought to believe that he hath died for him: and so the conclusion will be, that Christ hath died for all that believe in him, which is true; or it must be, that every one that heareth the gospel, is obliged to receive Christ and rest upon him, and upon that condition may expect life; which will make nothing to the intended purpose.

This occasion giveth ground to insist a little further, in clearing the extent of the merit of Christ's death in respect of the effects thereof: and tho' it be neither possible for us to make every thing fully clear, nor pertinent to our purpose, long to insist on the same; yet the former grounds being laid, we may enquire shortly in some things, and answer to them with a particular respect to this place. *First*, It may be enquired, what is the proper effect of Christ's satisfaction, and that which is purchased thereby to sinners; *Secondly*, If this purchase extend to the procuring of faith and the first grace, as it doth to the procuring of pardon and justification? *Thirdly*, If it may be said, that any benefit, in any respect doth redound to any reprobate from Christ's death, as the proper effect of that purchase: And, *Fourthly*, If there may be an universal conditional redemption admitted, as consistent with the former grounds; yet so, as the effect thereof is made sure to the elect, and to them only?

To the first, viz. What is the native, proper, and immediate effect of Christ's purchase unto the redeemed? We answer, That we conceive it to be not only the procuring of salvation to be possible to them, so that now, by the intervening of this satisfaction, there is a way for the just God to pardon mens sins without wronging of his justice, which without this could not have been: and so some say, that by Christ's death God is made *placabilis*, or, to say so, put in a capacity to be pleased, or made placable; but is not actually appeased; or *placatus*, which is the assertion of the Arminians. Nor yet is only to make reconciliation with God upon the condition of believing, and faith in Christ possible, that is, by this intervening satisfaction, to give a ground for faith to rest upon, with hope of obtaining salvation thereby, which otherways would not have been profitable, had not this satisfaction of Christ's procured a new covenant to be made upon that condition. Thus, according to some, Christ by his death, hath procured an object to be held forth to all, to be by faith rested upon; and hath established this general, that all who should believe on him should be saved; and that faith alone should have salvation annexed to it, in whatsoever person it should be found: but such do deny, that actually and absolutely he hath redeemed any; or procured faith, justification and salvation to them; but we say further, that the immediate and proper fruit and effect of Christ's purchase to these for whom he suffered, is actual redemption, and the benefits following thereupon, to be applied in due order and manner, and not the possibility thereof only. *First*, This is clear from the 9th verse of this chapter, where they acknowledge and praise for this, that redemption and justification, &c. are not only made possible unto them, but that absolutely they are purchased by Christ's death for them, and that they are actually *redeemed to God by his blood*. *Secondly*, This doth clear it, that by his blood he is said to *make them kings*

and prieſts unto God: which cannot be underſtood of the poſſibility only of any privilege, but muſt take in the abſolute purchaſe, and the actual conferring thereof, in due order and time. Hence, Rev. i. 5. *waſhing from our ſins in his blood*, is mentioned as the proper effect of his purchaſe: and juſtification and ſalvation are frequently derived from Chriſt's blood as from their immediate meritorious cauſe, particularly in that place, Iſa. liii. 11. whereof was ſpoken a little before. And if there were no more but a poſſibility of ſalvation flowing from Chriſt's death, then Chriſt might never have ſeen his ſeed, or never had ſatisfaction for the travel of his ſoul. And if by Chriſt's death only, faith and ſalvation ſhould be knit together, and ſo faith made thereby to have an object propoſed to it, and that indifferently in reſpect of all; then it will follow, that the grounds of the redeemed's ſong would not be, *Thou haſt redeemed us by thy blood, and made us kings and prieſts*, &c. Neither could theſe be accounted the immediate effects of his purchaſe, but that he hath given them a ground to believe upon, and made ſalvation certain upon condition of believing: which would not be ſo chearful a ſong to the redeemed, neither would it warrant them to ſay, thou haſt redeemed us, in a peculiar ſenſe, ſeeing theſe effects are common to others: alſo many might have ground to bleſs for theſe mercies, beſide theſe who are made kings and prieſts. All which are moſt inconſiſtent with the ſtrain and ſcope of this place.

It is true, if we will conſider the way and method how theſe benefits are applied to the redeemed, or the order by which they come to be poſſeſſed of them, that inſtantly upon Chriſt's ſuffering all cannot be ſaid to be actually juſtified, nor glorified, more than they can be ſaid all to have really exiſted; becauſe the Lord in his covenant, hath particularly concluded, when, and by what means, ſuch perſons, and no other ſhould be brought to believe in Chriſt, and actually to be juſtified, even as well as when they ſhould have a being, or at what time their life ſhould be brought to an end, and they actually be glorified; yet, if we conſider the things purchaſed, in reſpect of the bargain, we will find that they were abſolutely and actually bought unto ſuch perſons, and ſatisfied for by the Mediator, ſo as not only, in his intention, he aimed to make their juſtification and ſalvation poſſible, but really and ſimply to make it ſure, and to procure it to them; yet ſo, as in due time and method it is to be applied. And we conceive, that it is a dangerous aſſertion to ſay, that Peter before his believing, had no more intereſt any way in Chriſt's death than Judas: which yet followeth upon the laſt opinion that was caſten, and is acknowledged by the author thereof. See Cameron, part. 3. pag. 583. indeed, if we will conſider Peter's own eſtate, as conſidered in itſelf, without reſpect to the covenant of redemption; and if we conſider any actual claim, which he might lay to Chriſt's death in that condition for his own peace and comfort, there was no difference: But if we will conſider Chriſt's ſufferings as in the bargain of redemption before the Lord, the procuring of Peter's juſtification and glorification was really undertaken for by the Mediator, and his debt ſatisfied for by his ſuffering in his name, ſo as it could not fail in reference to him, more than if he had actually had a being, and had been juſtified and glorified when that tranſaction was cloſed; none of all which can be ſaid of Judas, whoſe name was never in the covenant of redemption as Peter's was.

The ſecond thing moved, was to conſider, if faith and other ſaving graces be fruits of Chriſt's purchaſe, ſo as by his ſatisfaction he did not only really intend the purchaſing of pardon upon condition of believing, but alſo the purchaſing of regeneration, faith, &c. that ſo the elect might come to the obtaining of pardon? Arminius, and the patrons of free-will, do deny faith to be a fruit of Chriſt's purchaſe. So doth Cameron and ſome others, but with this difference, that theſe laſt do aſſert, that the gift of believing doth not flow from man's free-will, or any ſufficient grace beſtowed upon all, but from God's ſovereign good-will, thinking meet to beſtow that gift upon ſome whom he hath elected, and not upon others: and this they ſay, is a mere fruit of his ſovereign good-will, without reſpect to the merit of Chriſt's death, even as his decree of election was. The reaſon of the denying this, we conceive to be their making of the fruit and effect of Chriſt's death to be common to all; and it being clear in experience, that all men have not faith, it cannot be conſiſtent with the former ground to account it the fruit of Chriſt's purchaſe: for what he hath purchaſed, cannot but be brought to paſs, as elſewhere Cameron aſſerteth, and ſo according to their firſt ground, faith would be common to all men. And to ſay, that Chriſt hath purchaſed faith conditionally, as he hath purchaſed life and ſal-

vation unto all, were abſurd: Becauſe there is a clear condition, upon which men may expect life, viz. believing: but there can be no ſuch condition conceived, upon which faith may be ſaid to be purchaſed.

But to anſwer what was moved, we ſay, that converſion, regeneration, faith, repentance, &c. are no leſs the fruit of Chriſt's purchaſe than pardon and juſtification, &c. becauſe *Firſt*, By his purchaſe, *we are made kings and prieſts unto God:* and wherein do theſe privileges conſiſt, but in the having, and exerciſing of theſe inward ſaving graces of the Spirit, whereby the elect are made, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, kings and prieſts? *Secondly*, It cannot be well underſtood how juſtification and glorification may be ſaid to be purchaſed by him, if all the ſteps, by which theſe are neceſſarily brought about, be not in the ſame manner procured. *Thirdly*, We are ſaid to be bleſſed with all ſpiritual bleſſings in Chriſt Jeſus, Eph. i. 3. which muſt thus be underſtood, viz. that by his merit we have theſe communicated to us: and is not faith and ſaving grace to be accounted amongſt ſpiritual bleſſings? *Fourthly*, He is made to us of God, not only righteouſneſs, but alſo wiſdom, ſanctification, and redemption, 1 Cor. i. 30, 31. ſo certainly under theſe expreſſions, all ſaving graces, needful to the working out of our ſalvation, are comprehended. And the end of this is, that whoſoever glorieth, may glory alone in him, as having all in him, and nothing but by him. Neither would there be ſuch occaſion of glorying in him, if theſe were not purchaſed by him. *Fifthly*, The conſidering of the covenant of redemption, will alſo fully clear this; for, no queſtion, that muſt be a fruit of Chriſt's purchaſe, which the Lord hath promiſed to the Mediator, as a ſatisfaction to him for his ſufferings: now this is clear, that it is not only promiſed to Chriſt, that many, through faith in him, ſhall be juſtified; but that certainly *He ſhall ſee his ſeed and the fruit of the travel of his ſoul*, Iſa. liii. 10, 11. *That his people ſhall be willing in the day of his power*, Pſal. cx. 3. *That theſe whom the Father hath given him ſhall come unto him*, John vi. 37. *and that they ſhall all be taught of God, &c.* and what elſe can theſe ſpecial promiſes import but this, viz. that the Son, the Mediator, for laying down his life ſhall have many given him, and actually, by the Spirit drawn to him, and made to believe in him, and to acknowledge him as the author of their eternal ſalvation, without which, that promiſe of *ſeeing his ſeed* could never be accompliſhed? Yea, muſt not all the promiſes of the covenant have one riſe, and be derived through one meritorious cauſe?

Now, theſe promiſes of ſanctification, ſuch as to *take away the ſtony heart, to give a new heart, to cleanſe us from all our idols, and waſh us with clean water*, &c. are in one bundle with the promiſes of *his pardoning our iniquity, and remembring our ſins no more*, as is clear in Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, &c. and Jer. xxxi. 33, 34, &c. And ſeeing it cannot be denied, but the laſt promiſes are grounded upon Chriſt's ſatisfaction, muſt not the firſt be ſo alſo? eſpecially conſidering that without him there is no acceſs for binding up a covenant betwixt God and ſinners. Neither can it be denied, but faith is a part of that new heart, and a ſpecial fruit of that Spirit, which he promiſed to pour out upon his people. *Sixthly*, In Tit. ii. 14. *our being ſeparated to be a peculiar people to Chriſt, and zealous of good works*, &c. is expreſsly aſſerted to be his deſign in laying down of his life for his people. Alſo, Titus iii. 5. and 6. *the waſhing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt* (which muſt take in all particular graces) are ſaid to be ſhed on us abundantly through Chriſt Jeſus; which cannot otherways be underſtood; but that we have theſe by the intervening procurement of Chriſt's ſatisfaction. *Laſtly*, All that we pray for, we pray for it in Chriſt's name, as having obtained acceſs to ſeek the ſame through his purchaſe. Now, it cannot be denied, but faith, holineſs, and increaſe therein, may be prayed for: and therefore theſe muſt be underſtood to be procured by him alſo.

The third queſtion was, If it may be ſaid, that the reprobates, or any reprobate, do enjoy any common mercy by virtue of Chriſt's purchaſe and redemption; or if any mercy beſtowed upon any reprobate, or enjoyed by them, may be ſaid to be the proper fruit of Chriſt's purchaſe, or properly to be purchaſed by his death to them? In anſwer to this we ſhall lay down theſe aſſertions, which being granted, there will be no great hazard to the main matter.

Aſſer. 1. There is no ſaving nor eternal mercy procured to any reprobate by Chriſt's death: and ſo according to the ſcripture-language, it cannot be ſaid that Chriſt hath redeemed, ſatisfied for them, or born their iniquities in their room before the juſtice of God, thereby to procure

any ſuch mercy to them, becauſe, *Firſt*, to be *given to Chriſt*, to be redeemed, and to be juſtified, are ever of equal extent in ſcripture, and neceſſarily knit together with his bearing their iniquity. *Secondly*, The proper and native fruits of Chriſt's death are not divided, but they all go together; ſo that for whom he ſatisfied, and to whom he purchaſed any thing in one reſpect, he did ſo in all. Therefore we will find him praying for theſe who were given him, and for whoſe ſake he did ſanctify himſelf, John xvii. even when he doth exclude the reprobate world who were not of this number, from theſe his prayers. *Thirdly*, The proper fruit of Chriſt's purchaſe, is that which is ſatisfaction to himſelf for the travel of his ſoul, &c. but no mercy which is common to a reprobate can ſatisfy him: for his ſatisfaction conſiſteth in peculiar ſaving mercies, ſuch as actually to ſee his ſeed, to have many juſtified, &c. which mercies cannot be ſaid to be purchaſed to any reprobate: and ſo it cannot be ſaid, that any ſaving or eternal mercy is purchaſed to them; for if they were purchaſed to them, then neceſſarily they were to be beſtowed unto them; and if ſo, they could not be called reprobates. We take this for granted then, that no ſaving thing is purchaſed to them, and that Chriſt cannot in any proper ſenſe be called their Redeemer, nor to have ſuſtained their place and perſons before the juſtice of God.

Aſſert. 2. We ſay, that yet many reprobates do here in time enjoy many things which they had never enjoyed, had not Chriſt ſuffered. Of theſe, Chriſt's death may well be called the cauſe (*ſine qua non*) or, without which theſe had not been enjoyed: ſuch are the preaching of the goſpel, and the glad-tidings of the conditional offer of life which is made in it; yea it may be, that the keeping off of many temporal judgments and eternal alſo for a time, doth flow from this: whereby (as it were by the gardener's interceſſion, Luke xiii.) the cutting down of many a barren tree is for a time ſuſpended, that thereby the glory of grace may be the more manifeſted, the honour of the Mediator the more highly advanced, and in the cloſe, the glory of ſpotleſs juſtice made the more clearly to ſhine, becauſe of their greater inexcuſableneſs. This cannot be denied to follow upon Chriſt Jeſus his ſufferings, in ſo far as they neceſſarily follow upon the agreement wherein they were tranſacted, and upon the promiſes made to him in the covenant of redemption; unto all which, his ſufferings are preſuppoſed as the ſtipulation upon his ſide: Now, it being certain that there are ſome elect ones given to him by that covenant, in all ages of the world, and that he hath a viſible church and ordinances granted to him from the ingathering of them, which is ſo and ſo to be adminiſtrated, viz. by gathering under ordinances both ſheep and goats, and ſuch like; it muſt neceſſarily follow upon the ſuppoſition of this tranſaction in theſe terms, that the world muſt continue for ſo many ages, that the goſpel ſhould be preached in ſuch and ſuch places, and at ſuch and ſuch times, that ſuch and ſuch lights ſhould ſhine for holding forth clearly the truth of the goſpel; yea, that ſuch and ſuch common gifts ſhould be beſtowed upon many reprobates for the adorning of this viſible church, the honour of the head thereof, the furtherance of the edification of the elect, and many other things neceſſary for the attaining of the ends foreſaid. And according to the former ſuppoſition, theſe cannot be denied to be decreed in the counſel of God, and contained in the covenant of redemption, largely taken; becauſe accidentally, to ſpeak ſo, and by reaſon of the manner of adminiſtration concluded, they conduce to the honour of the Mediator, and to the furthering of his deſign, which is to have the pleaſure of the Lord proſpering in his hand.

Aſſert. 3. Although theſe former aſſertions be true; yet we ſay, that the ſaving bleſſings that are purchaſed to the redeemed by Chriſt's death, may be, and are far otherwiſe to be conceived, as the proper effects and fruits of Chriſt's purchaſe to them than any common mercy can be which followeth thereupon to any reprobate. For, *Firſt*, The purchaſing of the elect, and of ſaving grace and ſalvation to them, and what may tend to their good, was intended by the Mediator, in a ſubordination to the glorifying of his grace in them; and ſo his glory, and their good, are jointly intended in the ſame: this cannot be ſaid of the other; for though the things which flow from his death be good in themſelves, and though it cannot be denied but that therein alſo he intendeth his own glory; yet it cannot be ſaid, that theſe things are purchaſed by him as advantageous to them, in reſpect of any fruit that ſhould flow therefrom unto them: becauſe the effect ſheweth that in the

end they have no advantage by them: and therefore it cannot be said that he intended them as advantageous to them. I know some learned men do think, that some reprobates, by the power of common restraining grace, and the force of ordinances, are kept from falling in many gross evils, which otherwise they might have fallen into; and so in the end are kept from the greater degree of punishment, which they might have been liable to. I grant that it may be said, that some civil and formal hypocrites will be punished with a more gentle degree of wrath, to speak so, than others, or than themselves would have been punished with, had they not been by such common grace restrained; yet this must be understood comparatively, with respect to the case as it now standeth, that is, a civil hypocrite, living under the gospel, with many common moral endowments, and giving much outward countenance to ordinances, &c. shall be more gently dealt with in the day of judgment, than if he had not come that length in a common reformation under the means: yet, I suppose, it cannot be said that such a person shall have less punishment than if Christ had never died, or he had any knowledge of the gospel, or any common gifts of the Spirit, but had lived in more profanity without the same; for, although the sins of a civil moral hypocrite, be less in themselves than the gross profanity of a blind heathen; yet, considering the circumstances that do aggrege the same, they will be found to be of a more bloody dye before God. Hence, so often in scripture, the sin of refusing Christ in the most civil hypocrites, is aggreged beyond the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah, Tyre and Sidon, &c. Neither doth this flow casually from the gospel's being revealed to such persons, but from their abusing and slighting of the same. Whatever mercies therefore of this kind are bestowed upon any reprobate, they are bestowed upon them for the honour of the Mediator, and the good of the elect; and so, as such must be said to have been purchased by Christ's death. 2. Whatever Christ hath procured to the elect, he hath procured it by satisfying justice for them, and by sustaining in his own person the curse that was due to them, so that the Lord's forbearing of them, his making offer of the gospel to them, &c. are not only consequents, following upon the Mediator's death and the covenant of redemption, but are properly purchased fruits thereof: and so the gospel is preached to them, they are called unto a church-state, &c. Because Christ Jesus hath satisfied justice in their name, for the quarrel which the holy God had against them, and hath purchased peace, and every thing needful for their salvation; so that now the Lord cannot but be kindly to them, and bestow these mercies on them according to the order and terms laid down in the covenant: but on the other side it cannot be said, that our Lord Jesus did so purchase to the reprobate any of these mercies (which are indeed so in themselves) that are bestowed upon them, or that he satisfied in their room, or in their name paid any debt, or that the Lord is upon that account, as it were, engaged to be friendly to them, and bestow these things on them, as was observed to be in the case of the elect; because, in no respect is Christ their cautioner, as having undertaken for them. These mercies then which come to them, are rather to be accounted consequents following upon Christ's purchase, than proper effects thereof as to them; yet necessarily they follow, that what properly hath been purchased by Christ to the elect, may, according to the order laid down, be accomplished. This will be somewhat clear, by considering, Matth. xxiv. 22. where it is said, *except these days should be shortned, there should no flesh be saved:* yet, *for the elect's sake they shall be shortned:* the mercy promised there, viz. *the shortning of those troublesome days*, is a temporal mercy, and common to many reprobate as well as elect, during that time; yet, in respect of the elect, it may be accounted a fruit of Christ's purchase, and of God's covenant-love; because otherways, these whom Christ had redeemed might be in hazard; against which the covenant hath fully provided. But, on the other side, as to the reprobate, it is but a consequent of his death unto them, and bestowed upon them, not for themselves, but for the good of the elect amongst them, for whose sake it is said expresly, *that these days shall be shortned.* And so it is to be conceived, as supponing it to be conditioned to Christ simply, that such a tribulation shall not continue, because the performing of the articles of the covenant doth require the same; in that case consequently the reprobate living in that time and place, are sharers of that outward deliverance; yet considering it as a covenanted mercy, and a proper fruit of Christ's purchase, it doth agree to the elect only, for whose good it was covenanted; and to them it may well be called a

purchaſed mercy. It is true there doth no conſequence follow upon Chriſt's death, but what was foreſeen and intended by him to follow thereupon, yet it cannot be ſaid that all theſe conſequents were intended as proper fruits of his purchaſe to the reprobate, as the mercies are that come unto the elect; but we muſt acknowledge a difference between a conſequent and a proper effect; otherwiſe we might ſay, that the greater inexcuſableneſs and condemnation of many reprobates, are proper fruits of Chriſt's purchaſe, becauſe theſe do follow thereupon, and had not followed had he not died. And we might ſay, that the ſuſpending of the ſhutting up of the devil in hell in his everlaſting torments, were a fruit of Chriſt's purchaſe; becauſe, ſuppoſing Chriſt to have a church, and ſuch work for devils, in the exerciſing thereof, while it is on earth; and that Chriſt is to judge the devils at the laſt day, and, as a part of his glory, to paſs the final ſentence in reference to them, &c. It muſt neceſſarily follow, upon their ſuppoſitions, that the devils laſt judgment, and abſolute ſhutting up in the pit, muſt be ſuſpended for ſuch a long time; yet there is none that will eſteem this to be a proper fruit of Chriſt's purchaſe, though it be a neceſſary conſequent depending upon the ſame. And if any more be pleaded for, becauſe the offer of the goſpel is made to many reprobates, this may be ſaid, that Chriſt's having of a viſible church, and the goſpel preached therein, is properly purchaſed by him, that being neceſſary for the end propoſed; yet, if we conſider the preaching of the goſpel, in reference to ſuch a perſon, as ſuppoſe to Judas; or, how it cometh that he is a miniſter thereof, we conceive it is hard to ſay, that it was purchaſed by Chriſt's death as a mercy to him, as if Chriſt had intended, by his ſufferings, to ſatisfy God's juſtice in leſs or in more upon his account. And if it cannot be ſaid, that any ſatisfaction is made to God in his name, how can it be ſaid that properly any thing is purchaſed by Chriſt's ſufferings to him? For this is certain, that it is Chriſt's death, as it is a ſatisfaction and price offered in the name of any, that doth procure any good to them. Beſide, Chriſt's bearing of the ſins of any, and their obtaining of juſtification, are ſtill linked together, as was formerly ſaid: and therefore ſeeing no reprobate is juſtified, it cannot be ſaid that Chriſt hath born their ſins, and conſequently, upon that account, hath procured any thing to them. This difference may be thus illuſtrated, as ſuppoſe one having intended out of a number of ſlaves to relieve ſo many, ſhould therefore covenant a price for them, and actually pay the ſame, having withal this included in the bargain, that ſo many other ſlaves ſhould be appointed to wait on him till theſe ranſomed ones were ſafely tranſported, and for that end that they ſhould be for a time freed from ſome common drudgeries that other ſlaves are lying under, and be ſomeway fitted in their apparel and otherways, as might become his honour, and further him in the gathering together, ſhipping and tranſporting of theſe whom actually he had bought: yet ſtill he neither mindeth the relieving of theſe, nor doth for that end pay in the leaſt meaſure their ranſom, but only hath this articled to him, as conducing to the good of the main bargain. In this caſe, it cannot be ſaid that he had properly bought theſe whom he minded never to tranſport, or that any price laid down in the principal bargain, was laid in their name; yet it cannot be denied, but that many advantages do follow upon that bargain to ſuch beyond others; which yet, in the end, by reaſon of their own miſcarriages, might turn to their greater hurt: as ſuppoſe they ſhould refuſe to obey him, or put on the cloaths beſtowed upon them, but ſhould abandon him, and renounce their preſent liberty, and not wait on till the end, &c. and ſo procure themſelves juſtly to be deprived of any favour, and to be puniſhed for their ingratitude, ſo may it be ſaid in the preſent caſe: yet we ſhall not much contend for words, as whether ſuch a thing ſhould be called a conſequent or an effect? providing Chriſt be not ſaid to have ſuſtained the room of, or by being made ſin, to have ſatisfaction in leſs or more for any whom he doth not actually redeem and own for his.

The fourth queſtion is, if Chriſt Jeſus, the only abſolute Redeemer of the elect alone, may not yet be ſaid to have redeemed all men conditionally, and in the laying down of his life, to have intended the purchaſing of life to all, upon this condition, *If they ſhould believe in him?* This conditional redemption is diverſly expreſſed by learned men, who, in their writings, do abhor the groſſneſs of the Socinian and Arminian doctrines concerning the redemption. Some ſay, that Chriſt died abſolutely for none, but conditionally for all,

that is, that he purchaſed life for all, upon condition that they ſhould believe that he had died for them: and that God, by his decree of election, hath decreed to give faith to ſome and not to others, whereby Chriſt's death becometh effectual to them, and not to others: which difference doth yet flow from nothing in Chriſt's death. They ſay alſo, that Chriſt, by his death, procured freedom to all from the curſe of the law, ſo that that is removed from all, except any, by not believing that Chriſt hath died for them, ſhall make themſelves liable to that curſe, as Cameron aſſerteth, page 584. This opinion doth not lay the weight of men's making themſelves to differ upon themſelves, but it doth acknowledge the freedom, ſovereignty, and power of grace, as alſo the impotency and corruption of nature; yet we conceive it is dangerous, and doth directly contradict what hath been aſſerted from the text. For, 1. It denieth any, even the elect, to be abſolutely redeemed: which, though true in ſome ſenſe, viz. in reſpect of the method and manner of the application of the purchaſed redemption; yet can it not be ſaid to be true in reſpect of the purchaſe and bargain itſelf, or in reſpect of the parties bargaining in this purchaſe: becauſe Chriſt did not buy pardon of ſin and ſalvation to ſinners abſtractly, upon condition that they ſhould believe; but did abſolutely purchaſe the pardon of ſin and ſalvation to ſuch and ſuch as were propoſed to him. And this he did, not by buying ſalvation to the elect upon condition they ſhould believe, without making both the condition, viz. faith and ſalvation ſure unto them; but he abſolutely redeemed Peter, John, and other elect perſons, by purchaſing ſalvation, and every thing needful for the making of it ſure unto them, altho' in due manner theſe are to be communicated according to the terms of the covenant. 2. It doth deny faith to be a fruit of Chriſt's purchaſe; which is contrary to what was formerly ſaid. 3. This doth aſſert the reprobate by Chriſt's death to be freed from the curſe of the law, *In the day that thou eateſt*, &c. which is not to be underſtood, as if upon condition of believing they were to be freed from it, if ſo they did fulfil that condition; for that is not controverted: but it muſt be underſtood of ſome freedom from the curſe of the law that redoundeth actually to the reprobate from Chriſt's death. And it doth ſuppone them to have attained ſome freedom thereby, which their after-unbelief and ingratitude do make void unto them. And ſo they have not this freedom from the curſe offered to them upon condition of their believing, but they have it, if by their unbelief they do not mar their right to it. Now this, ſo underſtood, will infer, that Chriſt was made a curſe in the room of all men, which is contrary to what is ſaid: for they cannot be thought to be freed any way from under the curſe, except by his ſuſtaining it for them. And his bearing of the curſe in the ſtead of any, or his taking on their iniquity, hath ever their freedom following upon it, for whom he did the ſame, as was formerly marked. Again, there are many of mankind (ſuppoſe young children, dying before any actual ſin) who cannot be liable to any other curſe but the curſe of the law; yet cannot all theſe (even ſuch as are without the viſible church and the promiſes) be ſaid peremptorily and abſolutely to be ſaved. Beſide, this will infer, that either the reprobate ſhall not have the breach of the firſt covenant imputed to them, or that they ſhall have that debt imputed to them, which Chriſt himſelf did pay in their name; which is inconſiſtent with the ſcriptures formerly mentioned. 4. This doth make Chriſt's death conſidered as to him, and in itſelf, to be equally laid down for Peter and Judas which the authors of this opinion will abhor: yet doth it neceſſarily follow thereupon; for, ſuppoſing Chriſt to die abſolutely for none, but conditionally for all, there is in that reſpect no more regard had to Peter than to Judas: for he died conditionally for Judas, and he did no more for Peter; and ſo ſalvation, upon the condition of believing, is made equally poſſible to both. And though, in God's purpoſe, Peter hath faith decreed for him, whereby he cometh to be abſolutely juſtified; in which reſpect, there is a great difference betwixt Peter and Judas, for whom there is no ſuch thing propoſed; yet conſidering that this faith which maketh the difference, according to the former opinion, is no proper effect of Chriſt's purchaſe, but of God's abſolute ſovereignty, as election is, it cannot be ſaid, that becauſe thereof there is any inequality in reference to elect and reprobate in reſpect of Chriſt's death. It is true, their acknowledging faith to be God's ſovereignty and peculiar gift, doth not make the difference flow from Peter himſelf; yet it cannot in reſpect of his ſuſtaining the perſon of the one more than of the other. 5. This doth alſo infer that Chriſt hath paid for ſuch as ſhall again be brought

to reckon for their own debt; yea, for the ſame debt which he hath paid; now, in ſcripture, theſe two are ever put together, viz. Chriſt's bearing the iniquity of any, or paying of their debt, and theſe perſons being abſolved from that charge in whoſe name he had paid. This is ſo ſure, that the one doth ſtill infer the other, as was formerly marked, as Iſa. liii. *He was wounded for our tranſgreſſions*: whereupon it followeth, *by his ſtripes, we* (viz. *we* for whoſe tranſgreſſion he was wounded) *are healed*: And again, ver. 11. *He ſhall juſtify many, for he ſhall bear their iniquity*, that is, theſe whoſe iniquity he ſhall bear, and whoſe debt he ſhall pay, they ſhall be certainly juſtified and abſolved from the ſame. So is it, 2 Cor. v. 21. *He became ſin for us*, that is, took on him to anſwer for our debt, *that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him*, which ſheweth, that his end in becoming ſin for any, was, to have them actually freed from the ſame. The like is, Gal. iii. ver. 13, 14. *He redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us, &c. that the bleſſing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles, &c.* where actual redemption from the curſe, and obtaining of the bleſſing, are made of equal extent with Chriſt's ſuffering of the curſe in the room of any; and ſo is it in many other ſcriptures. And to ſay, that ſuch for whom he paid, were again to be brought to reckoning themſelves, doth directly contradict the ſcope of theſe places.

If any ſhould ſay, that theſe ſcriptures do not deny but ſuch may be brought to reckon for their own ſin, for whom Chriſt did only conditionally pay the debt; and the condition not being fulfilled by them, there is no abſurdity that they themſelves ſhould be again called to reckon for the ſame: as alſo conſidering, that the Lord's acceptation of ſuch a price for them, was only upon the fulfilling of the condition of believing, wherein they have failed. To this we anſwer, *Firſt*, That according to the former grounds notwithſtanding of Chriſt's death, payment might be exacted again, even from the elect, if the Lord himſelf did not graciouſly and freely enable them to fulfil the condition, becauſe they are but conditionally redeemed alſo, and have not faith purchaſed to them by Chriſt's death more than the other. But becauſe ſome may ſhift this, we anſwer, *Secondly*, That ſuch a conditional payment is not ſpoken of in ſcripture, neither do theſe places of ſcripture ſpeak of ſome whoſe iniquity Chriſt hath born, who ſhall thereby have freedom from being called to a reckoning; but they do ſpeak abſolutely of all for whom Chriſt hath ſuffered, and in whoſe name he hath paid any thing to God: for, all of them give ground for this connection, *Chriſt hath born their ſin, was made a curſe for them, &c.* Therefore, *they ſhall be juſtified and freed from the curſe, &c.* And this reaſoning will not hold, except this univerſal propoſition be preſuppoſed, viz. that all whoſe ſins Chriſt hath born, whoſe debt he hath undertaken, and in whoſe name he hath paid any price to the juſtice of God, &c. ſhall be juſtified, abſolved from their debt, and not brought to a reckoning for the ſame. Now, it muſt either be aſſumed, that Chriſt hath paid a price in the name of many reprobates, and hath born their ſin before the juſtice of God; and it is evident how falſe the concluſion will be. Therefore the minor muſt be falſe, ſeeing, the major is true; or, we muſt ſubſume thus, but none of the reprobates ſhall ever be juſtified or abſolved from their own debt, therefore it will follow, that for none of theſe did Chriſt become a curſe or ſatisfy the juſtice of God: which is a truth. If it be yet ſaid that his ſuffering in their name, was but conditionally: and ſo it cannot be ſaid ſimply, that he paid their debt, but upon ſuch and ſuch conditions only; and ſo he did not bear their iniquity, but upon condition that they ſhould believe. To this we anſwer, *Firſt*, This is almoſt one with the former objection, and may be again repelled, thus; either that conditional bearing of their iniquity, was a paying ſomething in their name, or it was not, if it was a paying in their name, and a laying out of any price by the Mediator, then the conſequence from the former ſcriptures will ſtill be urgent whatever the condition be; becauſe they aſſert, that all for whom Chriſt hath laid out his ſufferings, and in whoſe room he hath ſuſtained any part of the curſe, &c. ſhall be partakers of juſtification and life. And whatever the condition be, this conditional redemption ſuppoſeth a price actually to have been laid down. If it be ſaid, that actually Chriſt did lay down nothing for them, and in their name, when he ſuffered, but upon condition that it ſhould be imputed to them when they ſhould actually believe, then it muſt be ſaid, that Chriſt hath paid for none till they believe, becauſe it is his purpoſe and covenant with the Father that doth make

his ſufferings to be accounted a price for any: and if ſo, then faith cannot be ſaid to be purchaſed contrary to what was formerly ſaid. Beſide, if none can be ſaid to be redeemed but a believer, then it cannot be ſaid, that Chriſt hath paid any thing in the name of any reprobate, ſeeing he hath paid only for them who ſhall believe, which no reprobate can do. Further, though the imputation of Chriſt's laid down price be conditional; yet the paying of it is abſolute: for, he, according to this opinion, did really lay it down; and if ſuch ſhould after believe, there were need of paying no more in their name. Yea, what is actually laid down is ſuppoſed to be equivalent to their redemption, and with what is laid down for the elect: otherwiſe the price would not be proportioned to the ſuppoſed end, viz. redemption, and ſo it would be nothing.

That we may follow this conditional redemption a little, it is otherwiſe in ſome things expreſſed by ſome others, thus, viz. that Chriſt in ſome ſenſe is a ranſom for all, and yet not in that ſpecial manner as for his people: he hath brought others under the conditional goſpel covenant, but them under the abſolute: he hath according to the tenor of this covenant procured ſalvation to all, if they will believe; but he hath procured for his choſen, even this condition of believing. Thus learned Baxter in his *ſaint's reſt*, part 1. page 153. which may be yet variouſly underſtood as to one branch thereof: for, tho' he doth there ſpeak of all to be conditionally redeemed, and elſewhere often hints this, yet by ſeveral expreſſions of his it would ſeem to be reſtricted, at leaſt in a ſpecial manner to the viſible church: becauſe, he ſaith, theſe are by his death brought under the conditional goſpel covenant, which elſewhere viz. in the appendix to his *Aphoriſms*, page 241. in the laſt edition (is acknowledged to be *that which is revealed, and offered in the church.* And in that part of his *ſaint's reſt*, page 156. it is ſaid, not to be offered to all; and that expreſſion is uſed by him, that the conditional covenant is made with all, *at leaſt with the church.* Alſo, others have many hints to this purpoſe, and the learned Tuiſſe doth cite this ſaying out of Vorſtius, lib. pri. page 195. *Et ſane niſi pro vocatis ſaltem omnibus, mortuus eſſet Chriſtus, tum fruſtra hi omnes credere juberentur.* Therefore it will be meet to touch a little this conditional redemption, as it may relate to all men indifferently, and more particularly as it may relate to the viſible church; and becauſe of the nearneſs of the matter, and grounds thereof, both may be done as we do go on. Altho' this opinion, as thus expreſſed, may ſeem more plauſible; yet we conceive, that it will neither be found agreeable to the former grounds, nor to the text, nor to reaſon, nor yet any way more conducing to remove, or prevent theſe difficulties which are ſuppoſed to follow upon the doctrine of particular redemption, as it was formerly explained; for, *Firſt*, What we urged from theſe ſcriptures that ſpeak but of one abſolute redemption, and do ever knit juſtification and life with Chriſt's bearing the iniquity of any, or ſatisfying in their room, will alſo be binding here againſt this conditional redemption. For, if any way Chriſt hath born their iniquity, then they muſt be juſtified: otherwiſe, the former connection, which is ſo ſtrongly urged in the ſcripture, will fail; or, if he hath not born their iniquity, nor paid any thing in their name, then it cannot be ſaid, that he hath any way died for them, or redeemed them. *Secondly*, The text will confirm this, for in it, all men are divided in theſe two ranks, viz. the paſt-by body of nations and kingdoms, &c. and theſe few that are redeemed out of theſe tongues, nations, &c. But this conditional redemption can agree to neither member: therefore it cannot be admitted. It cannot be applied to the redeemed who praiſe; for, they are all abſolutely redeemed, and made kings and prieſts to God, &c. nor will it agree to the paſt-by multitude of the unredeemed that are contradiſtinguiſhed, from the former; becauſe, *Firſt*, The place doth aſſert the actual enjoyment of friendſhip with God, (and being made kings and prieſts, &c.) to be the proper fruit of Chriſt's blood and purchaſe, and not the having of theſe things made poſſible upon a condition, as was formerly laid down. *Secondly*, Becauſe that paſt-by multitude, is expreſly contradiſtinguiſhed from the redeemed, and theſe who partake of the benefits of Chriſt's purchaſe: and therefore the one being called the redeemed, the others may be called the non-redeemed; and they are diſtinguiſhed from, and oppoſed to the other here, not by any diſtinction ſimply founded upon the effect of Chriſt's death, viz. that the one are made kings and prieſts, and the other not, but it looketh

to the meritorious cauſe procuring theſe effects, and making them certain to the one, and leaving others without all title thereunto, viz. Chriſt's death; and ſo it is to be underſtood, *we are redeemed by thy blood*, that is, *thou* haſt paid the price of our redemption in our name, by thy blood, which hath not been done in reſpect of the multitude of theſe ſame nations, whereof we are a part, *Thirdly*, There is but one claſs of the redeemed, and theſe are abſolutely redeemed, ſo there is but one claſs diſtinguiſhed from theſe, and theſe muſt be ſuch who are no ways redeemed: for, what muſt be ſaid of the one, as to redemption by Chriſt's blood, muſt be denied of the other; for thus not to be amongſt the redeemed, is indeed to be unredeemed. This will ſtrongly militate againſt any who ſhould reſtrict this conditional redemption to the viſible church: for that would make upon the one ſide, two claſſes of ſuch as are redeemed, viz. ſome abſolutely, and ſome conditionally to be ſuch, whereas the text doth acknowledge but one: and it would alſo conſtitute two claſſes of the unredeemed, viz. ſome that are without the viſible church and conditional covenant, and ſome that are within; whereas it is clear, that theſe within the church, who belong not to Chriſt, are equally contradiſtinguiſhed from the redeemed with others that are without.

In the third place, this opinion will not be found conſiſtent with reaſons drawn from the ſcripture, as 1. It cannot be denied but Chriſt's ſatisfaction and interceſſion muſt be of equal extent, ſeeing they are both parts of his prieſtly office; and it is his ſatisfaction that regulateth, to ſay ſo, his interceſſion; now, it is clear in ſcripture, that Chriſt's interceſſion is qualified by God's decree of election; therefore he prayeth, Job xvii. *For theſe whom God hath given him:* whereby it is not only implied, that he doth not pray for the world which were not given him, but expreſly he doth exclude them. *I pray not for the world*, ſaith he, ver. 9. Therefore it muſt be ſuppoſed, that he did no way die for the world, ſeeing he doth not pray for them, becauſe he did not ſatisfy for them: and he did not ſatisfy for them, becauſe they were not given unto him. And we can no more ſay that there is a conditional ſatisfying for, and redeeming of all, than we can ſay that there is a conditional praying for all; and we cannot ſay that there is a conditional interceſſion for all, ſeeing he doth ſo expreſly, and abſolutely exclude the reprobate world from his prayers; and upon that implied ground, becauſe God did not own them as his, and had not given them to the Mediator to be owned and redeemed by him, therefore he doth ſolemnly diſown them.

If it be ſaid, *That, in that place, our Lord Jeſus doth only pray for theſe who did actually believe?* The very contrary will be found in the text: for, John xvii. 20. he intercedeth for all who ſhould after believe; and through the chapter, for all theſe whom God had given him. Beſide, it were hard to ſay, that our Lord Jeſus did comprehend all that were unrenewed under the title *world;* for ſo many unrenewed elect would have been excluded. Seeing therefore Chriſt excludeth the reprobate world from his interceſſion, even when he includeth many unrenewed elect then lying in profanity and nature, the former argument doth bind the more ſtrongly. From which alſo we may remove a ſecond exception, viz. that by world there are underſtood ſuch as Chriſt foreſaw ſhould reject the goſpel, and continue members of this world, notwithſtanding of his death and call, or ſuch as did for that time violently reject the ſame. To this we ſay, that if Chriſt meaned by world, preſent contemners and rejecters, then would many elect be excluded, as is ſaid. Again, If he underſtood ſuch as he foreſaw would continue in oppoſition and unbelief to the end, can it be reaſonably thought that he would immediately offer himſelf in their room, upon condition of their believing in him, whom he did not only foreſee to continue in unbelief, and never to perform that condition; but alſo whom he had inſtantly in expreſs terms excluded from his prayers and interceſſion, as having nothing to do with them? And ſo according to the former ground, viz. that his interceſſion and ſatisfaction are of equal extent, they cannot be underſtood any way to come in under either of them.

If it be ſaid, *That his interceſſion reſpecteth only the efficacy of his death; and therefore muſt be bounded with the elect:* this will ſay, that this ſatisfaction alſo muſt reſpect that only, ſeeing they are of equal extent. Again, Why prayeth he only in reference to the efficacy? It is becauſe he hath ground to own no more as God's or his; and that will ſay, that he will not ſatisfy for them either. *Laſtly*, He boundeth his dying and praying in theſe

words, ver. 19. of the forecited chapter, *for their ſakes ſanctify I myſelf*, viz. for their ſakes for whom he prayed, in their room allanerly did he devote himſelf to be a ſacrifice.

Secondly, In the firſt ground laid down, we ſaid that Chriſt's ſatisfaction, as to the object thereof, was to be regulated by the Father's propoſal to him; ſo that he died and ſatisfied for ſuch, and ſuch only as was propoſed to him. It being cleared there, that all were not propoſed; therefore there is no warrant to ſay, that Chriſt, in any reſpect, did bear the iniquity of any other. Neither can there be any end of his undertaking to pay for more than was propoſed to him; neither can it be thought, that any other was propoſed to Chriſt, but ſuch as were given to him abſolutely to be redeemed; becauſe there is no word in ſcripture that ſpeaketh of propoſing any to Chriſt to be bought, but the elect, who, for that cauſe, are peculiarly named by this title, *thoſe that were Chriſt's own and given to him*, &c. If any ſhould ſay, that they were conditionally given and propoſed (which indeed muſt be ſuppoſed in this conditional redemption.) Then, beſide what was ſaid, it may be aſked, if the Father, by propoſing ſuch, did intend their redemption, and their obtaining of any benefit by Chriſt's death? if he did, why is it not effectual? if he did not, to what end was ſuch a propoſal made by the only wiſe God? again, we may conceive this conditional propoſal to be thus upon the Father's ſide, I do propoſe and give ſuch and ſuch perſons to thee that are not elected to be redeemed, and to partake of thy redemption, providing they ſhall believe, and I will abſolutely exact the price from thee, which yet is not to be imputed to them till they believe; and yet they cannot believe except God give the ſame freely, according to the firſt opinion: or, till Chriſt purchaſe the ſame, according to the ſecond: yet, might he ſay, neither do I mind to give it to them, nor mind I to propoſe it to be bought by thee for their uſe. This certainly would not look like the wiſdom, ſovereignty and grace that do ſhine in the bargain of redemption: yet, ſuch a conditional propoſal muſt be ſuppoſed as in theſe terms. And ſo they are propoſed to the Mediator to be redeemed by him, when yet the neceſſary mids, and ſuppoſed condition of redemption is never ſo much as propoſed to be purchaſed, but the contrary is included; and ſo at the moſt, the Father propoſeth but one part of their redemption to the market, viz. the end without the mids; and therefore conſequently, the Mediator muſt undertake, for paying for the end, when he hath not the mids by which it is attained, made, to ſpeak ſo, redeemable, becauſe it is never offered to the market: and what wiſe man would make ſuch a bargain?

Thirdly, It ſeemeth not conſiſtent with reaſon and equity to ſay, That ſuch as are by God's ſovereign decree abſolutely reprobated, and diſcerned to be made to reckon for their own ſins; and yet to ſay, that our bleſſed Lord Jeſus ſhould have that debt imputed to him, and thereby conditionally to purchaſe for them a freedom from that curſe which is already determined to be executed juſtly upon them: for the decree of reprobation muſt be, even in order of nature, as ſoon as the decree of election. Now, it being clear, that the work of redemption doth preſuppoſe election to have preceded; ſo that in the order of nature, and according to our uptaking of things, we muſt conceive God's abſolute electing of ſome to eternal life, to be prior to the covenant of redemption, becauſe theſe who are given to Chriſt in that covenant, are ſaid to be God's own by virtue of that decree before that, John xvii. 6. which will infer, that God's abſolute decree of reprobation muſt be ſo alſo, ſeeing the decree of election doth neceſſarily infer the decree of reprobation; for, where there is an election of ſome, there is a pretirition of others. And therefore we muſt ſay, that Chriſt conditionally had propoſed to him, and did conditionally pay according to that propoſal the debt of many, that by a prior decree were abſolutely reprobated. And as to the laſt opinion hinted, there being but one decree of reprobation, It will follow, that either all theſe muſt be under a conditional redemption, which yet cannot be ſaid ſo confidently, as to ſuch who are without the conditional covenant; or, all muſt be excluded therefrom.

Fourthly, From the ground of this opinion it may be thus argued, if Chriſt redeemed any reprobate conditionally, then the performing of this condition is either in their own power, or it is a ſingular gift of God procured by Chriſt's death. The firſt they will not aſſert, who own this opinion, as was formerly obſerved: therefore it muſt be ſomething that can no otherways be procured but by Chriſt's purchaſe. And according to what is ſaid, it is not purchaſed to any reprobate, though it be neceſſary for their obtaining of any benefit of Chriſt's

purchaſe, therefore it cannot be ſaid that they are redeemed. For, at moſt, it ſaith that they are redeemed upon a condition, which they can never poſſibly perform; and this will infer, that they are not redeemed at all: for a peremptory, excluſive, conditional offer, where the condition is impoſſible, and known to be ſo to the offerer, is equivalent to an abſolute refuſal, as, ſuppoſe one would offer to relieve another from bondage, or to pay their debt for them, upon condition, and no otherways, that ſuch a perſon ſhould at once drink up the whole ſea: that offer ſo circumſtantiated, could not be looked upon otherwiſe but as an abſolute refuſal. Again, If he hath not purchaſed faith to them, then there is no ſaving grace purchaſed to them: and if neither faith nor any ſaving grace be purchaſed to them, it will be hard to ſay, that Chriſt hath died for ſuch, for whom no ſaving grace is purchaſed.

Fifthly, We ſay further, If all men be conditionally redeemed, then we muſt ſay, that all the midſes neceſſarily concurring in the work of redemption, for making it compleat, muſt be conditionally purchaſed alſo: for as by the acknowledged ground, that is called abſolute redemption, wherein faith and all the midſes are abſolutely purchaſed, ſo it will follow, that in this conditional redemption all theſe midſes muſt be conditionally purchaſed: for, the end and midſes are in one bargain; where the one is purchaſed, the other is purchaſed; ſo where the one is abſolutely purchaſed, the other is alſo: and therefore where the one is conditionally purchaſed, the other muſt be ſo alſo: but it cannot be ſaid, that the midſes, viz. faith, regeneration, and other graces, are conditionally purchaſed, becauſe this will be the ſenſe thereof, that Chriſt hath purchaſed faith in himſelf to ſuch perſons, upon condition that they ſhould believe in him: which, I ſuppoſe, none will affirm. It will follow therefore, that they cannot be ſaid to be conditionally redeemed, even as to the end.

Sixthly, If any conditional redemption be ſuppoſed to be, or if Chriſt be ſaid to have paid the debt of all, even conditionally, then this muſt be looked upon as a ſingular effect of God's grace, and a ſpecial evidence of the excellent freeneſs thereof for provoking the hearts of all ſuch to praiſe for the ſame: now ſuch a mould of conditional redemption as is propoſed, doth no way look like grace, nor tendeth to the engaging of ſuch as are ſo redeemed to bleſs and magnify God: therefore it is not to be admitted. That it doth not look like grace, will eaſily appear by conſidering, 1. That grace is every way grace, elſe it is no way grace (according to an ancient ſaying of Auguſtine) that is, it is grace in the end, and grace in reſpect of the midſes alſo. But here, whatever may be ſaid of the end, ſure there is no grace in reſpect of the midſes ſeeing no neceſſary and effectual mids for attaining of the end, is provided for in this ſuppoſed bargain of this conditional redemption: therefore it can neither be ſaid to look like a bargain of grace, nor yet to tend to the commendation thereof. 2. We may conſider, that as to the effect or end, this bargain doth not make the ſame free unto theſe that are comprehended under it: for it leaveth them to perform a condition for obtaining of the end, and that in their own ſtrength, without furniſhing them for the performance of it, even tho' they be of themſelves in an incapacity to perform the ſame: and how unlike this is to a covenant of grace, may eaſily be gathered. 3. This conditional redemption doth neither make the effect, ſuppoſed to be purchaſed, certain nor poſſible: certain it cannot be, ſeeing it never cometh to paſs: poſſible it is not, ſeeing it dependeth upon a condition, (which as it is circumſtantiated) is ſimply impoſſible; yea, and is ſupponed to be ſo in the covenant of redemption; for, we muſt look upon this condition, in reſpect of its poſſibility, not only with regard to men, as men indued with natural faculties; but we muſt look upon it with reſpect to men, as they are in their corruption incapacitated to do any thing that is ſpiritually good, ſuch as this act of believing is. Now, in the covenant of redemption, it is ſuppoſed, not only that faith is neceſſary; but alſo that man is corrupt, ſold under ſin, and ſo cannot of himſelf (except it be given him) believe: and yet in the ſame covenant it is agreed, that faith be purchaſed and beſtowed upon ſome, becauſe of the former reaſons; and even then, ſuch who are ſuppoſed conditionally to be redeemed, are bypaſt, and deliberately no ſuch thing is capitulated for concerning them. Therefore the effect muſt notwithſtanding of this, be ſtill impoſſible. And if ſo, can it be ſaid to be of grace, which is ſo clouded in the terms thereof, and doth neither make any good poſſible to theſe who are comprehended in the ſame,

nor give thorough occaſion to glorify grace as ſhining in the freedom, comfortableneſs and refreſhfulneſs thereof? and in effect, it ſeemeth rather to obſcure grace, than to manifeſt the ſame: and therefore ought not to be preſſed in the church. For a conditional tranſaction in this mould would be, as if one ſhould be ſaid to have paid the Turks for ſo many ſlaves, to be ſent home to him in ſuch and ſuch ſhips, as himſelf only could ſend for them; and that this purchaſe ſhould be valid, as to theſe ſlaves, upon condition allenarly that they ſhould return in ſuch and ſuch ſhips unto him; and yet in the mean time he never intended to ſend theſe ſhips for them, but in the ſame bargain conclude, that ſhips ſhould be ſent only for ſuch and ſuch others; would not theſe ſlaves neceſſarily continue under their bondage? and would this ſo be accounted a redemption amongſt men, or yet a wiſe conditional bargain? and is that to be attributed to the only wiſe and gracious God, and our bleſſed Lord Jeſus, which is upon the matter, the ſame? viz. that our Lord Jeſus ſhould pay the debt of ſo many, upon condition that they ſhould believe in him, by ſuch faith as he only can procure unto them; and withal, that in the ſame covenant it ſhould be expreſsly capitulated, that our Lord Jeſus his ſufferings ſhould be accepted for procuring of faith to ſome others allenarly, and to none elſe; whereby theſe, ſuppoſed to be conditionally redeemed, are abſolutely excluded upon the matter? this conditional redemption therefore is not to be contended for.

Laſtly, Beſides theſe, this opinion will infer many abſurdities and intricacies not eaſily extricable, as firſt, If Chriſt Jeſus hath died for all conditionally, then it will follow, that either he died equally for all, or one way for ſome, and another way for others: to ſay he died equally for all, is abſurd, and acknowledged to be ſo by the aſſerters of this opinion: And of this we ſpake in the former part of this queſtion. If it be ſaid he did, in a different manner die for the elect, and for theſe that are not actually redeemed, then it may be enquired, wherein this difference doth conſiſt? for it muſt either be in the matter, or price, to ſay ſo, that is given, viz. that he gave more for thoſe whom he abſolutely redeemed, than for theſe whom he only did conditionally purchaſe; or, it muſt be in his intention in the laying down of his life, and in the Father's will in ordering of the ſame, viz. that it was not Chriſt's intention, nor the Father's will to beſtow faith upon ſuch, and actually to redeem them; and ſo to have his death accepted as a ſatisfaction for them, as he had condeſcended in reſpect of others: if the firſt be ſaid, viz. that Chriſt hath given more for the one than the other; then it will follow, that Chriſt hath not ſatisfied for theſe who are ſaid to be conditionally redeemed, becauſe he hath not paid ſufficiently for them. Beſide, it will not be found in ſcripture, that Chriſt hath paid a part of the debt of any where he hath not paid at all. If it be ſaid, that the price materially conſidered was equal, then it will follow, that Chriſt ſuffered as much wrath and curſe materially for Judas as he did for Peter, which will not look like peculiarity of that love that appeareth in Chriſt ſuffering for any, nor yet ſound well to the thankful heart of a redeemed one, as if Chriſt had paid no more for him than for Judas. If it be ſaid, that the difference is in God's purpoſe and Chriſt's intention who did deſign theſe ſufferings to purchaſe faith to the one, and ſo to make their redemption effectual; which was not purpoſed in reference to the other. To this we ſay, 1. If the price laid down be equal, in reference to all, then it would ſeem juſt that Judas ſhould have no leſs fruit thereby than Peter, ſeeing no leſs was paid for him: but, 2. We ſay, that this anſwer doth confirm our argument: for, if it was not the purpoſe of the Father and the Mediator, that the fruits of Chriſt's death ſhould be effectual to ſuch and ſuch, then Chriſt's death cannot be called a ſatifaction for ſuch; becauſe his death is regulated in its extent according to that purpoſe, and is a ſatisfaction for none, but ſuch for whom it was purpoſed to be made effectual: for, to make it a ſatisfaction for any, not only is it neceſſary that there ſhould be a ſufficient price, but alſo that it ſhould be intended to be paid and accepted as ſuch, for ſuch and ſuch perſons: therefore, ſeeing it was not intended for them as ſuch, they cannot any way be ſaid to be redeemed by Chriſt's death, ſeeing ſtill the purpoſe and intention of the parties contracting, is wanting, without which it can neither be a ſatisfaction, nor a redemption. If it be ſaid, that there was an intention to make a conditional redemption. *Anſ.* This being underſtood as contradiſtinct from the abſolute redemption, as neceſſarily it muſt be, its as much as to ſay, that the Father and Son in the covenant of redemption

did intend for such and such persons, instead of a conditional redemption, a *non-redemption*, or *ineffectual redemption*; and so it cometh to this, that their redemption was never intended at all.

A second absurdity is, that this seemeth to imply a contradiction, viz. that the reprobate whom God hath passed by, are redeemed by Christ's death; yea, that the unredeemed are redeemed: for, if the redeemed be distinguished from others in this place, then these to whom they are opposed must be unredeemed. Neither can it be said, that the opposition is not *ad idem*, because the one are absolutely redeemed, and the other conditionally; for, upon the matter, the denying of an absolute and effectual redemption, is the denying of any redemption at all. Again, as to the first part, if any say that though Christ died for all men, yet did he die for no reprobate, as a reprobate: which some of late (even walking under the name of orthodox) do assert, because it is absurd to say, that Christ died for any reprobate. We answer, In Christ's redemption the elect are considered as elect; for them he redeemeth absolutely: therefore, on the contrary, he must consider others as reprobates, or at least as not elected, but he must also be considered as a reprobate, seeing there is not a mids: therefore either Christ must be said to redeem all men, without respect either to election or reprobation, which is false, because the elect are in all the business of redemption considered as such: or, he must be said to die for the reprobates as reprobates, which is the absurdity they would shift: or it must be said, that in the laying down of his life, he had no respect to them under any consideration: which is the truth. For, the decree of reprobation, being in order of nature, and according to our conception, prior to the decree and covenant of redemption, as was said, such as are contained therein, cannot but be looked upon under that consideration. And, by the way, it would not seem inconsiderable as to our purpose, to think, that before this transaction of redemption were concluded (to speak according to our uptaking of first and last in God's purposes) he should determine concerning the ultimate estate of all men by his decrees of election and reprobation, and when marches are rid, and bounds (never to be changed) set, then to come to the transaction of redemption. Which certainly must suppose, that he intended not to confound the difference he had made by that after-covenant, but thereby to provide a mean for making the decree of election effectual; which mids was necessary for this, but not necessary as for the other.

A third absurdity is, that this doth extend Christ's death further, and maketh it more common than the scripture doth: for in scripture Christ is said to die for his people, Mat. i. 21. for his *sheep*. John x. 11, 15, *to gather the sons of God*, John xi. 52. for *his own*, John xvii. 6. with 19. and such like. And in this place it is said to be for some *of all kindreds, tongues, and nations*, and not for all indifferently. Now, according to this opinion, Christ may be said not only to die for his sheep, but for all and every man, &c. There are two special objections against this: the first is, that although Christ be said to die for his sheep, and to have redeemed some out of every nation, &c. yet saith a late learned abettor of this opinion (viz. Dallaeus in his apology) that it will not follow; because he died for these, therefore he died for no other; more than it will follow from Paul's word, Gall. ii. 20. *He loved me, and gave himself for me*, therefore he did love and gave himself for no other. It is sad, that learned men should so please themselves, to shift arguments; for certainly, a clear difference may be observed between Paul's saying, *Christ gave his life for me*, and between Christ's saying, *I laid down my life for my sheep*: this doth expresly hold forth Christ's differencing of these for whom he was to die, and his contradistinguishing of them from others who were not of his sheep, nor given to him; and therefore for them he was not to lay down his life: whereas that word of Paul's is not spoken to contradistinguish him from any other believer, but to comfort himself in the application of that truth to himself, that Christ who died for his sheep, did also lay down his life for him as one of them. Again, when Christ speaketh of his people, of his sheep, and of his own in this case, he doth particularly (to say so) consider them as a species or kind of people by themselves, and differenced, in the respect mentioned, from others, as the scope cleareth: but when Paul speaketh of himself in the application foresaid, will any think that he speaketh of himself as differenced from all, and not rather as one individual of the species foresaid? Therefore altho' we may conclude thus, God hath made man a reasonable creature according to his own image, therefore no other creature is such, because, by this qualification, man, or that

ſpecies, to ſay ſo, is differenced from all other creatures on earth; yet, it will not follow, Peter is a reaſonable creature according to God's image. Therefore no other man is ſo: becauſe, Peter is but an individual perſon under the ſame ſpecies with others. Juſt ſo is it here, Chriſt's *ſheep*, *own*, *people*, &c. denote a ſpecies, as it were, differenced by ſuch relations from others, whereas Paul is but an individual believer comprehended under the ſame.

A ſecond objection is, that many other ſcriptures do aſſert Chriſt to be given, and to have laid down his life for the world: therefore it cannot be abſurd to ſay, that in ſome ſenſe Chriſt hath redeemed all; and particularly that place, John iii. 16. is urged (for our ſcope ſuffereth us not to digreſs to more) viz. *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son: that whoſoever ſhould believe in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* In reference to which place, we ſay, 1. That the ſcope is not to ſhew that Chriſt was given for all the world, taken diſtributively, that is, for every perſon that ſhould be in the world, becauſe it is only brought in here to confirm this general ſum of the goſpel which is laid down, verſe 15. *That whoſoever believeth in Chriſt ſhould not periſh, but have eternal life.* Now, ver. 16. is brought in as a confirmation of this; for, ſaith he, *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son*, for this very end, *That whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have eternal life.* Where God's end in giving of his Son, is mentioned to be a ground of quietneſs to all that ſhould believe, and will bear that univerſal well. *Whoſoever believeth are redeemed*, and may expect the benefits of Chriſt's redemption; becauſe the juſtifying and ſaving of ſuch, was the end for which God ſent his Son: and to extend the place any further will not be conſiſtent with the ſcope thereof. If it be ſaid, that God's reſpect and love to the world indefinitely, is mentioned here; be it ſo, yet that will not infer, that becauſe he had reſpect to the world, that therefore he intended that Chriſt ſhould die for all and every individual perſon in the world; but it will only infer this much at moſt, as if we had ſaid, ſuch a Chriſtian king, or potent man, had ſuch a reſpect to Chriſtians, or to men of ſuch a nation, as to ſend ſuch a great ſum to redeem ſo many of them as he particularly deſcended upon, from the bondage of the Turks: it may well be ſaid, that ſuch a great man had reſpect to Chriſtians, or to ſuch a nation, becauſe he purpoſed to redeem many of them when he took no thought of others; yet it cannot be ſaid, that he intended the redeeming of all, either abſolutely, or conditionally, ſeeing he did appoint the price given, to be paid for ſuch as himſelf thought meet to redeem, and not for others: juſt ſo is it here in this caſe at the moſt; and ſo God's reſpect to the world may be oppoſite to his paſſing by of all the fallen angels. Again, *Secondly*, We ſay, that if *world*, in this place, be to be underſtood of particular perſons, and an univerſality of them, it muſt be underſtood of the elect world, as in the verſe following is clear, where God's purpoſe of ſending his Son is expreſſed to be, that *the world through him might be ſaved.* Now, there can no other univerſality be thought to be intended, to be ſaved by God, as was formerly cleared, but the univerſality to ſpeak ſo, or the world of the elect. Neither will the reading be abſurd, to underſtand it thus, *That God ſo loved the elect world, that he gave his only begotten Son to death for them, that by their believing on him they ſhould not periſh, but have eternal life.* And ſo this place will be interpreted by the parallel thereof, 1 John iv. 9. *In this was manifeſted the love of God towards us, becauſe that God ſent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him:* for *us* and *we*, in the one place, are equivalent to the *world*, and *whoſoever will believe*, in the other. That thus it is to be underſtood, appeareth in this, that even according to the grounds of this opinion, there can none be expected to believe but the elect: and in the text there are none profited by this fruit of Chriſt's love to the world, but the believers: therefore this love, which giveth this gift, muſt be ſaid to reſpect the elect only, eſpecially conſidering, that it is in a matter which is the evidence of God's moſt ſpecial love, as was formerly ſaid. Only it is expreſſed in this general, *Whoſoever ſhall believe*, &c. becauſe the extending of it, in this indefinite expreſſion, doth ſuit beſt with the propoſed mould of the offer of the goſpel, which is not to invite men to believe, becauſe they are particularly elected or redeemed; but to invite men to believe, becauſe God hath promiſed to ſave ſuch as believe, and becauſe he doth by the outward miniſtry call hearers thereunto. And this is the more to be obſerved, becauſe Chriſt here, as a good miniſter of the goſpel, is preaching to Nicodemus,

and laying before him the ſum of the goſpel; and that which muſt be the object of his faith; and therefore it was neceſſary that he ſhould take that way of preaching theſe truths to him, ſo that as upon the one ſide, he doth hold forth God's peculiar reſpect to the elect world; ſo upon the other, he doth hold forth God's acceptation of all whoſoever ſhall believe, that the peculiarity of the redemption may not ſtumble any in their approaching to Chriſt, who have the offer of the goſpel made unto them: for, the word faith in ſum, a believer cannot fail of ſalvation, ſeeing God had that reſpect to his elect, as to give his only begotten Son to purchaſe this unto them: and this is to be preached in theſe indefinite terms, and cannot but be true, ſeeing it is the revealed will of God.

A fourth difficulty following this opinion is, that it will be hard to conceive how Chriſt could conditionally die and lay down his life for the redeeming of many, who were actually already condemned in hell: yet, this univerſal conditional redemption will infer this, otherwiſe the reprobates, who lived before Chriſt's death, were not ſo much obliged to him as theſe who did ſucceed. If it be ſaid, that although Chriſt actually died in time, yet the tranſaction was eternal before any man lived in the world. This will not remove the difficulty, becauſe, though it was tranſacted before time; yet, no queſtion, it was ſo regulated as it might be performed in time. Now can it be ſuppoſed, that the tranſaction was in theſe terms, that the Mediator ſhould die and lay down a price for ſo many elect, who by the virtue of his death were to be brought to glory before his ſufferings; and that alſo he ſhould pay ſo much in the name of ſo many reprobates, who for their own ſins were to be actually damned at the time of payment? and whatever be ſaid of the tranſaction, yet when it came to Chriſt's ſuffering, it muſt either be ſaid that theſe were ſcored out, ſo as Chriſt did not bear their iniquity, or die for them, in any reſpect; or, it muſt be ſaid, that before God's juſtice, Chriſt did bear the iniquity, and pay in the name of ſuch as were actually in hell, ſuffering for their own ſins at that ſame inſtant of time.

Fifthly, It may be aſked, *What doth become of all infants, whether in the viſible church, or without it, who die in their infancy?* According to the former grounds, it will be hard to determine: for none can ſay, upon the one ſide, that they are all abſolutely redeemed and ſaved, there being no warrant in ſcripture for this; on the other ſide, to ſay that Chriſt died for them, upon condition that they ſhould believe in him, cannot be well underſtood: for, tho' ſome of them be within the conditional covenant made with the church, and therefore cannot be more rigidly conſtructed of than theſe at age; yet are they not in a capacity to perform acts of faith, and to fulfil that condition: and this incapacity doth not meerly flow from mens corruption, as it doth in men at age; but is natural to young ones, as not to underſtand, ſpeak, or walk are: now, it were unreaſonable to ſay, that ſuch children who die in their infancy, were redeemed by Chriſt, upon condition that they ſhould underſtand, ſpeak, walk, &c. or, of a child dying in ſuch a condition, ſuppoſe it be one not abſolutely redeemed, it cannot be ſaid that the child was redeemed upon this condition, that it had walked, ſpoken, &c. when as yet it was not, poſſibly, of one hours age. Again, can it be ſaid of children within the viſible church, which are not abſolutely redeemed, that it is undeterminable whether Chriſt did die conditionally for them, or, not at leaſt till they come to ſuch an age as they themſelves may act faith? neither can it be ſaid here that he redeemed reprobate children in the church conditionally, as he did abſolutely redeem theſe that are elect, although even theſe cannot act faith: for he purchaſeth to the elect ſaving grace in the ſeed thereof, a new nature to be communicated to them, whereof the youngeſt children are capable, ſeeing therein they are meerly paſſive: but, in that conditional redemption, there is nothing purchaſed to any, but upon condition that they receive Chriſt offered and believe in him; which doth ſuppoſe an activeneſs, and acting, to be in theſe to whom the offer is made: of which, children are not capable. And if this condition could be ſuppoſed only to infer ſomething wherein children might be meerly paſſive, then this will be the meaning thereof, viz. that Chriſt redeemed ſuch children, upon condition that he himſelf ſhould confer ſuch and ſuch things on them, in receiving of which, they could only be paſſive: which would not look like a conditional covenant; for, the performing of the condition will be on Chriſt's ſide, and not upon theirs: and ſo it would be abſolute, as in the caſe of the elect children. Neither will it remove this difficulty, to ſay, that children are partakers of the father's privileges, and are to,

be reckoned accordingly: for this cannot be ſaid of ſaving privileges, ſo as if no elect parent could have a reprobate child; or, no reprobate parent an elect child dying at ſuch an age; becauſe theſe things belong unto the ſovereignty of God, and he is not ſo to be bounded in reſpect of all particular children. Beſide, experience in the word giveth ground to us to call it in queſtion. It muſt then be underſtood only of federal privileges, and that in reſpect of the external adminiſtration of the covenant: and this will ſay nothing to the difficulty; becauſe the doubt is ſtill, what to ſay of children, that are within the conditional covenant, in reſpect of their parents, that are within the viſible church; yet, ſuppoſing them to die inſtantly, or in their nonage, they cannot be ſaid to be conditionally redeemed, becauſe of the reaſons foreſaid.

Sixthly, If the reprobate be conditionally redeemed, then that redemption of theirs is either tranſacted in the ſame covenant with the abſolute redemption of the elect, or not: They cannot be ſaid to be comprehended within the ſame covenant, becauſe all ſuch as are comprehended in it, are contradiſtinguiſhed from others, *as being the Lord's choſen, and ſuch as are given to Chriſt*, &c. Again, this covenant of redemption includeth the means with the end; for, it is *ordered in all things and ſure*; which cannot be ſaid of this conditional covenant: therefore they cannot be comprehended in one. And it would not ſound well, to ſay that the elects redemption, and that of the reprobates, were contained in one covenant. Nor can it be ſaid, that it is a diſtant bargain beſide the covenant of redemption: becauſe, 1. That were indeed to grant that it is no redemption, ſeeing it is not comprehended in the covenant of redemption. 2. The buſineſs of Chriſt's death is only tranſacted in that covenant where the redemption of the elect is abſolutely concluded; becauſe it is the great mids deſigned for making of that effectual: therefore ought it, as to the extent of its merit, to be proportioned to the object of that covenant, ſeeing by his undertaking therein allenarly, he becometh liable to death. 3. This would infer two covenants of redemption, whereas the ſcripture doth but ſpeak of one. And although ſome ſpeak of a conditional covenant with the viſible church; yet, neither can that be ſaid to be made with all men, and ſo none without the viſible church ſhould be redeemed; neither can that be called a covenant of redemption, diſtinct from that which is made in reference to the elect; becauſe nothing can be counted a covenant of redemption, even a conditional covenant, but that wherein God and the Mediator are parties; for, no other can determine abſolutely or conditionally upon the buſineſs of redemption. Beſide, what is revealed to the viſible church, and hath the form of a conditional covenant, doth but flow from this, as the adminiſtration, application, or execution thereof: and therefore cannot be thought to contain any new article concerning the extent or fruit of Chriſt's death, but muſt be regulated by the former, and is not to be looked upon as a diſtinct covenant in itſelf.

The laſt thing which we have to ſay, is, that this mould of a conditional redemption of all men, doth not bring with it any more ſolid way to ſatisfy or remove the difficulties that are pretended to follow the former. And indeed the way of grace being a myſtery, and depth which is unſearchable, and the giving of Chriſt unto death being the moſt myſterious part of all this myſtery; what wonder is it that carnal reaſon cannot reach the grounds of the Lord's ſovereign proceeding therein? and what preſumption may it be thought to be, to endeavour ſuch a mould of this, as may marr the myſterioufneſs thereof, and ſatisfy reaſon in all its proud objections? yet we ſay, this will not do it: for, *Firſt*, It doth not prove any way more conduceable for the glorifying of grace, in reſpect of theſe who are conditionally redeemed, as was formerly ſhown, but rather the contrary. Nor doth it conduce any more to the quieting and comforting of wakened conſciences, whereof alſo ſomething was ſpoken; nor doth it any way tend to make reprobate ſinners more inexcuſable, as if thereby the juſtice of God were more clearly vindicated: for, by this doctrine, he did not redeem them abſolutely, neither did purchaſe faith unto them, without which, even according to this conditional covenant, they cannot be ſaved; and yet they can no more obtain faith of themſelves, except by his purchaſe, than they can by themſelves ſatisfy divine juſtice, had he not, by his death, interpoſed. Now may not carnal reaſon ſtill cavil here, and ſay, that though Chriſt hath died, and purchaſed them conditionally, yet ſeeing he hath not purchaſed faith to them, their ſalvation is no leſs impoſſible, than if there had been no ſuch conditional

redemption at all. Neither can it be ever inſtanced, that this mere conditional redemption did profit any perſon as to life, or any ſaving good, more than if it had not been at all: and ſo the matter upon which the pretended cavil doth riſe, is but altered, but no way removed.

Secondly, Seeing the aſſerters of this conditional redemption do admit of an abſolute election unto life as we do, (at leaſt for ought I know) then they will have the ſame cavils to meet with: for the connection betwixt election, faith, and ſalvation, is no leſs peremptor, (ſo that none can believe and be ſaved but an elect) than the connection is betwixt Chriſt's dying for one, and his obtaining of ſalvation; yea, the connection is no leſs peremptory and reciprocal (to ſay ſo) betwixt abſolute redemption and life, and betwixt meer conditional redemption and damnation (to ſpeak of a connection ſimply, without reſpect to any caſualty) and that according to their grounds, than there is betwixt redemption and life, and non-redemption and death, according to the grounds which we maintain: yet I ſuppoſe, that none will account this abſolute election of ſome few, when others are bypaſt, to be any ſpot upon the ſovereign and free grace of God; or yet any ground of excuſe to ſuch as are not thus elected by him: and yet without this, as to the event, it is certain that they can never believe nor attain unto ſalvation: yea, ſuppoſing that election were grounded upon foreſeen faith, and ſuppoſing reprobation to be grounded upon foreſeen ſin and impenitency therein; yet, now both theſe decrees being peremptorily and irrevocably paſt, this is certain, that no other will or ſhall be ſaved but ſuch as are ſo elected; and ſo that all others, to whom the offer of the goſpel cometh, ſhall neceſſarily periſh, or the former decree muſt be cancelled, which is impoſſible; and this is true, although it be paſt, as they ſay, *voluntate conſequente*, now when the offer of the goſpel cometh, may not carnal minds raiſe the ſame cavil and ſay, ſeeing the Lord foreknew that ſuch and ſuch would not believe, and for that cauſe did determine to glorify his juſtice upon them; to what end then is this offer made to ſuch, who are now by a decree excluded from the ſame, whatever be the ground thereof? and indeed there is no end of cavilling, if men will give way unto the ſame: for fleſh will aſk, even in reference to this, *Why doth he then find fault?* and *who hath reſiſted his will?* for certainly if he had pleaſed, he might have made it otherwiſe; and ſeeing he pleaſed not to do ſo, therefore it could not be otherwiſe, as the apoſtle hath it, Rom. ix. 19, 20. unto which he giveth no other anſwer but, *Nay, O man, who art thou that replieſt againſt God? ſhall the thing formed ſay to him that formed it, why haſt thou made me thus? hath not the potter power over the clay? &c.* in which alſo we muſt acquieſce; otherwiſe no ſuch mould of a conditional redemption will give ſatisfaction.

Thirdly, It can no more warrant the application of the fruits of Chriſt's purchaſe to any, ſo as to comfort them in this conditional redemption, more than if there were no ſuch thing at all; for if the ſinner believe, the doctrine of particular redemption doth warrant any to make application of Chriſt's purchaſe: if they believe not, this doctrine of conditional redemption giveth no more warrant to make application for the comfort of any, than if it were not at all.

Fourthly, Neither doth it warrant a perſon with any greater boldneſs to take hold of Chriſt, or to cloſe with the offer of the goſpel made unto him; becauſe that perſon, who is jealous to cloſe with Chriſt, upon this ground, becauſe he knoweth not whether he be redeemed by him or not, ſeeing all are not redeemed, may be no leſs jealous upon this account, becauſe he knoweth not if by his death he hath procured faith to him or not, and ſo if he be abſolutely redeemed; for this is no leſs neceſſary for his peace and confidence than the former, and yet will be as difficult to be known to any that will needs ſearch into what is ſecret, and not reſt upon the revealed offer of God, as the ſufficient ground and object of their faith. And if only by actual believing, and no otherwiſe, they may be aſſured that faith is purchaſed unto them; by the ſame ground alſo may they be cleared, that they are redeemed by Chriſt, yea, and elected alſo; becauſe there is an equal peremptory connection betwixt faith and all theſe.

Fifthly, Neither doth this way, and the grounds thereof, give miniſters any more ſolid ground to make the offer of the goſpel indefinitely in their public preaching: for, by the truth formerly laid down, we can aſſure hearers, that whoſoever believeth ſhall partake of life, and of the benefits of Chriſt's redemption; and by virtue of the general call, and warrant which we

have in the goſpel, we may invite them to believe in Chriſt, require faith in them; and, upon condition thereof, aſſure them of pardon, &c. becauſe the nature of the adminiſtration of the covenant of redemption is ſuch in plain terms, viz. that whoſoever believeth ſhall be ſaved. Alſo, the nature of our commiſſion to preach this goſpel, doth fully import the ſame, as it is ſummed, Mark xvi. 15, 16. for miniſters warrant to preach and offer ſalvation, is not to preach and offer the ſame to the elect only, whom the Lord hath kept ſecret from them; but it is to preach and make offer of this goſpel, to thoſe unto whom the Lord ſhall ſend them, and whom he ſhall gather into a viſible church-ſtate, yet, this is done for the elect's ſake among ſuch, whom God hath thought fit to gather out among others by this preaching of the goſpel, without ſignifying to the miniſter who is elect, and whom he hath deſigned to believe: therefore it is ſuitable to this manner of adminiſtration, that the goſpel be preached indefinitely in reſpect of its call, and that indifferently, as to theſe who preach; that ſo while the call doth reach all particularly, the elect may withal be gripped with the ſame. And, upon the grounds of this conditional redemption, others can do no more, but publiſh the offer of the goſpel indefinitely, and aſſure any who ſhall believe in Chriſt, that they ſhall thereby obtain life and pardon. It is true, we cannot ſay that Chriſt hath died and ſatisfied for them all to whom we preach; yet that doth not leſſen our warrand to call hearers indifferently on the terms of believing; becauſe, though Chriſt's redemption be the ground which hath procured this goſpel to be preached, even in theſe terms, as from that forecited place, John iii. 16. may be gathered: and though it be that which boundeth the Lord's making of preaching effectual; yet our commiſſion is bounded according to the expreſs terms in which it hath pleaſed the Lord to draw up the ſame unto us: becauſe the tranſaction of redemption, as it relateth to the names of the redeemed, is a ſecret betwixt God and the Mediator, and therefore the book of life is never opened until the day of judgment, Rev. xx. But a miniſter's commiſſion in his treating with ſinners in the viſible church, is a thing which he hath thought good to reveal: and therefore hath done it ſo, as the former ſecret may not be revealed, and yet the end be made effectual, viz. the effectual calling and ingathering of ſo many elect. And upon the other ſide, theſe who may require faith of all, and plead it of them, upon this ground, that they are conditionally redeemed; yet they cannot ſay to their hearers, that Chriſt hath by his death procured faith to them all, and ſo they leave them ſtill at a loſs, except they betake them to the external indefinite call, which doth warrant miniſters to require faith of all hearers indifferently, and that without diſputing whether Chriſt hath redeemed all or not; or whether by his redemption he hath procured faith to them all or not; becauſe, faith is a duty, and is called for warrantably by virtue of that call, as is ſaid; and this we do in ſo far acknowledge. And ſo in ſum, their warrant then to preach the goſpel indefinitely, and ours, is found to be of the ſame extent, and to be founded upon the ſame general call: therefore there needeth not be much contending for a different doctrine, or, as ſome call it, a different method to derive this warrand from, which doth ſo natively flow from the received truth. And though the ſcripture doth ſometimes uſe this motive indifferently to the members of the viſible church, to ſtir them up to glorify God, viz. *that they are bought with a price*, as 1 Cor. vi. 20. Yet will not that infer an univerſal or conditional redemption of them all, more than theſe places immediately going before, (ver. 15, 19, where it is ſaid, *that they are members of Chriſt, and temples of the holy Ghoſt*,) will infer an univerſal or conditional regeneration of them all: the firſt whereof is falſe; the ſecond is abſurd: for ſo it would be upon the matter, that they were renewed, ſanctified, and had the Spirit dwelling in them, upon condition that it were ſo; ſeeing regeneration, the Spirit, and faith (which is a fruit of the Spirit) cannot be ſeparated. The like phraſes alſo are, chap. iii. of the ſame epiſtle, ver. 16, 17, &c. Beſide, will any think that when the apoſtle ſaith, *ye are bought with a price*, &c. that he doth only intend that conditional redemption which can never be effectual, but he muſt be underſtood as having reſpect to that great mercy in its moſt peculiar reſpect; becauſe he doth ſpeak of it to the elect as well as others, and that as having with it the greateſt obligation that can be?

Laſtly, It cannot be thought that this mould of a conditional redemption ſo qualified, can be

more acceptable to these who plead for an indifferent or equal universal redemption: because this doth not any whit remove their objections, whereby they plead for nature against the sovereignty of God; nor answer their cavils, whereby they reflect upon the justice of God, for condemning men who cannot possibly, (according to the case they are in) be saved. Therefore there is still ground for them to plead man's excusableness, seeing his salvation, even according to these grounds, is still impossible, as hath been formerly cleared. Neither, I suppose, will it be instanced, that any holding the Socinian, Arminian, or Lutheran principles in these things, have been brought to judge more favourably of that way than of the other; but on the contrary, may be strengthened, or rather stumbled by this, to continue in their former errors, as finding many orthodox divines in part to yield, because of the supposed strength of their arguments; and from such concessions they have some ground given to make their conclusions the more strong; for this conditional redemption doth alledge, that there is need to vindicate God's justice, and to declare man's inexcusableness, and to have clearer grounds of dealing with men for bringing them to faith, &c. than can be consistent with the principles that are ordinarily maintained by the orthodox in that point; and seeing by the length which this conditional redemption doth go, such ends are not attained, as hath been formerly hinted, therefore it will follow, that even more than that is necessary, and so that there can be no halting till it be their length. Also it must stumble and strengthen them not a little, to find orthodox divines taking up and managing their arguments, and by their weapons, bearing down the answers which hitherto have been made thereto, and to see them also enervating the arguments which have been brought again them by homologating of their answers. Sure Cameron, the author of this method, went as far in several points to allay the heat of Arminians and others, against this doctrine, as any; yet Episcopius, in his dealing with him, doth load his way with no less absurdities, nor doth any whit inveigh less bitterly against him than against others whom he dealt with; yea, in some respect he doth insist more, as alledging his way to be more inconsistent with reason and with itself, than the way of others; because still, Cameron did assert the absoluteness of election, the efficacy of grace in conversion, and the impossibility of frustrating the same (when God doth apply it to effectuate conversion,) or to convert themselves without it, tho' he endeavoured to maintain these things upon grounds different from what are commonly made use of. We conclude then, that these who are redeemed, are peculiarly obliged to Christ more than any other; and yet that no other hath any just ground to quarrel with him; this being certain, that though the reasons of his proceeding may sometimes be unknown to us, yet can they never be unjust. And there is no question but these who dispute most against his way now, shall, in the day of judgment, have their mouths stopped, when their consciences shall convincingly bear witness of the justice of all the Lord's proceeding in this work of redemption, and even in their own condemnation. But who can search into these depths of the riches both of the knowledge and wisdom of God? O! how unsearchable are his ways, and his judgments past finding out! To him be praise for ever.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were, the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts, saying, Come and see.*

THIS chapter beginneth that part of this book which is properly and mainly prophetical. We heard of the preparation to it in the former two chapters; serving not only to stir up John, but all that should hear or read, to observe the things that should be revealed. Followeth now the first prophesy to be spoken of, which is manifested to the church, by our Lord's opening the seals of the book: but it will be needful to premit some generals, before we enter on particulars. 1. Touching our way of proceeding. 2. Concerning the object and scope of the prophecies. 3. Concerning the

ſeries and order of them. 4. Some generals obſervable about them, for the better underſtanding of them.

1. For our way of proceeding, we ſay, 1. That this being an obſcure place, and interpretations being many and different, we muſt have liberty ſometimes to propone theſe that be moſt probable; that out of them we may take what is ſafeſt, ſeeing among three expoſitions (when a fourth cannot be given) the overthrowing of two, is an eſtabliſhing of the third. 2. There muſt be more uſe made of human hiſtory, and the citing of men's names than ordinary, ſeeing the reſolving of a propheſy is in an hiſtory: and there is no ſcripture-ſtory poſterior to this. Uſe then muſt be made of others, as in the expounding of Daniel is needful. 3. We intend not to be particular, or peremptory in aſtricting or limiting applications to times, caſes, or perſons; ſeeing the ſame expreſſion may be more comprehenſive than only to take in one event, or look to one party or perſon, it may take in others alſo; it may therefore ſuit as well with the ſcope to comprehend both, when the things included do not overturn one another. 4. Neither will it be meet, where conſiſtent and ſubordinate ſenſes offer, to adhere to one of them, when it may be as ſafe to take in both.

2. For the object and ſcope of this propheſy, we conceive it to be mainly to ſet out what concerneth the church; and occaſionally to touch any other thing as may ſerve to that end; for, it is ſent for the behove of our Lord Jeſus his ſervants, to arm them againſt trials, to keep them from being offended with them, and to comfort them under them; beſide, that God is not in this whole book, as in the former viſion, looked on as in his government ſimply, but in reference to his church chiefly: ſo it is his church's ſufferings, battles, victories, and others, as they are enemies to her or fighting with her, that are ſpoken to. 2. Becauſe the church was eſpecially within the bounds of the Roman empire, that then did almoſt command the world, and becauſe they were moſt manifeſtly friends or enemies to her; and the affairs of that empire being of moſt concernment to the church, there is mention made ſometimes more eſpecially of it. 3. Antichriſt being the great, and laſting enemy, and moſt dangerous to God's people, and yet pretending to be no enemy; the Holy Ghoſt therefore inſiſteth moſt in that particular, (deſcribing, diſcovering, and pointing him out in his riſe, his followers or church, his reign and ruin) that believers may be eſpecially guarded againſt him, and that Chriſt's church and people may be diſcerned from Antichriſt's church, people, or followers. 4. It is not purpoſed particularly to hold forth every diſpenſation in the church, or all changes befalling it, or happening to it, but the ſpecial and main ones, moſt needful and uſeful to be known, and underſtood by the church; therefore, while as other prophecies are more general, this concerning Antichriſt is eſpecially, particularly and at length inſiſted on, as if the Lord intended eſpecially by this propheſy to meet with him.

3. For the ſeries of the ſtory, this is certain, the ſtate of the militant church is holden forth from that time to the end of the world, but how it is, there is difference. There are three opinions, eſpecially in this, 1. Some would carry on the ſtory in an even line by an uninterrupted ſeries, knitting every chapter at the back of another; as if the chapters keeped the order of time, till it come to the end: but this will no ways conſiſt with the matter contained in theſe chapters, eſpecially, chap. xii, xiii, xiv. which certainly is cotemporary with, and explicatory of the former viſions, and ſo are chap. xvii, xviii. 2. Some make all theſe viſions to begin and end together, as if in each of them were a full propheſy, extending from the beginning of this revelation to the end of the world. But this will not hold in the principal prophecies, as will appear. 3. Some divide it in two books; the firſt cloſed, chap. v. the ſecond opened, chap. x. and that theſe two have two propheſies beginning alike, and ending at the end of the world. But it is certain, that that book, chap. v. containeth all; for it containeth the ſeven ſeals; they contain the ſeven trumpets; the ſeventh trumpet is not blown till chap. xi. and certainly it containeth the vials, which are the laſt woes and plagues. 4. We may add a fourth opinion, as a kind of midſt, that is, that neither is there a continued ſeries amongſt all the prophecies, nor yet are all the viſions, or the three principal prophecies cotemporary; but that the three principal prophecies, viz. of the *ſeals*, *trumpets*, and *vials*, continue the ſeries from the beginning to the end, and are not cotemporary, properly; but that the explicatory viſions, though they be not cotemporary one with another, yet are they

cotemporary with these, or some part of these principal prophecies, that is, 1. The seals precede. 2. The trumpets succeed. 3. After follow the vials, and that immediately, and these carry it on till the end.

If we consider the matter contained in this revelation, it may not unfitly be divided in two parts, each of them giving a view of the whole, from the beginning to the end; with this difference, that what is more shortly and obscurely pointed at in the one, is more largely and plainly insisted on in the other: for, (from chap. vi. to the end of the xi. inclusively) there is a view given of affairs concerning the gospel-church unto the end. And such like, (from chap. xii. *initio*, to the end of this book,) a review is given of the same extent, viz. from the first spreading and rise of the gospel, unto the end of the world: wherein what was more shortly hinted at concerning Antichrist, his rise, and ruin, by the fifth and seventh trumpet, chap. ix, and xi. is more largely and fully insisted on, from chap. xiii. and forward: so that, upon the matter, this division seemeth not impertinent. Yet, considering the native form in which these prophecies and visions are delivered, and the special periods of the militant church, which are by special events remarkable, and of which the Holy Ghost taketh particular notice by beginning, and breaking off purposes at them, by continuing one form of expression, viz. by the same types of *seals*, *trumpets*, or *vials*, until such a period run out, and then altering, and proposing the succeeding matter in a different form, and under different types, as altering from *seals* to *trumpets*; and then again, when a new period cometh, altering to *vials*. Considering these things, we conceive, that the dividing of this book in principal and expository prophecies, and subdividing each of these again in three, will conduce most for a distinct and clear uptaking of the matters revealed, and suit best with the form wherein it is delivered; and by which also of itself it is divided, as will more fully appear in our proceeding. And so the order and series of the prophecies of this book, are thus to be conceived.

The whole revelation, as prophetical, is contained in that book sealed with seven seals, chap. v. the six first seals, being opened, deduce the story to one period, viz. to the end of the heathen persecution, and the quieting of the church from that. The seventh seal bringeth in the trumpets, chap. viii, and ix, which contain the story of the church's trouble by intestine enemies, until Antichrist be at his height. The seventh chap. containeth no other matter, but is cast in betwixt the first principal prophesy and the second, to make way for the more clear passing from the one to the other; and especially to prepare for, and help to understand the prophesy of the trumpets, chap. x. and xi. contain a consolation for the church in reference to that sad condition. Then in chapter xii, xiii, and xiv. is inserted an explicatory prophesy belonging to that same time, and conducing both for clearing the two prophecies preceding, and also that of the *vials* following. Then cometh the third principal prophesy of the vials, which hath its preparation, chap. xv. its execution, chap. xvi. and is enlarged and explained in the two last explicatory prophecies, chap. xvii, xviii, &c. unto the end of the book.

Concerning these three principal prophcies, viz. 1. Of *Seals*, chap. vi. 2. Of *Trumpets*, chap. viii. ix. 3. Of *Vials*, chap. xvi.

Observ. 1. They have all prefaces or preparations before them, with songs for upstirring of the reader at the entry, chap. iv. and v. are preparatory to the prophesy of the *seals*, chap. vi. chap. vii. is preparatory to the *trumpets* which follow chap. viii. and ix. and chap. xv. to the *vials*, which are comprehended, chap. xvi.

Observ. 2. That all of them have their consolation and explication intermixed with them, or added, relating unto them; thus the consolation of the church, against the persecution, intimated by the second, third, and fourth seals, is added in that same chapter by the fifth and sixth seals: and the explication which is cotemporary with it, is in chap. xii. viz. the first part of it. The consolation laid down in reference to the trumpets is, chap. x. xi. And the explication of them, (for, both the difficulty and consolation are expounded) is chap. xii. last part, with chap. xiii, xiv. The vials are of themselves consolatory, being against the churches enemies; yet are they particularly explained, and insisted on from chap. xvii. to the end.

Observ. 3. That each of these prophecies have something inserted in them, which, as a key may serve both for the understanding of the meaning of them, and timeing of the thing contained in them. This key is especially to be found in the consolatory part of each principal prophesy, it being not one of the least consolations to un-

derſtand them. 4. It is to be obſerved, that every one of them is linked in, with, and to another, ſo as the laſt ſeemeth to infer a new period; as the ſeventh ſeal bringeth the trumpets, the ſeventh trumpet bringeth the vials; the ſeventh vial again ſeemeth to look to an interval after the beaſt's deſtruction before the day of judgment, and to relate to that viſion, chap. xx. or, at leaſt, to a chief part thereof; ſo that looking to the principal propheſies in themſelves, there are but three periods of the militant church; but as the ſeventh vial containeth ſomewhat new, and ſingularly different from the former, there are four. Thus the church's eſtate is either ſuffering; and that, 1. Under heathen perſecutors: this relateth to the ſeals, and is the firſt period; or, 2. It is torn and waſted under heretics and Antichriſt. This is holden forth by the trumpets, and is the ſecond: or, 3. It is aſpiring to an outgate from theſe in a more wreſtling and fighting way, gaining ground againſt Antichriſt, from his begun fall to his ruin, by degrees; which is held forth by the firſt ſix vials, and that is the third: or, 4. It is more quiet after his ruin, which taketh in that interval and kingdom, chap. xx. I mean, that eminent part thereof that falleth under the ſeventh vial, and that is the fourth. In ſum, the whole ſtate of the militant church may be divided in two, 1. In a condition more ſuffering: or, 2. More proſperous. Each of which again may be ſubdivided: her ſuffering condition in two, 1. Under heathens: 2. Under Antichriſt. Her proſperous condition again may be conſidered, as it is begun and fighting, or more quiet after her eminent enemy Antichriſt is down; which, in all, make four periods. But becauſe this laſt of the church's quiet condition, ſeemeth not to be of ſuch continuance as any of the former, it is not ſet down by diſtinct types as they are, and therefore the whole eſtate of the church runneth moſt in three periods, according to the principal propheſies *of ſeals*, *trumpets*, and *vials*. By *period* in this diſcourſe, underſtand one continued way of diſpenſation unto the church, till by ſome new intervening change it be broken off, as the alteration from heathen perſecutors, and heathen perſecution from without, unto inteſtine perſecutions and troubles from within, and the like. That this ſeries may be clear (which we will find agreeable to the nature of, and matter contained in, theſe propheſies, to hiſtory, in what is paſt, and to reaſon drawn from ſolid grounds in the book itſelf;) we ſhall lay down theſe following propoſitions, to make out, that theſe three principal propheſies are not cotemporary to each other, and do not deduce the ſtate of the goſpel church ſeverally from her beginning to the end of the world; and alſo to make out, that theſe explicatory propheſies do not belong to any diſtinct time, different from the former, but are to be underſtood as cotemporary with them, or ſome part of them.

Propoſition 1. Theſe principal propheſies are not cotemporary one with another in this reſpect, as if each of them did hold forth a view of the whole goſpel church, from the beginning to the end of the world, as may appear, 1. By the genuine order that is amongſt the *ſeals*, *trumpets*, and *vials*. The *trumpets* are comprehended under the ſeventh ſeal, and therefore cannot be cotemporary with the former ſix, except we ſay the laſt were cotemporary with the firſt, which is abſurd; for the ſecond is not ſo cotemporary with the firſt, nor the third with the ſecond. Likewiſe, the *vials* are comprehended under the ſeventh trumpet, as will be clear, chap. xi. when the ſeventh trumpet is expounded; and therefore cannot be cotemporary with the former ſix trumpets, upon the foregoing reaſon.

This argument preſſeth the more ſtrongly, becauſe if there be order of time amongſt the events, comprehended under the firſt ſix ſeals, ſo that the following ſeal comprehendeth matter, in time ſucceeding the former; then muſt the ſeventh ſeal contain matter, ſucceeding in time to the ſixth, as the ſixth did to the fifth? but the former is true, there is order amongſt the firſt ſixth ſeals, viz. the *white horſe* cometh by the firſt, bloody perſecution followeth in the ſecond, and ſo forth, one ſucceedeth another, as will be clear by the expoſition of them; and therefore the ſeventh muſt ſucceed the ſixth, except we overturn the whole order of the reſt, which ſeemeth, for weighty and remarkable reaſons, to be ſo particularly mentioned by the Holy Ghoſt.

The ſame argument alſo will bind the more ſtrongly by conſidering the order that is amongſt the vials and trumpets among themſelves: for, if one trumpet or vial (accordingly as they are deſigned, 1, 2, &c.) be in time preceding or ſucceeding to another, in reſpect of the matter contained in them, then that ſame order muſt be between the ſeventh

ſeal, and the trumpets comprehended under it; and the ſeventh trumpet, which hath the ſeven vials following upon it (for that ſame reaſon which diſtinguiſheth the ſecond from the firſt, and the ſixth from the fifth) will hold alſo in diſtinguiſhing the ſeventh from the ſixth preceding, but it will be clear that the trumpets have order amongſt themſelves (as appeareth, chap. viii. laſt verſe, by the three woes of the laſt trumpets ſucceſſive one to another) and ſo alſo in the matter of the vials, as will appear, chap. xvi. And therefore we conclude, that the trumpets which are contained under the ſeventh ſeal, cannot be cotemporary with the ſix former ſeals, nor can the vials which fall in under the ſeventh trumpet, be cotemporary with the ſix firſt trumpets, much leſs with the ſeals.

2. It may be made out by the different matter contained in theſe principal propheſies, that they cannot be cotemporary one with another, but muſt be ſucceſſive to one another: for, the ſeals hold forth predominant perſecution by heathens, the trumpets hold forth the tyranny of Antichriſt unto its height, which is inconſiſtent with the former; the vials bring judgment on all the church's enemies, which is inconſiſtent with both: which argument will be more clear hereafter.

3. It may be thus made out, if neither of theſe propheſies begin at one time; nor end at one time; but one of them ſucceed to another, then they are not cotemporary, but ſucceſſive one to another: but the firſt is true. *Ergo*, 1. They have not one beginning: the vials chap. xvi. the firſt of them is poured on them that have the mark of the beaſt; which beaſt was not riſen during the ſeals, and was perſecuting under the trumpets, as appeareth, chap. xi. Therefore the beginning of the vials doth not cotemporate either with the ſeals, or trumpets. Again, the trumpets ſuppoſe a church, unto which they give warning, as appeareth by the Lord's ſealing and preparing his own, chap. vii. ere the trumpets blow, chap. viii. and therefore the firſt trumpet cannot cotemporate with the firſt ſeal, wherein the preaching of the goſpel, for the begetting of a church, is held forth, as will appear in the expounding of them. 2. It may be made out, that the cloſe of theſe three prophecies do not cotemporate together: for, it is certain, that the vials bring the laſt judgment, as they are called, chap. xv. *the laſt plagues*, or, which is all one, *the laſt woe*, chap. xi. and therefore they muſt be conceived to ſucceed the ſeals and trumpets, which contain, in this reſpect, the firſt plagues; for firſt and laſt cannot cotemporate one with another. 3. Neither the firſt ſix ſeals, nor the ſix firſt trumpets (for, the ſeventh contained a different period from the preceding, as is ſaid) reach in their events unto the end of the world; for the ſeventh ſeal, as is ſaid, followeth ſixth, and ſo the ſeventh trumpet followeth the former ſix: and yet neither the ſeventh ſeal, nor the ſeventh trumpet, can be ſaid to be after the day of judgment, which that would infer.

Yet, concerning this, take theſe advertiſements, 1. That when we name an order or ſeries betwixt trumpets and ſeals, or amongſt themſelves, we mean not, as if what is mentioned under one ſeal, were paſt and ended before another were opened, and ſo betwixt the ſeal and trumpets, &c. No, that is not meaned; for the white horſe in the firſt ſeal, and the red horſe in the ſecond, are ſtill riding, as we will ſee, chap. xix. in the time that belongeth to the vials; but it looketh eſpecially to the riſe of theſe, as the white horſe goeth before the red, and the red before the black, and the ſeals before the trumpets, and ſo forth, altho' the event, ſignified by the white horſe, may continue after the red is come; and ſo in other events. Alſo it looketh to theſe events mentioned as in an eminent degree; as for example, when we ſay the ſeals hold forth open perſecution, and the trumpets error, the meaning is, they hold out theſe to be at a height more than ordinary, and to be the predominant ſtate or evil of the church, during that time reſpectively. 2. We would be advertiſed, that one of theſe may well agree, and be applied to another time and occaſion by proportion and analogy, but not ſimply: as for inſtance, the white horſe cometh firſt out under the firſt ſeal, and ere long the red horſe followeth. This may hold doctrinally in the general from it, that wherever the goſpel cometh, ere long the devil ſtirreth up men to perſecute it: or wherever Chriſt ſendeth the goſpel it holdeth forth that his errand is there to conquer; yet looking on the words as they are prophetical, they hold forth the firſt ſpreading of the goſpel, and the conqueſt and perſecutions that followed it: otherwiſe, there were no difference betwixt this book which is prophetical, and any other which is doctrinal; ſeeing the general diſpenſations which befal the church, might be gathered

from both alike; neither would it make for Chriſt's ſcope, which is to ſhew unto his ſervants things to come, for arming of them againſt them.

Prop. 2. The firſt two prophecies hold forth the troubles of the church; that of the vials, the ruin of her enemies. 1. That the ſeals (at leaſt, ſecond, third, and fourth) hold forth ſad things to the church, appeareth, 1. From the fifth ſeal, chap. 6. in which mention is made of many martyrs killed for the teſtimony of Jeſus, which muſt be under the former ſeals. 2. In that they deſire revenge on their perſecutors for their blood: whereby it appeareth, that till that time they had been born down by perſecutors as unrevenged, which could not be, if the former ſeals contained judgment on the world.

2. That the trumpets hold forth a torn and waſted condition of the church, and God by them giving the alarm thereof, is evident, 1. By the prophets propheſying in ſackcloth, chap. xi. and the beaſt's prevailing againſt the ſaints, chap. xiii. which cotemporateth with the trumpets. And 2. By this, that when the ſeventh trumpet ſounds, chap. xi. 17. it is ſaid, that God hath taken to him his great power, and reigned, as if under the former ſix his power had lien by, becauſe his church was under affliction. 3. That the vials bring judgment on the enemies, appeareth, 1. From the ſong, chap. xi. when the ſeventh trumpet ſounds, and chap. xvi. 5, 6. it is the ſhedding of their blood who had ſhed the blood of his ſervants; and it is on the beaſt his followers and throne, in the chapters following. And though now and then God took order with particular perſecutors; yet ſuch a remarkable change as that, will not agree with a ſtanding perſecution, or, to ſpeak ſo, with a ſtate of perſecution, ſuch as was under the former two.

Prop. 3. Though both the ſeals and trumpets hold out troubles to the church, yet do they hold forth different troubles, not only in time, but in nature, and from different enemies. The ſeals hold forth bloody cruelty from heathens; the trumpets deceitful hereſies and troubles from falſe Chriſtians; which may thus be gathered, 1. Concerning the ſeals, they are bloody to the church, as appeareth from the fifth ſeal, where they cry for vengeance againſt the ſhedders of their blood. 2. That under the ſeals the ſaints are merely paſſive and patient, in bearing out their cauſe with ſufferings towards their enemies, and prayers towards God: but under the trumpets it is different. 1. God giveth them warning, that they ſhould be active in preparing for that ſtorm. 2. That they are repreſented as ſtriving, not only in ſuffering, and prayer, as to outward enemies, but, chap. xi. by propheſying, which agreeth better to the vindicating of truth againſt falſe brethren, than towards theſe who are altogether without. 3. The enemies are diverſly deſcribed; under the trumpets, come the falſe prophets and the locuſts, in a ſecret manner carrying on their deſign. 4. The effects are different; the ſeals, ſhed blood, and take away the lives of all profeſſors: by the trumpets again, the clear waters of life are imbittered, and truth corrupted, ſtars made to fall from heaven, and eſpecially the prophets perſecuted, and inſulted over, chap. xi. 5. It is clear from God's preparing his own againſt the trumpets, chap. vii. more than againſt the ſeals, chap. vi. of which difference, this is the reaſon, that Chriſt will not keep his people from killing ſwords, but will guard them from ſoul-murdering errors, as by chap. xii. compared with chap. ix. and iv. is clear. 6. It is moſt clear; by comparing the explicatory prophecies, chap. xii, and xiii. which are cotemporary to theſe of the ſeals and trumpets: from which may be gathered, not only that the church hath troubles during that time; but alſo, that theſe troubles are to be diſtinguiſhed either as they proceed from the dragon, who waiteth to devour the child, chap. xii. which cotemporates with ſeals; or, as they proceed from the beaſt, chap. xiii. which hath horns like the Lamb, but indeed ſpeaketh like the dragon, and ſucceedeth him in his ſeat, which cotemporateth with the trumpets.

From which we may conclude. 1. That the firſt period of the militant church, viz. that which belongeth to the ſeals, is to be fixed at the cloſe of the great perſecution by heathens and her meeting with new ſtorms from within, by the devil's raiſing up falſe teachers, and corrupt doctrines, with great patrons to them, both civil and eccleſiaſtic, which is a trial of another nature, and yet of as great concernment to her. Therefore, leaſt being free of the former, ſhe ſhould now think herſelf free of all, the Lord ſoundeth a trumpet, and giveth her the alarm of this ſtorm: which time will fall about the three hundred year of our Lord, or thereby, when at firſt the church enjoyed peace by public authority under Conſtantine,

which peace was immediately declared by the Arian herefy, and others following it, unto which the trumpets gave warning.

This would not be underftood, as if the church wanted herefies under the feals, or perfecution under the trumpets: no, the contrary is clear; but this we mean, 1. That under the feals, perfecution by blood had its height, and was more conftant: under the trumpets again, herefies and corrupt doctrines had their height, and were, for the time refpectively, predominant in the church. 2. We mean, that under the feals, perfecutions were ftill growing till the change came, as the laft perfecution by Diocleftan was the greateft; and that under the trumpets, error and declining grew, till Antichrift came to his height; fo that tho' there may be error under the feals, yet error came not to its height then, and was not the predominant evil which troubled the church as under the trumpets. 3. Although there may be perfecution under the trumpets, yet thus do they differ, 1. In refpect of the perfecutors; in the one, open enemies to Chrift; and in the other, covered enemies to Chrift. 2. They differ in refpect of the grounds they go upon, and the manner how they profecute their defigns according to their refpective principles.

2. Again, we may conclude, the period between the trumpets and the vials, is to be fixed at the Lord's beginning to purfue Antichrift, and to make the obfcured light of the gofpel to break out, to the diminifhing of Antichrift's tyranny; which will fall to be about the one thoufand five hundred year of our Lord, or fomewhat thereafter: for the firft vial bringeth judgment on his (that is the beaft's) worfhippers; which judgment is carried on by one vial after another, chap. xvi. till he himfelf be caft in the lake. 2. The fixth trumpet endeth before the laft woe, when the feventh is to found: and, chap. x. it is certified by him that fweareth, that the time of his reigning in a predominant and uncontrolled way, fhall be continued no longer than the feventh angel begin to found; at which time, the vials begin to be poured forth on him. 3. It is clear by the fong, chap. xi. after the founding of the feventh trumpet, wherein God is praifed for avenging of the blood of his fervants, and beginning to reign in Antichrift's overthrow, before the eyes of the world; which overthrow is carried on by degrees under the feven vials, and God is praifed for it at the beginning, it becometh then fo certain, though in one inftant it be not perfected.

3. We conclude, that the fixth vial endeth at Antichrift's caffing in the pit, chap. xix. at the end; the feventh, at the utter overthrow of all the enemies of the church, and the confummation of all things, yet fo as God doth feveral ways, and at feveral times plague his enemies before this, but their final and full overthrow goeth along with this.

For thefe prophecies, which we call explicatory prophecies, they are alfo three: the firft is in chap. xii, xiii, xiv. defcribing Antichrift's rife, reign, and begun ruin; and by the party to whom he fucceedeth, viz. the dragon, chap. xii. The fecond is, chap. xvii, xviii, and xix. holding out a particular explication of his ruin, efpecially by the fifth and fixth vials. The third is, chap. xx, xxi, and xxii. relating unto the happy eftate of the church here and hereafter, efpecially under the feventh vial, as at chap. xx. will be cleared.

That thefe three muft be for time cotemporary unto, and for the manner (though in more obfcure types) comprehended under the principal prophecies, or fome part of them, (which was the fecond thing propofed concerning this feries to be cleared) may appear, 1. If thefe principal prophecies be linked fo together that the one of them immediately inferreth the other, and yet fo, that all of them together do contain a view of the church's affairs from the beginning unto the end; then all thefe explicatory prophecies muft cotemporate with fome of the former, and the matter contained in them muft be of that fame nature with, and relate unto the former: but the firft is clear, from the propofitions formerly laid down. 2. It will be clear by confidering the matter of both. The fame thing is in the xii. chap. that we had chap. vi. And fo the xiii. chap. agreeth with the trumpets, even as the xvii xviii. &c. anfwer unto the vials; with this difference, the principal prophecies fhew the events more fhortly and darkly; the explicatory, more fully and clearly. The firft fheweth the events what is done; the fecond fheweth the manner how, and the inftruments by whom, and circumftances relating unto them. 3. That the xii. chap. cotemporateth with the feals; the xiii. and xiv. &c. with the trumpets; the xvii. and xviii. &c. with the vials, may thus be made out, 1. The ruin of Antichrift, chap. xvii, xviii. &c. is evidently and undeniably cotemporary with the vials, chap. xvi.

which beginneth and perfecteth that ruin. 2. The riſe of Antichriſt and his reign, chap. xiii. doth immediately go before his ruin, and ſo precedeth the vials immediately; and therefore muſt cotemporate with the trumpets, which do alſo immediately go before the vials. 3. The dragon's purſuing the church, chap. xii. is immediately antecedent to the beaſt's riſe, chap. xiii. and ſo muſt cotemporate with the ſeals that immediately go before the trumpets, which cotemporate with the beaſt's riſe, according to that certain rule, *quae conveniunt uni tertio, conveniunt inter ſe*, that is, if the ſeals belong to the time that goeth immediately before the trumpets and the perſecution of the dragon, chap. xii. belong to that time alſo, then they muſt belong to one and the ſelf ſame time, and ſo in the reſt. Or thus to the ſame purpoſe, the ſeals contain the church's infancy and firſt trials, and the xii. chap. undeniably doth the ſame; therefore they are cotemporary together. The beaſt, chap. xiii. ſucceedeth the dragon, as the trumpets do the ſeals, which proveth again that the beaſt, chap. xiii. and the trumpets are cotemporary; ſo alſo muſt the vials which ſucceed the trumpets be cotemporary with that reviving ſtate of the church, chap. xiv. which immediately dependeth upon the beaſt's height, chap. xiii. And this ſeemeth to be native to the form of the types, the Holy Ghoſt minding to ſet out things ſucceſſive one to another by one manner of expreſſion in ſeven types; and when he ſtoppeth or digreſſeth to ſet down what is further needful, for preparation unto, conſolation againſt, amplification, or explication of things contained in theſe, he taketh himſelf to another manner of expreſſion; as after the trumpets, chap. ix. unto the xvi. and again, when he returneth to the ſeries of the ſtory to follow on where he left, he taketh up his former way of ſetting forth events by ſevens, as he doth in the xvi. chapter. And no other reaſon can be given why he interrupteth that manner of expreſſion, and returneth to it again, but to help us to know what part of this propheſy to ſubjoin to another, and what part of it to take as an explicacary repetition of ſomething already ſaid. This we judged neceſſary to premiſe in the entry, that we may the more clearly proceed according to the mould propoſed, from which in general we may *obſerve*,

1. How various the caſe and ſtate of Chriſt's church is here on earth, ſometimes better, ſometimes worſe, but moſt ordinarily under the croſs, there being two prophecies holding forth their ſuffering, and but one their victory; God in his wiſdom hath ſo mixed the conditions of his church here with proſperity and adverſity, that the one is ever ſet over againſt the other, to the end that man ſhould find out nothing after him, Eccleſ. vii. 14.

Obſerv. 2. That the beſt condition of God's church, and the worſt part of the enemies condition, cometh laſt. The church hath a foul morning, and a fair evening; the enemies have a fair morning blink like Sodom, Gen. xix. but ere long wrath is poured out of vials upon them.

Obſerv. 3. That our Lord hath wiſely ordered and circumſtantiated the caſe of his church unto the end of the world, whether in their afflicted or proſperous condition, whether from enemies without or within. Our Lord knoweth them all, and hath given us a little touch of them; and though we cannot know all the particulars, yet that he not only knoweth them, but hath ordered, meaſured, and timed all of them with all their circumſtances, and ſo far revealed the ſame to us, ſhould be ground enough of comfort, patience and ſubmiſſion to us.

Concerning learned Mede *his* Synchroniſms, *or, a particular conſideration of the ſame.*

LEarned Mede, in his accurate Clavis to this book, doth lay down ſeveral Synchroniſms, which he divideth in two parts: and becauſe the right cotemporating of the ſeveral prophecies, doth much conduce to the underſtanding thereof, we ſhall, before we proceed, lay down his Synchroniſms in order as he hath them; and then ſhew wherein we agree with them, and wherein we differ from them, according to the former ſeries.

His firſt Synchroniſm, part I. doth cotemporate theſe four, that is, maketh them to belong to one time, having the ſame beginning and cloſe, viz. Firſt, *The woman her being in the wilderneſs*, chap. xii. Secondly, *The ſeven headed beaſt after the healing of its wound*, chap. xiii. Thirdly, *The treading of the outer court by the Gentiles.* Fourthly, *The prophets propheſying in ſackcloth.* chap. xi. All which are for the ſame ſpace of *one thouſand, two hundred and ſixty days*, chap. xii. 6.

forty and two months, chap. xi. 2. *three days and an half*, chap. xi. ver. 9. 11. *And times, times, and half a time*, chap. xii. 14. This is a truth, and neceſſarily followeth upon the expoſition of theſe places.

His ſecond Synchroniſm is, of the *two horned beaſt, or falſe prophet, with the ten horned beaſt*, or that which is called the *image of the beaſt*, chap. xiii. To ſpeak properly, theſe cannot be ſaid to be cotemporary, becauſe that ſuppoſeth them to relate to diverſe things: we do therefore ſay, that that two horned beaſt or falſe prophet, and the ten horned beaſt or image of the beaſt, do ſet forth the ſame object, viz. the former ſeven headed beaſt, after the healing of its wound: and ſo, upon the matter, it is but the ſame Synchroniſm with the former, all theſe types tending to ſet forth and deſcribe the ſame Antichriſt and his kingdom, altho' under ſeveral conſiderations, becauſe no one type doth ſufficiently deſcribe him. This will be clear afterward from the expoſition of the xiii, and xvii, chapters.

The third Synchroniſm is, of the *great whore, myſtical Babylon*, chap. xvii. ver. 1. and the *ſeven headed* and *ten horned beaſt* that carrieth her, ver. 3. Of this we give the ſame judgment as of the former, that theſe do deſcribe the ſame Antichriſtian church, conſidered diverſly in reſpect of its head and body, as the expoſition of that chapter will clear; and therefore they are to be underſtood, not as expreſſing different events that fall together, but as deſcribing the ſame one thing under different conſiderations.

The fourth Synchroniſm is, of the *hundred forty* and *four thouſand ſealed virgins*, chap. vii. ver. 4. and chap. xiv. ver. 1, 3, 4. with that *Babyloniſh whore and beaſt* formerly mentioned: this we acknowledge to be truth, and it is made out, chap. vii. lect. 1.

His fifth is but a conſectary, drawn from the former four: whereby they are all in their events found to be cotemporary one with another; which, according to the former qualifications is to be admitted.

The ſixth doth cotemporate the *meaſuring of the inner court*, chap. xi. 1. with the dragons watching of the woman, and fighting with Michael, chap. xii. This we do not agree unto; becauſe this meaſuring of the inner court or temple, is cotemporary with the leaving out of the outer court, as will appear from the expoſition thereof, chap. xi. But from the former grounds, the leaving out, and treading underfoot the outer court, doth ſucceed to the woman's bringing forth her child, chap. xii. and doth cotemporate with the prophets propheſying in ſackcloth, chap. xi. Therefore this meaſuring of the inner-court, cannot be cotemporary with the dragon's watching of the woman, but muſt ſucceed the ſame. Neither will the grounds given, prove, that this meaſuring of the inner-court doth precede in time the trading of the outer-court, nor the firſt ground, viz. that the building of the inner-court of the temple was, in reſpect of order and ſituation, before the building of the outer-court: becauſe, *Firſt*, That is both obſcure and uncertain. And, *Secondly*, The ſcope of that meaſuring and alluſion to the temple, chap. xi. is not to ſhew any ſucceſſive different ſtate of the church; but to deſcribe her ſtate during the ſame time, by diſtributing of her members in two ſorts; even as the temple of old, after it was compleatly built, was divided into two courts, the greateſt whereof was common to the multitude, and the leaſt and inner-court peculiar to the prieſts, who were but a few in compariſon of the other, as will be clear from the place; and there is no reſpect had to the other of its building, in reſpect of time or priority at all. The ſecond ground is built upon this miſtake, that the 11 chap. doth deduce the whole ſeries of the propheſy from the beginning thereof to the end, as being the firſt new propheſy of the opened book, chap. x. ſuppoſed by him to be another from that, mentioned chap. v. This will be clear to be a miſtaken ground, chap. x. and is contrary to what was formerly hinted in the diviſion laid down.

The ſeventh Synchroniſm is of the ſeven vials, chap. xvi. *with the decaying ſtate of the beaſt and Babylon:* which of itſelf is clear.

In the ſecond part he doth add other ſeven Synchroniſms, the firſt whereof is of the *ſeventh ſeal*, in as far as it reſpecteth the firſt *ſix trumpets*, with *the ten horned beaſt, and all theſe other prophecies* mentioned to be cotemporary with the firſt four Synchroniſms in the firſt part; ſo that they, and the firſt ſix trumpets, belong to the ſame time. This, in the general, we acknowledge to be truth; yet in the application we do exceedingly differ, although we do both grant that the firſt

trumpet doth ſucceed immediately to the ſixth ſeal, and that the ſixth trumpet doth cloſe with the expiring of the 1260 days of the church's wilderneſs condition: yea, although we make no great queſtion concerning the duration of that time, viz. that it doth ſignify ſo many years for days, or near thereby, yet do we differ in the fixing of the beginning and cloſe thereof; for, he doth not fix the beginning of theſe days until Popery and the Antichriſtian kingdom be at an height, and ſo cloſeth them with his full ruin; at leaſt, with the firſt ſix vials: we again, do begin the trumpets and theſe 1260 days immediately after the public authorizing of the Chriſtian religion in the world, and cloſeth them at Antichriſt his height, and the beginning of his ruin: of which we have ſpoken, chap. xi. lect. 4. and it muſt be ſo, conſidering the grounds formerly laid: for, if the firſt trumpet cotemporate with the ſeventh ſeal, and the ſeventh ſeal immediately ſucceed to the ſixth, and the ſix firſt ſeals be cotemporary with Michael his war with the dragon, chap. xii. and if that war did end at Conſtantine, his advancement to the throne of the empire (which the ſame author doth expound to be the woman's delivery, and the child his taking to heaven, chap. xii.) it will follow upon theſe grounds, that the trumpets, and theſe 1260 days, muſt be begun at that time of Chriſtianity, its being publicly authorized in Conſtantine his time: and if it were not ſo, there will be a great interval between the woman's delivery, and her flying; or between the ſixth ſeal, and the ſeventh ſeal; which the ſeries of this propheſy will not admit. From which it will follow, that theſe days muſt expire with Antichriſt's height and begun fall. Otherwiſe alſo, there would be no proportion between the number of days and years, that is, ſo many years to be underſtood, as days are mentioned, which he himſelf doth grant. And that ruin of that Roman hierarchy mentioned before the blowing of the ſeventh trumpet, chap. xi. is not a total ruin of that dominion, as himſelf ſeemeth to acknowledge, page (*mihi*) 20. but the turn and beginning thereof as afterward, and chap. xi. lect. 4. will be clear.

The ſecond Synchroniſm is of *the meaſuring of the inner-court, and Michael his fighting with the dragon for the child, with the firſt ſix ſeals.* For the laſt part thereof viz. that Michael his war with the dragon, and the firſt ſix ſeals, do cotemporate, if the cloſe thereof be well underſtood, we acknowledge; but have already ſhewed, that the meaſuring of the inner-court can cotemporate with none of them.

The third Synchroniſm, viz. of all the vials with the ſixth trumpet, cannot be admitted, becauſe it is inconſiſtent with the ſeries formerly laid down, and would quite confound the diſtinction that is between the principal and explicatory propheſies. This is a main difference, and hath many others following upon it: we ſhall therefore endeavour (beſide what is already ſaid, and what may be ſubjoined, chap. xi. lect. 5. and chap. xv.) to make out this, that the vials do not cotemporate with the ſixth trumpet, but do ſucceed the ſame, and belong to the ſeventh trumpet, and cotemporate with it, as the ſeventh trumpet did belong to the ſeventh ſeal, or were comprehended under the ſame. Which we demonſtrate thus, 1. If the title, nature, effects, object, and time of the ſeven vials, and of the ſeventh trumpet be the ſame, then muſt the ſeven vials and the ſeventh trumpet be cotemporary expreſſing the ſame events: for there can be no diſtinction gathered between them, if they be the ſame in all the former reſpects; and there can be no greater identity than to be one in all theſe; yea, particularly one in reſpect of the ruin of the church's enemies, and her freedom: but the former is true. *Ergo, &c.* The title is one, the ſeventh trumpet is called a woe, and *a great woe;* the ſeven vials are called plagues of God, as if they were the former woe, divided into ſo many great plagues. *Secondly*, That their nature is the ſame, may be read out of their names which do expreſs it. *Thirdly*, Their object is the ſame; the ſeventh trumpet bringeth deſtruction upon thoſe that deſtroyed the earth, and particularly thoſe who ſlew the prophets and ſervants of God, chap. xi. ver. 18. which can be no other but the judgment on the beaſt, and his kingdom, who perſecuted the prophets, ver. 7. and is threatned for that cauſe, chap. xiii. 10. and chap. xvii. The vials again are poured out on the ſame object, viz. on the men that worſhip the beaſt upon his throne, great Babylon, &c. chap. xvi. *Fourthly*, That they belong to the ſame time muſt alſo be clear, becauſe the ſeventh trumpet is the laſt woe, the ſeven plagues are the laſt plagues, which doth make them relate to one

time. And if they were not wholly cotemporary, they both could not be called the laſt: for if not ſo, than the laſt woe, viz. the *ſeventh trumpet*, would be poſterior to the firſt ſix vials. And we conceive, that the firſt of theſe vials is comprehended under the title, *laſt plagues*, as well as the ſeventh; becauſe it alſo falleth in within the compaſs of the *laſt woe*, viz. the ſeventh trumpet. And if theſe four conſiderations prove them not to be the ſame, we know not what will prove it; or, for what end ſuch coincident expreſſions are choſen by the Spirit of God. Beſide, theſe ſeven vials muſt be called the laſt plagues, either becauſe they do cotemporate with all the three laſt woes, which cannot be alledged, or, with the laſt two only, which only cannot be pleaded for by him, ſeeing at moſt, they begin at the cloſe of the ſecond woe, as is alledged; or, it muſt be becauſe they do cotemporate with the ſeventh only, which is the thing we have ſaid: And ſo they are ſaid to be the *laſt plagues*, upon the ſame account, that the ſeventh trumpet is called the *laſt woe*, viz. becauſe both had woes and plagues, and the ſame woes and plagues preceding them, and none ſucceeding; and therefore as the ſixth trumpet muſt go before the laſt woe, ſo muſt it go before the laſt plagues, and ſo none of theſe vials can cotemporate with it, ſeeing they are called *laſt*, with reſpect to it, and as following upon the ſame.

To clear, and confirm it further, we may conſider their periods more particularly, and we will find that they ariſe and cloſe alike, and therefore that wholly they muſt be cotemporary. Firſt, That they expire together, viz. at the end of the world, is not queſtioned; and they could not both be called the *laſt*, if it were not ſo: this then will prove them, in part, to cotemporate. Secondly, In reference to their riſe, we ſay, either the ſeventh trumpet doth cotemporate only with the ſeventh vial, or with all the ſeven, or, with ſome of them, and not with all, but neither the firſt nor the laſt can be ſaid: for, 1. All the vials contain matter of one kind, as is already cleared: therefore there is no reaſon to divide them, as if one part of them, viz. the firſt ſix, did belong to one woe, viz. the ſecond woe or ſixth trumpet, and others of them to another woe, viz. the ſeventh trumpet: there is no reaſon for this diviſion, eſpecially conſidering that the laſt woe is of the ſame nature as the ſeven vials are; but the ſecond woe, viz. the ſixth trumpet, is not of the ſame nature with the laſt, as the expoſition thereof will clear; for which cauſe, they are divided in diſtinct woes: the vials therefore being of one nature, cannot agree to woes that are ſo different in all their former reſpects. *Secondly*, That there is ſome obſervable march and bound betwixt the ſecond and third woe, cannot be denied; for, it is eſpecially marked in all the three laſt woes, *one woe is paſt, and another cometh, &c.* and the expoſition will make it out: but if we will apply ſome vials to the ſecond woe, and others to the third, there will be no ſuch remarkable change to fix the difference betwixt theſe two woes; becauſe all the vials are but ſteps and degrees of plagues of the ſame kind, or rather of one plague, and that on the ſame object, viz. Antichriſt, &c. but theſe three woes do expreſs judgments of different kinds, and upon different objects. And it is obſervable, that that learned author, otherwiſe moſt acute in every thing, yet here is at ſome ſtand, whether to take in the firſt five, or the firſt ſix vials within the ſixth trumpet. And conſidering, that the ſeven vials are put together in one form by the Holy Ghoſt, even as the ſeals and trumpets were, what reaſon can there be given why they ſhould be divided, and the laſt only made to cotemporate with the ſeventh trumpet, and others with the preceding trumpets, as if it were not one principal propheſy, as the reſt are, more than to divide the trumpets, and to make the laſt only to cotemporate with the ſeventh ſeal, and the reſt with the other preceding ſeals, ſeeing the Spirit keepeth the ſame form in both? Further, we argue thus, if the ſeventh vial and the ſeventh trumpet only cotemporate together, then the firſt ſix vials muſt cotemporate with the preceding trumpet, viz. the ſixth; but ſurely that cannot be ſaid: becauſe firſt, the vials carry judgments on the ſame object with the ſeventh trumpet, viz. on the beaſt; but the ſixth trumpet doth contain a judgment of another nature, and on another object, as is ſaid: therefore the vials cannot belong to it. *Secondly*, The ſeries and ſtrain of the vials ſheweth, that they together, do contain one whole period of the ſtate of the militant church, viz. Antichriſt's declining and decaying eſtate, even as the ſeals and trumpets did contain two former periods, viz. the churches ſufferings under heathenish perſecutions, and Antichriſt his riſe and the height.

The ſixth trumpet therefore, being a ſtep or degree of a former period, cannot be cotemporary with any of the vials, which are ſteps of a ſubſequent period; for two periods, neither in whole, nor in part, can be cotemporary one with another.

More particularly, their riſe muſt be at one and the ſame time: for the ſeventh trumpet cometh immediately on the back of the killing of the witneſſes and cotemporateth with the whole courſe of their liberty, as appeareth by this, *that then, and not until then, the kingdoms of the earth becometh the Lord's*, then *he taketh to him his great power and reigneth*, then *he rewardeth his ſervants the prophets*, and deſtroyeth them that deſtroy the earth, then *the temple is opened in heaven, and the ark of his teſtament* is ſeen, &c. as it is chap. xi. All which do ſuppoſe, that it was otherwiſe in all theſe reſpects, before the ſeventh trumpet did ſound, ſeeing theſe are marked to be effects of the ſounding of it: which demonſtrateth, that the ſounding thereof muſt be immediately upon the back of Antichriſt's height, and killing of the witneſſes; and ſo muſt carry on his ruin long before his deſtruction, which cometh by the ſixth vial. It muſt therefore blow long before the ſeventh vial; yea, it muſt cotemporate with the firſt, becauſe they, viz. all the vials carry on Antichriſt's ruin, from that ſame term as is granted, and will appear from chap. xv. where the angels with the vials, even the firſt of them, came out of the temple thus opened by the ſeventh trumpet, upon the inſtant of the earthquake and ſhaking of Antichriſt's kingdom, at the expiring of the ſixth trumpet, which is the very march thereof: for which, ſee chap. xi. lect. 4. therefore none of theſe vials can precede the ſeventh trumpet, ſeeing before it, the temple is ſuppoſed to be ſhut. *Secondly*, This laſt woe doth immediately ſucceed the ſecond woe, and therefore muſt have its beginning with the firſt vial, becauſe, if ſix vials did precede the blowing of the ſeventh trumpet, then would a diſtinct woe interveen between theſe two, viz. Antichriſt's ruin, which is carried on by the firſt ſixth vials; which were abſurd: for, the ſixth trumpet is not called a woe, as bringing any judgment on Antichriſt; as the expoſition will clear, and is granted by him. *Thirdly*, If it were ſo, that the firſt ſix vials did belong to the ſixth trumpet, then would it, viz. the ſixth trumpet, contain two woes, viz. the plagues of Mahomet, and the ruin of Antichriſt; for both theſe give a denomination to ſeveral woes; but the former is abſurd. *Fourthly*, If the ſeventh trumpet doth comprehend Antichriſt's ruin, and carrying on thereof to his deſtruction, then muſt it contain the firſt ſix vials, becauſe by theſe he is ruined and brought to nought, and his judgment is begun immediately on the back of his height and fall, and perfected by them; therefore muſt it here belong to the ſeventh trumpet, or, the ſeventh trumpet doth no way belong to the ruin of Antichriſt; but it doth belong to his ruin, as was formerly hinted in the object thereof, and afterward will be clear, *Ergo*, &c. *Fifthly*, If the ſixth trumpet doth contain Antichriſt's height, and the church's loweſt ſufferings, then can it not comprehend the firſt ſix vials, becauſe by them Antichriſt is ruined and brought to nought; and it is abſurd to place Antichriſt his height and total fall under the ſame trumpet or woe, ſeeing they do not fall under one period. Neither will it conſiſt with the nature of this propheſy, that one trumpet, which containeth but a part of one period, ſhould contain effects of ſo contrary and oppoſite natures, as Antichriſt's greateſt height, and his total and full ruin; but the former is true, the ſixth trumpet containeth his height and triumph. *Ergo*, &c. *Sixthly*, The ſixth trumpet doth leave the beaſt ſtill in ſome being while the ſeventh come, as the ſame author granted Synchroniſm 1. of this ſecond part; but the ſixth vial doth wholly overturn Antichriſt, and caſteth him in the lake, as will appear from chapters xvi. and xix. and is often inculcated by this author. Therefore the ſixth trumpet, and the firſt ſixth vials, can no way be cotemporary. *Seventhly*, This ſeventh trumpet doth cotemporate with the palm-bearing company, chap. vii. which palm-bearing company doth immediately ſucceed to the ſealed company preceding; ſo that where the ſealed company cloſeth, there they begin, and the vials doth the ſame. For, chap. xv. immediately upon the hundred forty four thouſand, their being compleat, and getting the victory over Antichriſt's name, (which is all one with having palms in their hands) then immediately came the angels forth with the vials, and not till then; therefore it will follow, that the vials muſt in whole cotemporate with the ſeventh trumpet, the cotemporary of that palm-bearing company, according to the common rule, *quae conveniunt uni tertio*.

conveniunt inter ſe; but the firſt is true, as from the former grounds is clear. *Ergo*, &c. *Laſtly*, If we ſuppoſe 1260 days to ſignify ſo many years, as he doth; and again, if we ſuppoſe that juſt ſo many years muſt intervene between the breaking of that heatheniſh perſecution, and the blowing of the ſeventh trumpet, and alſo of the pouring out of the firſt vial, then muſt the ſeventh trumpet, and the beginning of the vials, be cotemporary; this cannot but hold; but both the former are true, and are to be ſuppoſed; the firſt from his grounds, chap. xi. the ſecond will appear thus, that ſo many years, *de facto*, or, in experience, have intervened, from the church's delivery from heatheniſh perſecution, and her begun delivery from Antichriſt, before which, no vial can be ſaid to be poured forth: the other part, viz. the blowing of the ſeventh trumpet upon the expiring of theſe 1260 days from that date, is to be made out, chap. xi. lect 4. In ſum, if it can be made out, that the ſixth trumpet is paſt, and the ſeventh already hath ſounded *de facto;* then the debate of cotemporating the ſeventh trumpet, with the laſt vial only, will evaniſh; becauſe that is the thing driven at; that the ſeventh trumpet may hold forth an eſtate of abſolute freedom to the church after Antichriſt his full ruin; but, we ſuppoſe that the former is made out chap. xi. lect. 4. The grounds therefore that are laid to hold up this ſynchroniſm muſt alſo fail.

If it be ſaid, that the ſeventh trumpet doth ſuppoſe an abſolute freedom from Antichriſt, becauſe in it the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, the kingdoms of the earth are become his, &c. which cannot be verified, during the firſt ſix vials, while, in part, Antichriſt reigneth; therefore it muſt ſucceed them? Anſwer *Firſt*, This is a miſtake of the place, which is not to ſhew what caſe the church ſhall be in at the ſounding of the ſeventh trumpet, but by way of anticipation, to ſhew the effects following thereupon before they come: and ſerveth to explicate the expected events thereof, and make it obſervable, becauſe of ſuch a wonderful change, viz. that kingdoms and nations, even now Antichriſt's, are, by its ſounding, to become the Lord's: which doth ſuppoſe Antichriſt's to be ſtrong, having many kingdoms and nations, and the church to be few and low, when it doth ſound. *Secondly*, Although it expreſs the events in their higheſt degree, yet it will not follow, that it was at its height, inſtantly at the blowing thereof; but only this, that it was to be ſo ere it expired; becauſe it is uſual in this propheſy, to expreſs the ſtate of the church, during one period, by the moſt eminent ſtep thereof, as we will find, chap. xi. and xii. where the church is ſaid to be in the wilderneſs during a whole period, becauſe that decay came to a height during that time, altho' it was not at the firſt inſtant ſo low. Particularly, the whole ſtate of the church, after heatheniſh perſecution, is ſet forth, chap. vii. in two periods; the one, viz. that of the ſealed number, is ſet forth at its loweſt, the other at its higheſt victory: yet, no queſtion, ere the palm-bearing company come to a height, after the ſealing time, there was a fighting and wreſtling againſt Antichriſt for his weakening. Hence we may reaſon, either the vials, which bring down Antichriſt, muſt belong to the ſealed, or to the palm-bearing company: for there is no mids: but they cannot belong to the firſt; becauſe in all periods, the laſt ſtep is the higheſt ſtep, as the laſt perſecuting ſeal is the foreſt: the laſt trumpet of Antichriſt his reign, hath him higheſt, and the laſt vial hath his kingdom loweſt: the vials therefore which ſuppoſe Antichriſt's height to be paſt, and and the church's flouriſhing condition to be begun, can, in reſpect of none of them, cotemporate with the ſealed number, but with the palm-bearing company; and ſo all of them muſt cotemporate with the ſeventh trumpet; which was the thing to be demonſtrated.

His fourth ſynchroniſm, is, *of the ſerpent and dragon his binding*, chap. xx. with *the ſeventh trumpet*. This being well underſtood according to our former grounds, whereby the ſeventh trumpet, and all the vials are made cotemporary, is to be fixed as a truth: but being underſtood as he doth underſtand it, by cotemporating the ſeventh trumpet with the ſeventh vial only, and that interval which followeth the deſtruction of the beaſt. by the ſixth vial, is not to be admitted. And ſuppoſing that that binding of Satan, (during theſe thouſand years, chap. xx.) doth cotemporate fully with the ſeventh trumpet, chap. xi. (which is indeed a truth) and ſuppoſing that the ſeventh trumpet doth begin with the ſeven vials immediately on the fall of Antichriſt his declining kingdom (which we have formerly made out)

it will neceſſarily follow, that the thouſand years are to begin with the vials where the ſixth trumpet cloſeth Antichriſt's height: and as the ſeventh trumpet doth not preſuppoſe Antichriſt's full, but his begun ruin, (as hath been ſhewn) ſo it muſt be ſaid of that thouſand years binding of Satan, which is called the time of his binding; becauſe, during that period, he cometh to be bound, although at the entry thereof his reſtraint be not at its height: concerning which, more is to be ſeen, chap. xx. lect. iv.

His fifth Synchroniſm is of the thouſand years of Chriſt's reign, with the ſeventh trumpet or interval following the beaſt's deſtruction. This reign of Chriſt's being the ſame with Satan's reſtraint; what judgment we have given of the former Synchroniſm, is alſo to be applied here.

The ſixth Synchroniſm is of *the new Jeruſalem*, and *the Lamb's wife*, with *the ſeventh trumpet and interval* foreſaid. This we cannot admit, becauſe we conceive that *new Jeruſalem* is to ſet forth the glorified ſtate of the church triumphant, and ſo falleth not in under the ſeventh trumpet, ſafe as that trumpet doth put an end to time and enter the church (then made ready as a bride for the bridegroom) within the palace of the King, and there to abide for ever. But of the grounds thereof, ſee more chap. xx. lect. i.

The ſeventh and laſt Synchroniſm is, of *that palm-bearing innumerable company*, chap. vii. ver. 9. with *the ſeventh trumpet*, or *interval* aforeſaid. This general we acknowledge to be a truth, the ſeventh trumpet being begun with the firſt vial, as hath been ſaid: but the reſtricting of it to the interval, following the deſtruction of the beaſt and ſixth vial, cannot be admitted: and is the riſe of that diſcrepancy which is in the application of many of theſe Synchroniſms, which otherwiſe in the general are ſolid, and do agree fully with the ſeries and mould which we have laid down, as in the procedure will appear.

LECTURE II.

Ver. 1. *And I ſaw when the Lamb opened one of the ſeals, and I heard, as it were, the noiſe of thunder, one of the four beaſts, ſaying, come and ſee.*

2. *And I ſaw and behold, a white horſe, and he that ſat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.*

FOLLOWETH now the hiſtory of opening the ſeals, which is to be knit to ver. 7. of chap. v. *And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that ſat upon the throne.* There is then a digreſſion by a ſong from the matter, whereunto now he returneth, as it were, thus; *I ſaw when the Lamb had taken the book out of the right hand of him that ſat upon the throne*, he went on to open the ſeals, *thereafter I ſaw, and behold, &c.*

Every one of theſe ſeals hath a type, holding forth the matter contained in it, and ſome word of explication added for the underſtanding of it.

The firſt four have one common type, viz. a *horſe*, becauſe they relate to one common ſubject or object, viz. the church; and they have a voice, calling, *come, and ſee:* the fifth and ſixth have no ſuch voice, becauſe they ſpeak ſo diſtinctly of themſelves, with difference from the former four, in reſpect of their ſcope.

For conceiving the meaning of theſe ſeals, take notice, 1. That they are not to be looked upon as continuing a ſtory of the church from the beginning to the end of the world, as was ſaid; yet, it appeareth, by the anſwer given to the ſaints in the fifth ſeal, that there were martyrs to be crowned by ſuffering after that time before the end; and it being clear, that theſe martyrs are not crowned by the ſixth ſeal, which bringeth judgment upon perſecutors. It muſt remain therefore to be fulfilled under the trumpets, and conſequently that they muſt intervene between the ſixth ſeal and the end.

2. Take notice, that by them is ſet forth the ſtate of the church, and that under perſecution uninterrupted, until the ſixth ſeal be opened. For, 1. There is one common ſign or type in the firſt four ſeals, viz. an *horſe*, which in the firſt ſeal, repreſenteth the church as honourable and victorious by the ſpreading of the goſpel. And therefore, 2. By an *horſe*, under the ſecond, third, and fourth, muſt be underſtood the ſame thing repreſented, viz.

the church, although different in her condition from the former, according as the ſame type is variouſly ſet forth. 3. It appeareth by the fifth ſeal, that the church's ſufferings is here to be underſtood, where we have theſe four, 1. That the party ſuffering was the church, as appeareth by their prayers, *doſt thou not avenge our blood? &c.* 2. It appeareth that their ſufferings was for no private quarrel, by their deſcription, ver. 9. *The ſouls of them that were ſlain for the word of God, and for the teſtimony which they held.* 3. It appeareth that this ſuffering was from men, and that without the church, by their deſcription who were inſtruments, *Doſt thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?* As looking to the multitude of the world, contradiſtinguiſhed from the church. 4. It appeareth, that this ſuffering was a long time uninterrupted, and ſo muſt be the firſt ſuffering of the church before God overthrew heathen perſecutors: their prayer, *How long, Lord, wilt thou not judge and avenge our blood? &c.* Which importeth, that unto this time God had not viſibly reckoned with heathen perſecutors, as he did when authority began to own Chriſtianity: and ſo the firſt five ſeals, at leaſt, hold forth the ſuffering condition of the church, during the time of heatheniſh emperors: and this period runneth to the firſt great change of God's outward diſpenſations to his church, viz. when civil authority and force began to befriend the church againſt her enemies, which will be found to be in Conſtantine's time, about the year of our Lord, 310, or thereby. Yet would we not peremptorily aſſert, that none of theſe judgments affected the wicked world during that time. For, 1. God ſendeth the goſpel into the world. 2. Many profane men reject it: for which, 3. God plagueth the ungrateful world more than before the goſpel came: whereupon, 4. The rage and malice of men do break out againſt the goſpel, and the profeſſors of it, as the cauſes of all their evil, which procureth again new judgments from God. By which we may ſee what interwoven connection there is amongſt theſe things, viz. the church's ſufferings and the world's, (which hath been long ſince obſerved by Tertullian and Cyprian in their apologies, *contra Scapulam* and *Demetrium*) but this we think, that though there might be, and no queſtion were, judgments on the world for deſpiſing the goſpel, and particular plagues on perſecutors; yet during that time there was no ſuch general reckoning with them, nor are they ſuch judgments which their ſeals primarily deſcribe, which is all we would ſay.

For underſtanding theſe ſeals or types in them, we would therefore have reſpect to theſe three, 1. To the key or ſeries of the ſtory before expreſſed from the fifth ſeal. 2. To the nature of the type itſelf, being compared with other ſcriptures. 3. To the events, as they are recorded in ſtory.

The firſt words of this chapter hold forth the riſe of this viſion, viz. *the Lamb's opening one of the ſeals;* which is to be knit to verſe 7. chap. v. as is ſaid. By *opening one of the ſeals*, is underſtood the firſt ſeal, as Matth. xxviii. 1. *One of the ſabbaths;* or, by *one day of the week*, is underſtood *the firſt day of the week*, as by comparing of the evangeliſts is clear, and is here confirmed by deſigning the ſecond, the third, &c. after this; and ſo alſo it is clear, that by mentioning *one beaſt*, is underſtood the firſt, by the ſame reaſons. We ſhew before, chap. v. that theſe books were long ſcrolls, rolled about ſomething, and the book being ſo rolled, it might be divided by ſundry ſeals, ſo that one part might be opened and read, while the reſt were ſealed, and ſo, *when he had opened the firſt ſeal*, importeth, that ſuch a part of the ſcroll was made legible.

The firſt thing that occurreth, is, the preparation by the firſt beaſt's inviting to *come and ſee.* This is common to the firſt four ſeals, though in ſome things there be difference. There are three parts in the preparation for this ſeal; the firſt is common, *A voice ſaying, come and ſee:* which is not only for John's upſtirring and warrant to behold that type; but alſo for readers and hearers, to put them to obſerve it, implying, that there is ſome myſtery in the thing, yet deſirable in itſelf to be known, and to be deſired by God's people.

The ſecond is, that it is the firſt beaſt that uttereth this voice, chap. iv. he is *like a lion*, importing the valiant courage and boldneſs that faithful miniſters had in the primitive times, when Chriſt firſt ſent forth the goſpel, and it ſuiteth well with the type following, the beaſts being ſo marſhalled, as they hold forth the qualifications that ſhould be, and are requiſite to be, in faithful miniſters, in the execution of the things propheſied of in theſe types.

The third, is, that it is ſaid to be like the noiſe, or voice of thunder, becauſe of the power and force of that word, exhorting all to the beholding and welcoming of Chriſt in the goſpel, as was in the firſt founding of the Chriſtian church, and ſpreading of the goſpel, and the flouriſhing ſtate thereof, when he furniſhed his apoſtles and miniſters with ſuch liberty and boldneſs.

From all which, theſe two ſpecial doctrines ariſe, 1. That the beſt of men need upſtirring for receiving the things of God, and conſidering his diſpenſations; were it John himſelf, he hath need of upſtirring; and conſequently all God's people have need of upſtirring on this ſide of time, elſe things may eſcape us, and not be obſerved; means are not uſeleſs, a miniſtry is needful and uſeful, as long as there is a corrupt member in a church, or corruption in any member.

2. That our Lord Jeſus in diſpenſing gifts to his church and people here, hath ſuited and accommodated the qualifications of his miniſters wiſely to that which they have to do. Therefore, he having the goſpel to ſpread, he fitteth men like lions, as through the Acts of the apoſtles is clear; and when he calleth men to ſuffer, he fitteth them like a calf, as the ſecond beaſt is ſet out, with patience to endure perſecution. Or, take the doctrine thus, that the thriving of the goſpel is accompanied with bold and valiant preachers; or, boldneſs and liberty in preaching, is a good ſign that God mindeth the thriving of the goſpel.

Ver. 2. We come now more near to the types, The firſt thing ſeen, is, a white horſe, where, conſider, 1. The type, that is, a horſe and a rider. 2. How he is deſcribed and ſet out in ſeveral circumſtances; as, *Firſt*, from his colour, he is white. *Secondly*, In his rider and his armour, *he that ſat on him, had a bow. Thirdly*, In his dignity, *a crown was given unto him. Fourthly*, His employment, (which is expreſſed in the word added for explication) *He went forth conquering, and to conquer.*

1. By a horſe and a rider, is underſtood in ſcripture amongſt the prophets, ſome diſpenſation of the Lord to his church, brought about mediately by the miniſtry of angels or men, or immediately by God himſelf, as is clear by comparing Zech. i. 8. 10. Verſe 8. The prophet ſeeth *a man riding, &c. and behind him were red horſes, ſpeckled and white.* Ver. 10. Again, expoundeth this to be *theſe whom the Lord hath ſent to walk to and fro through the earth;* that is, his diſpenſations of ſeveral kinds, by whatever mean he pleaſeth to bring them about, and they are either good and proſperous, or adverſe and afflicting diſpenſations, as the colours and other circumſtances difference them, as in the forecited place.

His diſpenſations are compared to horſes and riders on them, for theſe reaſons, 1. To let us ſee his ſovereignty, that hath all theſe at his command to ſend for good and ill, as great kings have their meſſengers for executing their will. 2. To ſhew the ſpeedineſs, ſwiftneſs, and irreſiſtableneſs of whatſoever diſpenſation he ſendeth, as the horſe is ſpeedy and valiant. 3. To ſhew the dependence of all events on his dominion, and his immediate ordering and guiding of them, as a rider doth an horſe; and he letteth them not run at random, or by gueſs, as a horſe without a rider or bridle, but hath them all well ordered, whether good or bad.

2. A white horſe ſignifieth comfort, gladneſs, victory, triumph, and antiquity, both as ſcripture and profane authors clear it, ſee chap. xix. 11. where Chriſt is in his triumph upon a white horſe.

3. The riders armour and dignity, a bow and a crown, which ſignifieth the ſame thing; the bow ſhooteth far and pierceth deeply, as is ſaid, Pſal. xlv. *Thy arrows are ſharp in the hearts of the king's enemies.* A crown again, ſetteth out ſtatelineſs and victory, eſpecially while it is ſaid, *a crown was given him*, which ſuppoſeth growing ſucceſs.

4. This is cleared by the word added for explication, *He went out conquering*, that is carrying all before him; *and to conquer*, that is continuing and going on to do ſo victoriouſly. In the application of this, and of the following types, we ſhall look, 1. To them as prophetical, relating to particular events and times 2. As holding forth ſome doctrines in general, uſeful for all times.

By this type, is underſtood the flouriſhing eſtate of the goſpel, and the ſpreading eſtate of the church by it after our Lord's aſcenſion, as it were, Chriſt in the miniſtry of his word, going out to conquer ſouls and prevailing. *Firſt*, This expoſition agreeth well with the type, being compared with Pſal. xlv. 3, 4, 5. and Rev. xix. 11, &c. In which places, Chriſt is repreſented, 1. As riding

on horſeback, and that upon a white horſe. 2. As armed with arrows, and the two-edged ſword, which is his word. 3. As being crowned. 4. As having the ſame deſign of riding proſperouſly, &c. for the ſubduing of the people under him by his ſharp arrows in their hearts: which is the very ſame thing agreeing with this type. *Secondly*, It agreeth well with the event: if we conſider the firſt eſtate of the church, immediately after Chriſt's aſcenſion, (the deſcribing whereof is the ſcope of this firſt type) we will find it in the apoſtle's days to have exceedingly ſpread the goſpel, then, and a little thereafter, triumphing, and conquering almoſt over the whole world. Paul preached from Jeruſalem to Illyricum, Rom. xv. 19. then among the Jews, the word increaſed mightily, Acts vi. 7. to Damaſcus, Acts viii. in Arabia, Gal. i. Pontus, Aſia, Cappadoſia, Babel, Bithynia, 1 Pet. i. 1. and chap. v. 13. to Parthia, Media, Meſopotamia, &c. Acts ii. 9. to Corinth, Athens, Macedonia, Galatia, Rome, Antioch, &c. as appeareth by the hiſtory of the Acts, and the epiſtles written to theſe churches: which being looked upon in itſelf, to be carried on ſo ſuddenly by ſuch weak means, and deſpicable inſtruments, as the preaching, and preachers of the goſpel: and over ſo great difficulties, as the wiſdom, power, and enmity of the world, it cannot but be wonderful and paſſing credit, and can be no other thing but the conqueſt of him who can ſubdue all things to himſelf, and call things that are not, to bring to nought thoſe things that are, by the moſt feckleſs and unlikely means; ſo that juſtly this event may be deſcribed by ſuch a type as this.

If we take from hiſtory a view of after-times, it ſpread to Afric, Spain; yea, to Britain itſelf, as is teſtified by the moſt ancient writers, whether by Simon Zelotes, or Joſeph of Arimathea, or by ſome of the apoſtles themſelves, as is aſſerted by *Cent. Magd. Cent.* 2. *Foxe, White* in his way, *Uſher de ſuc. Eccl. Brit.* we ſhall not determine. This is clear from *Tertullian Apol. adv. Genies*, that before his days, Britain, which was inacceſſible to the Roman armies, was made ſubject to Chriſt by the goſpel. This is enough to prove the event to anſwer the type, and that this horſe hath conquered according as was foretold, the church at that time being enlarged in bounds, increaſed in number, ſhining by the gifts of miniſters and lives of profeſſors, and being, in a great meaſure, for a time kept from being over-run with errors and ſchiſm. This horſe and rider, though he began to conquer then, he hath not altogether given over yet, though for a time he may ſeem to halt: when the world is again reſtored from Antichriſtian darkneſs, ye will find him thus mounted, chap. xix.

For general doctrines ye may obſerve theſe, 1. That the preaching of the goſpel, more than any other diſpenſation; cometh not by gueſs amongſt a people, but is ſent and ordered as other diſpenſations are, and hath a particular commiſſion. It is one of the horſes he ſendeth here: and hence it is that it is ſent to, and preached in, one place and not in another. So Acts xv. the Spirit putteth them to one place, and ſuffereth them not to go to another place. There is not a ſermon cometh without a commiſſion. *Obſer.* 2. That the thriving and ſucceſs of the goſpel (more than the coming of the goſpel among a people) goeth not by gueſs. The goſpel hath its end as well as its commiſſion, a particular commiſſion for ſuch an effect, Iſaiah lv. 10. as the rain cometh down, 2 Cor. ii. 14. *Thanks be to God which always cauſeth us to triumph in Chriſt.* 3. The goſpel is moſt mighty to conquer and ſubdue, when Chriſt armeth it with a commiſſion, and doth concur therewith, 2 Cor. x. 4. *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of ſtrong holds, caſting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itſelf againſt the knowledge of Chriſt, and bringing into captivity every thought, &c.* 4. From this deſcription of the horſe and his rider, and his employment, *Obſ.* That the great and main end of the goſpel, where it cometh, is to conquer and ſubdue ſouls. That is the end of a miniſtry, to bring ſouls in ſubjection to Chriſt, 2 Cor. x. 5. *To pull down ſtrong holds, to caſt down imaginations, and every thing, to lead every thought captive to the obedience of Chriſt.* And it hath its end, when Chriſt's arrows are made powerful to pierce hearts. Compare, Eph. iv. 8. with Pſal. lxviii. 18. *He aſcended on high, and led captivity captive, and received gifts for men; even for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them.* This is the main thing the goſpel aimeth at: and as many of you as render to Jeſus Chriſt, the goſpel hath had its force and effect in you. But where folks ſtand out in their rebellion, it hath

not its proper fruit: and O, how few are wrought upon kindly! how few are made ſubject! how many are yet ſerving their luſts and pleaſures, and yielding themſelves to ſin which they were born ſlaves to, ſin and Satan keeping ſtill their old dominion in them, and they their old ſubordination to them. *Obſ.* 5. The goſpel conquereth more or leſs wherever it cometh, that being its errand to conquer; when Chriſt is mounted, he is going to conquer, if it were but to take one fort or one ſoul from Satan; when he lights his candle, it is for ſome loſt groat, and it will accompliſh that for which he ſent it, Iſa. lv. 6. taking this conqueſt, and flouriſhing ſtate of the goſpel, to relate to the firſt times thereof when it came into the world. *Obſ.* That moſt frequently the goſpel at its firſt coming amongſt a people prevaileth moſt, and hath more ſenſible ſucceſs and conqueſt, than at any other time. So was it when it came firſt to the world, its victories were ſwift and ſpeedy; increaſing more for a few years at that time, than afterwards in many generations. And ſo it is when the goſpel, after Antichriſt's defection reviveth again, chap. xix. 11. In a few years it ſpread through many kingdoms and nations, when there were but few labourers comparatively. In Luther's days it conquered more than for a hundred years ſince. And as this holdeth in the general, when the goſpel cometh to a land; ſo doth it proportionably hold with a congregation, yea with particular perſons, who in experience are found often to make more ſenſible progreſs at their beginning than afterward; ſo alſo with the coming of a particular miniſter with the goſpel to a certain place, often he is moſt ſenſibly countenanced, or at leaſt by people more accepted than afterwards, it being often with them as with the hearers of John Baptiſt, John v. 35. who rejoiced in his light for a ſeaſon.

Reaſon 1. Becauſe ordinarily ſome more than a common impreſſion upon the hearts of hearers accompanieth the goſpel at its firſt entry, there being generally amongſt people ſome common effects of the Spirit, ſuch as convictions, warming of affections with love to the meſſage, and to the carriers of it, as with John's hearers; partly, from the newneſs and uncouthneſs of the thing; partly, from the lovelineſs and deſirableneſs of what is contained in it; partly, from the reaſonableneſs and equity of what the work calleth to; partly from the exerciſes and wakenings of others touched about them; partly, from ſome ſpecial efficacy and power uſually accompanying the word at its entry, while the affections of both ſpeakers and hearers are moſt warm: which things, being ſomewhat new to many, and not being acquainted formerly with the like, breed ſome ſtirring and motion amongſt people; which tho' it be but common, yet ſomeway diſpoſeth for the more ſerious and ſingle uſe-making of the word, even as miracles, tho' not ſaving gifts of themſelves, yet thus contributed for making the goſpel to be received at firſt among the people: and experience teacheth, that when the goſpel, to ſpeak ſo, becometh more habitual to folks, theſe motions are more rare, and the diſpoſitions to profit leſs.

Reaſon 2. When the goſpel cometh among a people, it really findeth them in ſome groſs temper of ignorance, profanity, or the like, &c. and therefore when or where the general truths of the goſpel are believed, there is a more ready way to conceive, and threaten, and a greater facility to take with convictions, and to tremble at threatenings, when the natural conſcience can neither ſay againſt the truth itſelf, or the application of it to them. But again, where the goſpel hath been for a time, men are ſo puft up with the name of Chriſtianity (like Laodicea, or, are ſatisfied with formality for removing of challenges for groſſer evils, or with preſumption in miſapplying the promiſes) that it is not ſo eaſy to alarm them with their hazard.

Reaſon 3. God's intention and purpoſe in ſending of the goſpel to a people or place, is to conquer: and his way of conquering, is, to catch, as it were, whole draughts by his net at once (as we may ſee by the many thouſands, Acts ii. 3, and 4. that are gained by one preaching) and therefore as he never ſendeth the goſpel, but where he hath ſome to gather, ſo to ſpeak, he keepeth the tide, and ſendeth where, and at ſuch time as he hath many together, having, as it were, fitted and tryſted them for that end. As we may ſee from Matth. ix. 37, 38. the fields are firſt ripened, then labourers are ſent to the harveſt. Every time is not harveſt time, and therefore not a ripening time; but when he hath ripened a kingdom, town, or pariſh, then, and not till then, ordinarily thruſts he out his labourers, who ſpeedily cut down the ripened grain; but as the harveſt doth not always continue, ſo neither doth this

ripening: for a miniſter's ſucceſs is not always according to his pains, but according to the ripeneſs of the field he labours in; and therefore he may, when the harveſt is paſt, be at more pains in the gleaning of a reaped field, than at firſt to gather whole ſheaves.

Reaſon 4. Becauſe then ordinarily people are in more capacity to profit by the goſpel, at leaſt, in a leſs incapacity, than when without fruit they have lived for a time under it: for, when it edifieth them not, through their corruption they grow more hard and cold, more ſecure and preſumptuous in reſpect of themſelves, more prejudged in reference to the word, and the carriers of it, and can abide freedom leſs patiently than before, as we may ſee by the churches of Galatia, who, at firſt received Paul as an angel of God, chap. iv. 14. and ſo far he prevailed with them, as to make them give up themſelves in profeſſion to Chriſt with much ſeeming zeal, ver. 15. yet afterward, theſe ſame Galatians being Chriſtians, took worſe Paul's freedom, verſe 16. and were not ſo eaſily, even by him, brought over a fault in Chriſtianity, to be ſingly Chriſtians, as they were at firſt to be Chriſtians. This being ordinary where the word cometh, and bettereth not folks condition; the longer they live under it, the greater will be their incapacity of getting good by it, Iſa. lv.

Reaſon 5. Which followeth upon this, God's giving up a people judicially, that they who have loved darkneſs rather than light, tho' light came into the world, ſhould be given up, as it is, Iſa. vi. *To ſee and not perceive, to hear and not to underſtand;* which is, to have means and not to profit by them; or, as it is, Iſa. xxix. 10, *to be caſt into a deep ſleep, ſo that all viſions become as a ſealed book unto them.* This cauſe hath divers ſteps, in ſome leſs, and in ſome more, according as they continue to thwart with the light of God, and to impriſon it in unrighteouſneſs, Rom. i. 18. Hearers had need to advert what uſe they make of this goſpel; many ſad proofs of this truth are amongſt them; young ones and beginners had need to be watchful, if they thrive not at their entry by this word, before the ſcurf grow over their hearts, it is a hundred to one (as may be ſeen in experience) if ever it do them good. Miniſters at their entry to a place, and the people with whom they enter, had need to be buſy, every time of the year will not be harveſt time to them.

7. From the order that the Lord keepeth when judgments and ſad diſpenſations are coming, you may ſee, though there be three ſad for one comfortable, yet he beginneth with the comfortable offer of his grace. Hence obſerve, that in God's order, the offer of grace cometh firſt, he is content to do folks good, if they do not reject it; the white horſe goeth before the red, or any other. This is his way to ſinners, Firſt, To offer peace before war: which is his practice to you, and ſo it is now the time of your viſitation.

LECTURE III.

Ver. 3. *And when he had opened the ſecond ſeal, I heard the ſecond beaſt ſay, Come and ſee.*
4. *And there went out another horſe that was red: and power was given to him that ſat thereon, to take peace from the earth, and that they ſhould kill one another: and there was given unto him a great ſword.*

FOLLOWETH now the opening of the ſecond ſeal, which hath the ſame type, viz. an horſe and a rider, as the former, but very diverſe in reſpect of the other particulars, as by comparing them is clear.

That this end the two following, do hold forth ſad diſpenſations, will be eaſily granted by theſe who conſider the deſcription of them. The main thing to clear then, is, 1. Whether theſe hard things do principally point at judgments on the world, for deſpiſing of the offer of grace made under the former ſeal; or, 2. Perſecution ſtirred and moved by the world againſt the profeſſors of Chriſt; or, 3. God's judgments on perſecutors; theſe three, in their cauſes and in the events, are ſo linked together, that one of them is not long without the other, and it is no great inconſiſtence to take in all. The world deſpiſeth grace, God plagueth it for that; the heathens blame the Chriſtians for theſe evils being ſtirred up by the devil againſt them, as the only troublers of the world, and contemners of their gods, which putteth them to perſecute, and then the Lord letteth looſe all ſorts of judgments on them, as was hinted before.

Yet more eſpecially, conſidering the ſcope (which is to ſhew the condition of the church) and the arguments which are in the text, we think it eſpecially ſetteth out the ſufferings of the church; for, 1. It is the ſame type in all with the former, viz. a horſe, differing only in accidentals, as colour, &c. It is moſt like then, that they ſet forth the ſame thing, and belong to the ſame ſubject, viz. the church, but as ſhe is diverſly affected, according to the diverſe deſcription of circumſtances. 2. The fifth ſeal cleareth this; for, they ſuffer here, who cry for vengeance there, but that is the church, who are ſupponed by that crying to have been long under ſuffering before that, which can be no other but the ſufferings holden out by theſe ſeals. 3. It agreeth beſt with that cotemporary propheſy, chap. xii. where this bloodineſs is ſet out by the red dragon's waiting to devour the man-child new brought forth. 4. The event, and Chriſt's prediction, Mat. x. 34, 35. and Luke xii. 51, &c. that he came not to ſend peace but a ſword, and to kindle a fire already almoſt begun, confirm it: and we cannot more warrantably expound theſe ſad things which follow and accompany the goſpel of any particular event, than of that which agreeth with his plain word: by which word alſo we may be helped to underſtand what taking peace from the earth is, viz. confuſions and troubles that come on the church after the manifeſtations of the goſpel.

The meaning then of this type, as a propheſy, in ſhort is, to foretel that that church which ſhould at firſt ſhine by the ſpreading light of the goſpel, and ſhould be captivated unto Jeſus Chriſt, by his triumphing in his ordinances throughout the world, that church ſhould be ſuddenly ſet upon by perſecutors, and a bloody and a terrible-like diſpenſation ſhould immediately follow the conqueſt of the goſpel, ſo that in no part of the world, the profeſſors thereof ſhould have eternal peace; but being hated of all men, ſhould be betrayed, killed, maſſacred, and cruelly and univerſally put to death, in ſo far, that the former diſpenſations to the church ſhould ſeem quite to be altered in their outward face, and ſhe changed from her former whiteneſs to a bloody colour, in reſpect of her many ſufferings.

The preparation here to this type, is the ſame as under the former, viz. a voice, ſaying, *Come, and ſee:* whereby all are again and again ſtirred up by all the miniſters of Chriſt, whatever be their qualifications to conſider the opened ſeals. Only it differeth in theſe two, 1. That this is the ſecond beaſt formerly deſcribed, chap. iv. 7. 2. That tho' he ſpeaketh the ſame thing, yet doth he it in a different manner, as a calf or ox differeth in their ſound from a lion. The reaſon why the ſecond beaſt ſo qualified as a calf, is made uſe of, to invite to come and ſee the events of this ſeal, is, becauſe, that beaſt, being moſt famous for patient enduring, and hard labouring, ſuiteth beſt with ſuch a ſuffering condition of the church, and ſo ſad news as were to be revealed by this type; and alſo, becauſe it repreſenteth beſt the qualifications of a miniſtry fit for ſuch a diſpenſation, and ſo alſo ſetteth forth God's wiſdom moſt, in fitting man for, and tryſting them with, ſuch a ſad condition of his church. It is therefore, to good purpoſe, obſerved at the opening of each ſeal, whether it be the firſt, ſecond or third beaſt that calleth; for, they are not ranked by gueſs, but purpoſely to point out a ſuitableneſs and conformity between ſuch an event or condition of the church, and the perſons made uſe of in reference thereunto, according as they are repreſented by the ſaids beaſts; and as this expoſition agreeth with the ſcope of the propheſy, ſo with the type, and with the word of explication that is added.

1. It agreeth with the type; for it is ſaid, *There went out another horſe that was red, and there was given unto his rider a ſword, &c.* This *red horſe*, ſignifieth a bloody diſpenſation; for which cauſe, the dragon, chap. xii. in the propheſy cotemporary to this, is called red: and the beaſt that was drunk with the blood of the ſaints, is deſcribed as ſcarlet-coloured, for that ſame cauſe viz. their bloody effects upon the church. The ſword alſo which was given, importeth perſecution, as Mat. x. 34. Luke xii. 49. *I come not to ſend peace, but a ſword.* Alſo, Rom. viii. 35. *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of God? Shall tribulation or perſecution, or ſword?* &c. The meaning then of this type, we clearly take to be the ſame perſecution ſignified by the red dragon, chap. xii. which perſecution immediately followed, and waited upon the church flouriſhing by the goſpel, as was typified by the woman clothed with the ſun, &c. even as this doth follow upon the conqueſt of the white horſe. The word of explication alſo, which is added, doth confirm this; it is ſaid, *power was*

given him to take peace from the earth. Wherein we have, 1. His errand, viz. *to take peace from the earth*, and put all in confuſion. 2. The mean or weapon ſuitable to that end, viz. a *Sword*, ſignifying the marring of that peace by perſecution. 3. It is marked in both, that that power, and that great ſword was *given* him, to ſignify God's ſovereignty over perſecutors, and his abſolute ordering of perſecutions, even the moſt cruel (which is ſignified by a *great* ſword) and moſt confuſed, which is ſignified by *killing one another*. Yet, in all, the commiſſion is particularly given by God: none can move it till he give power; yea, all the weapons are furniſhed by him; which is a great proof of his ſovereignty, and contributeth much to the comforting of God's people under ſuch trials.

There is one objection againſt this expoſition neceſſarily to be removed, for clearing this and other paſſages of this prophecy: that is, ſay ſome, this commiſſion is expreſs to take peace from the earth; but through this prophecy, the church is ordinarily underſtood by *heaven*, and theſe that are without, by the *earth*.

For *Anſwer*, we ſay, 1. It is true, by the *earth*, often is underſtood the unconverted world: yet it is not always ſo even in this prophecy, as is clear by theſe places, chap. iii. 10. The men on the earth which are to be tried, are members of the church; otherwiſe it had been no peculiar privilege to Philadelphia to have been exempted from it; ſo chap. vii. 1. chap. xii. 9. chap. xiii. 14. chap. xiv. 16. &c. where the expoſition of the ſeveral places will make this clear. For as ſometimes the church is diſtinguiſhed from the world, and in that reſpect called *heaven;* ſo ſometimes the church militant is diſtinguiſhed from that which is triumphant in heaven, and in that reſpect it is called the *earth*; and that is, eſpecially, when its trials or ſufferings are ſpoken of, which reach only to that part which is on earth.

2. We *anſwer*, That by *earth*, is underſtood the viſible church here militant: which is ſo called, 1. Becauſe it ſeemeth this prophecy relateth to that of Chriſt's, Matth. x. 34. and therefore is expreſſed almoſt in the ſame words. 2. By perſecution of the church, peace may be ſaid to be taken from the earth, becauſe, by it, all the earth is ſo put through other, it having ſo many troubles, diviſions, treacheries, and tumults, &c. going along with it. 3. Becauſe it pointeth here at the outward and earthly peace, which by perſecution could only be taken from them, and that it reacheth not to mar their ſpiritual and eternal peace, according to Chriſt's word, John xvi. laſt verſe, *In the world ye ſhall have tribulation, but in me ye ſhall have peace.* 4. The church may be called the *earth* here, becauſe it is uſual to the prophets, (whoſe expreſſions John often followeth) to ſet out the church and her troubles under that name, becauſe ſhe is the moſt excellent part of all the world, therefore do they account it ſad to all the earth, which is ſad to her, and *contra*. See Iſa. xxiv. 1, 4, 5, 6, &c. where yet the church is underſtood, as appeareth from verſe 5. and therefore the former expoſition doth agree well with this expreſſion. We take it then for granted, that this expoſition agreeth well with the ſcope, which is to ſhew the church's condition immediately after the goſpel came into the world, and her ſufferings then, that it agreeth well alſo with the deſcription of the horſe in his colour, rider, commiſſion and weapons. We are therefore, 3. To conſider how it doth agree unto the event, which in every thing we will find anſwerable. None that know any thing, but know how ſoon perſecution, eſpecially killing with the ſword, followed after the goſpel. The ſcripture mentioneth it of Stephen, Acts vii. of James, Acts xii. The hiſtory of the Acts, Paul's frequent reckoning of perſecutions, and particularly by the ſword, Rom viii. 35. &c. 1 Cor. i. 4. 2 Cor. iv. and xii. 2 Tim. iii. 10. &c. and the former epiſtles to the churches of Aſia, make it evident. This alſo is in general made out by the ten perſecutions (which are for their cruelty, and univerſality, famous, if we may ſpeak ſo in all church hiſtory) beſide what particular murthers were committed in ſeveral places at all times; ſo that the event anſwereth well, both to the type, and to the expoſition of it.

More particularly, we think this part of the prophecy looketh eſpecially unto the firſt two perſecutions, viz. the firſt raiſed by Nero, which began near, or about, the year 66. of our Lord. Theſe ſecond followed with ſome interval under Domitian, whoſe perſecution began, *anno* 97. Theſe were the firſt, who, by public edicts, ſtirred up the heathens, and all the enemies of the Chriſtians againſt them, to kill, murther, and torture at their pleaſure. By theſe perſecutions, ſuffered almoſt all the apoſtles, as the hiſtory of the church

cleareth and many other famous champions of Chriſt: and it came to that height, that Chriſtians *were accounted all the day long as ſheep for the ſlaughter*, Rom. viii. 36. and could have no certain dwelling place in the world, though it was not worthy of them. We apply it eſpecially to theſe two firſt perſecutions: becauſe 1. It agreeth beſt with the order of time formerly laid down, viz. that the ſecond ſeal is next immediately unto the firſt. 2. Becauſe the nature of theſe perſecutions, and the effects of them, which were in a bloody, cruel, and open manner, driven on by theſe two beaſts, (one of whom Paul calleth the *Lion*, 2 Tim. iv. 17.) do ſuit beſt with the type formerly expounded, though proportionally the following perſecutions in their nature are deſcribed here, as they were bloody: in which reſpect we will find killing with the ſword again to be mentioned ver. 8. under the fourth ſeal.

This being the expoſition of this type, as it is prophetical, we ſhall now lay down ſome general doctrines which may be drawn from what is ſaid, and further confirm it. 1. From renewing this exhortation, *Come and ſee*. *Obſerve*, That every paſſage revealed by God, for the good of his church, ſhould be taken notice of by them. 2. That it is the ſecond beaſt which is now made uſe of when the church is ſuffering. *Obſ.* That our Lord Jeſus hath miniſters fitted for ſuffering, as well as for action: he hath them who are like lions to ſpread the goſpel; and therefore the firſt preachers or reformers in a land, are eminently furniſhed ordinarily with boldneſs and zeal, daringly to undertake ſuch a difficult taſk. Again, he hath them who are patient like calves, when he calleth for ſuffering. *Obſ.* 3. That fitneſs for patient ſuffering, is a gift neceſſary and profitable for the edification of the church, and a qualification becoming a miniſter of the goſpel, no leſs than the former boldneſs, and hath work and uſe in the church, as well as the former hath; though it be not alway ſo ſhining, yet is it not to be deſpiſed by any. *Obſ.* 4. That our Lord Jeſus Chriſt timeth and tryſteth miniſters qualifications according to the taſk which he hath to do with them, whether it be for doing or ſuffering, he hath them accordingly qualified. 1. He ſendeth out as it were, lions, becauſe then he is to triumph over difficulties; then come, as it were, calves after them, becauſe their great work is not ſo much to gain new ground, as to maintain what the former have gained, and as it were, calves to endure ſuffering; yet both ſorts are employed for one end, to preach one goſpel, for the edification of the church. 5. More particularly from that which is holden forth in the type, being compared with the former ſeal, we may *Obſerve*, That a flouriſhing goſpel in the world, or in a land, is not long without a perſecuting ſword on the back of it, or, ordinarily there is a certain connection betwixt a conquering goſpel, and ſad trials upon the profeſſors thereof, Luke xii. 49, 50, 51. *I came to ſend fire on the earth, and what will I, if it be already kindled?* &c. Scripture and experience doth abundantly confirm this.

We may only aſk, *How it cometh that perſecution followeth ſo at the heels of the goſpel, and what ſort of connection this may be? Anſw.* We will find a threefold connection between theſe.

The firſt is meritorious, procured by the church's walking unworthy of the goſpel; for, many deſpiſe and reject it; others walk unworthy of it: the moſt part ſit down under a formal and lukewarm profeſſion: and ſo by not welcoming kindly the white horſe, they do procure this red horſe to be ſent out upon them for puniſhing their hypocriſy. This is given for a cauſe of theſe firſt perſecutions by ſome of the bleſſed martyrs, particularly by Cyprian, who laying out the cauſes of the perſecution, doth name worldlineſs, emulations, diviſions, &c. as ſins amongſt the Chriſtians juſtly provoking God ſo to exerciſe them, accounting that a chaſtiſement as from God, which was perſecution, as from men. See Cyprian in his fourth epiſtle of his fourth book, which is the 8th epiſtle, pag. 15. Edit. Pamelii. And frequently ſee Euſeb. lib. 8. cap. 1.

The ſecond connection is final, in reſpect of God's purpoſe, who by theſe perſecutions, intendeth the bringing about of good ends, as to make his truth more manifeſt, to diſcover the rottenneſs of ſome profeſſors, to evidence the honeſty of others. Many will rejoice for a time, under the profeſſion of the goſpel, who, when perſecution cometh (like the ſeed ſown in ſtony ground, Matth xiii.) by and by will ſtumble; therefore the Lord, in his wiſdom, letteth a ſword pierce thro' many of his moſt precious ſervants, *that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed;* which reaſon is given, Luke ii. 34, 35.

The third connection may be called occaſional, that is, when the light of the goſpel with power

cometh into the world, (where ſin hath had the dominion, and by it men's corruptions begin to be reſtrained, and their liberty in ſinning marred) corruption and malice in men take occaſion thereby to rage, as being the more provoked: and therefore leaveth no mean unaſſayed to have that goſpel out of the world, which diſturbeth their ſinful peace. This doth not properly flow from the goſpel, but from the devil's malice, and men's corruptions, which are imbittered thereby, and now rageth to be diſturbed in that dominion and poſſeſſion, which for a long time he hath poſſeſſed, like a ſtrong man keeping all in peace within his bounds, till this ſtronger come to caſt him out. This maketh many who lived quietly before light came amongſt them, to appear quite another thing.

More particularly, we will find theſe primitive perſecutions to have been raiſed upon theſe occaſions, which went along with the goſpel.

1. The goſpel drew men from the old heatheniſh way of ſerving idols, and, by force of reaſon, did evidence the nothingneſs of idolatry, and vanity of that worſhip which was uſed by theſe emperors, and almoſt all the world. Upon this, Satan took occaſion to charge Chriſtians with ſingularity, in taking up a religion of their own; and with pride, in counting themſelves wiſer than their predeceſſors; and to be inſufferable, as untractable men, who would not follow the reſt of the world, nay, not their own emperors, nor predeceſſors in the matter of their religion, but took them to a new way of their own: All which was exceedingly heightned by the devil, to make Chriſtians and Chriſtianity odious. This pretext is frequent.

2. A ſecond was, the devil ſtriving to make Chriſtianity ſuſpected unto the great men of the world, as inconſiſtent with civil authority, and tending to the eclipſing and diminiſhing of temporal greatneſs, dominion, and power of kings: which was confirmed by theſe things. 1. Miniſters freedom in reproving the faults of all, and their not ſparing nor flattering of any, often occaſioned the enmity of great men, who thought that derogatory to their honour, and unbecoming inferiors: therefore, to ſuppreſs that, often the moſt faithful men were perſecuted, as we ſee in that inſtance of Herod, in John the Baptiſt, Matth. xiv. 2. This ſuſpicion was confirmed by the multiplying of Chriſtians, and the miſtake of the nature of Chriſt's kingdom, as if his kingdom had been inconſiſtent with theirs, therefore fearing leſt the multiplying of Chriſtians ſhould have tended to the ſetting up of Chriſt's power, and the overturning of theirs, they endeavoured to bear them down. This made Domitian, in a ſpecial manner, to ſearch for, and put to death, all the natural kindred of our Lord Jeſus, leſt any of them in the abounding of Chriſtians, ſhould have pleaded title to his kingdom. 3. The many ſlanders that were vented againſt Chriſtians, eſpecially by magicians, idolatrous prieſts, Jews, apoſtate Chriſtians, and ſuch like, who crying out on them as enemies to mankind, and guilty of the vileſt ſins, as of adultery, inceſt, drunkenneſs, &c. at their meetings, and ſo to be the cauſes of all the plagues that came upon the world: which calumnies are fully refuted by Juſtin Martyr, Tertullian and Cyprian in their apologies. Wherein theſe two things are aſſerted, 1. That Chriſtians were innocent of theſe ſcandals. 2. That it was not the goſpel, but the world's rejecting of the goſpel, that brought theſe judgments on. 4. This occaſion roſe from Chriſtians ſtrictneſs, who would not flatter their emperors by worſhipping of them, and calling them gods, as others did. 5. Nothing more was miſtaken than churchmen in their exerciſing of diſcipline, and cenſuring others, without dependence on civil power, eſpecially when they exceeded in any particular, as in that law of Euariſtus, ordaining that not any accuſation of a layman, or laic, againſt a paſtor ſhould be admitted. This is recorded to have provoked Trajan to perſecute all the Chriſtians.

3. The failings and practices of ſome Chriſtians, and their unwarrantable carriage, made Chriſtians odious in the world; eſpecially theſe, 1. The many differences and diviſions that were amongſt themſelves, and the many ſects contrary to truth, and one to another, that ſprung up with the goſpel, and the great bitterneſs wherewith theſe differences were followed. 2. Outbreakings of profeſſors in any groſs ſin, made all others to be ſo accounted; yea, practices of the Saturninians, Nicolaitans, and other groſs heretics, though diſclaimed by true Chriſtians, yet were imputed to them. 6. Unfaithfulneſs in ſome few of them, in reference to their truſt, provoked perſecution againſt all. It is particularly recorded, that Philip, who was the firſt Chriſtian emperor, his killing of the emperor Gordianus, by which deed he came to the empire, did not only ſtir up Decius

afterward to kill him, but alſo to riſe a moſt hard perſecution againſt all Chriſtians, as become odious by that fact.

Obſerv. 6. The perſecutions of the church of God are particularly ordered as well as the preaching of the goſpel, and the thriving and flouriſhing of the church. This horſe hath a rider that hath his armour, and a ſword given to him, and it is told what he ſhall do, he ſhall take peace from the earth to go ſo far and no further; yea, there is a more particular commiſſionating of this not the former, to point out that there is a particular hand guiding the ſufferings of the church and people of God. See it in Job, how in all the commiſſions Satan getteth, he is ſtraitly bounded and limited. If the world rage at Chriſt and his followers, and perſecute, yet that horſe is not without a rider, and a bridle, and the ſword he carrieth is limited, it cannot hurt a hair of the head of any but as it is commiſſionated, Mat. 10. *The hairs of your head are all numbered.* Perſecution cometh not without a particular commiſſion, more than one is converted without the influence of his Spirit; he that guideth the one guideth the other; and our Lord Jeſus reigneth now, as before. 7. The reſtraint mentioned here, to take peace from the earth ſheweth, that no perſecution can mar ſpiritual and eternal peace, they reach but the outward condition, as to hurt the name, to plunder the goods, and to kill the body; but can reach no further, John xiv. 27. Chriſt's peace is given, not as the world giveth it, uncertainly, but ſurely: which ſhould make us eſteem the more of it. 8. An earthly condition or peace is never ſettled; any trouble may quickly diſturb that. 9. The world is much in God's reverence for their outward peace: at one word he can take peace from the earth, and turn order into confuſion, and imbitter the ſpirits of moſt familiar friends, and near relations, one againſt another. Did not he prevent it, our life would be ſoon miſerable. It is he that we ſhould depend on and acknowledge, even in outward things: for when he giveth quietneſs, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth himſelf, who can behold him? Job xxxiv. 29.

LECTURE IV.

Ver. 5. *And when he had opened the third ſeal, I heard the third beaſt ſay, Come and ſee. And I beheld, and lo, a black horſe, and he that ſat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.*

6. *And I heard a voice in the midſt of the four beaſts ſay, a meaſure of wheat for a penny, and three meaſures of barley for a penny, and ſee thou hurt not the oil and the wine.*

THeſe verſes continue the hiſtory of the opening of the ſeals, or rather the propheſy revealed by them. The third ſeal holdeth forth a ſad condition of the church, in ſome things agreeing with the former type, and preparation thereunto; but in many circumſtances differing. As firſt, the voice that calleth *come and ſee*, is the voice of the third beaſt, which, chap. iv. 7. *had the face of a man:* whereby is ſignified, 1. Prudence and reaſon in the miniſters of the goſpel, as we ſaid there. 2. It ſignifieth ſuch a condition of the church to be typified by this type, as ſhould have need of prudence, reaſon, and wiſdom, in the miniſters of the goſpel, even as the former two called reſpectively for boldneſs and patience as meet for them. 3. It holdeth forth that the church, under this diſpenſation ſhould be well furniſhed with miniſters accordingly qualified, as ſuitable to ſuch a diſpenſation.

2. The colour of this horſe differeth from the former: this is *black*, the former was *red*. 3. The weapons of the rider differ. As alſo, 4. The word added for explanation differeth, as we will ſee more particularly in the opening of them.

That this type may be underſtood, it will be neceſſary to inſiſt a little both in the explication and application of it. At the firſt view, it ſeemeth to hold forth ſome terrible famine by all the circumſtances of it, more particularly, this horſe is ſaid to be *black:* which, in general, holdeth forth a ſad ſtrait. Job, chap. xxx. 30. giveth it as one of the ſymptoms of his lamentable condition. And ſo, Zech. vi. 2. the *black horſes* do repreſent a ſad diſpenſation coming. Moſt ordinarily it ſetteth forth the plague of famine, which turneth the moſt beautiful colour to blackneſs, as from Lam. iv. 8. and v. 10. is clear. 2. The *pair of balances* in the hand of the rider, import a ſtrait, wherein men ſhould not have meat at their

pleaſure, but weighted and meaſured out to them: which ordinarily is uſed to ſet forth famine, Ezek. iv. 16. Levit. xxvi. 26. Famine is threatned under theſe words, *ye ſhall eat your bread by weight, &c.*

In ſum, this type importeth theſe three, 1. A great ſcarcity and reſtraint. 2. Not an utter want. 3. A ſort of juſtice or equity in the managing of this want, or accompanying this ſtrait, wherein it differeth from the great confuſion and violence, without any ſhew of juſtice, as was under the former. 3. The word of explication added, ver. 6. hath two things to be conſidered in it, 1. Whence this voice came: it is ſaid to be from the *midſt of the four beaſts*, that is from God, or from the Lamb, as he is placed, chap. v. 6. to ſhew Chriſt's particular ordering of this moſt ſad diſpenſation in the object and extent of it: and therefore he is to be conſidered not as the rider, but as he who giveth orders unto him. 2. The words uttered, are to be conſidered; in which there are, 1. A proclamation, and, 2. A limitation. The proclamation is, *A meaſure of wheat for a penny, and three meaſures of barley for a penny:* wheat and barley are the two grains moſt commonly made uſe of for the entertaining of life. The word rendered *meaſure* is in the original χοῖνιξ. What the particular quantity of it is, needeth not to be enquired: this is commonly acknowledged, that it was the ordinary meaſure allowed to a working man for his meat in the day, ſo as it came to be underſtood ordinarily for a day's meat according to the proverb, *Non ſedendum eſt ſuper Chaenicem*, meaning, that none who had but a day's meat beſide them, ought careleſly to ſit down, but had need to provide more.

The price of this meaſure is a penny, which is likewiſe the ordinary wages of a work-man for his ſervice in the day, as appeareth from the parable, Matth. xx. The ſum cometh to this, that men, by their labour and toil, ſhould hardly buy ſo much wheat, which was the beſt grain, or ſo much barley, (which was more coarſe, and ſo taking a greater meaſure) as was meet to entertain them. The limitation added is, *See that thou hurt not the oil and the wine.* Wine and oil are more for cheering and refreſhing men, Pſal. civ. 15. The ſcope is, to ſhew, (according to the letter) that though there was much hardſhip to befal the church in things that neceſſarily pertain to their life; yet all ſhould not be deſtroyed, but a reſervation ſhould be of the beſt things, uſeful for their refreſhment.

This type then holdeth forth a hard condition the church ſhould be under, and a ſad diſpenſation ſhe ſhould meet with, which, though moderated in a more orderly way than the former, yet ſhould exceedingly mar the beauty of the church, and bring her low, ſo that ſhe who before was white and lively, and afterward red and wounded, ſhould now, as it were, drawing near expiring, fainting and ſwooning, as one who hath ſhed much blood, turn black and pale, which, in general, holdeth forth a growing ſtrait of the church, drawing nearer unto death than the former.

That we may conſider the meaning of this type more particularly, we would lay down theſe concluſions touching it. 1. We conceive it doth not hold forth an abounding or reigning of juſtice in the world ſimply; for that is of itſelf no plague, but a great good, and ſo doth not agree with the ſcope, which is to ſet forth the trials of the church, though we think it may point at a ſort of ſeeming juſtice in the way, and perſons of theſe who ſhould be inſtrumental in theſe afflictions; in which reſpect this rider differeth from the former, as is ſaid. 2. Neither can it only literally be underſtood of bodily famine, but figuratively; for the plague of famine is no peculiar exerciſe of the church, but is common to the reſt of the world.

Again, this famine here is ſuch a croſs as maketh them in the fifth ſeal to cry for vengeance on theſe who were inſtruments of it; which cannot agree to famine properly, which ordinarily floweth from God's immediate hand. Beſide that, there is little in hiſtory to evidence the fulfilling of it in that ſenſe, ſave what is mentioned by Tertullian and Cyprian to have been in Afric. Neither is it likely that any famine hath been or could be, in the ordinary way, that famines come, and wine and oil be ſpared, which yet neceſſarily according to the letter muſt be. Add, that there is alway ſome ſuitableneſs between the qualifications of the beaſt inviting to come and ſee, and the event foretold by the type; but there can be none between the third beaſt and famine literally underſtood; which yet may well conſiſt, if figuratively it be conſidered. Concluſion 3. The event here foretold, muſt fall within the firſt period laid down, viz. after the firſt perſecution, and before the vengeance executed up-

on heathen perſecutors; yea, it muſt be, as it were, a middle ſort of perſecution between the riſe thereof under the ſecond ſeal, and its height under the ſeals following.

By this type then, in ſum, we underſtand the church's ſad condition after the firſt two perſecutions; yet not ſo much any particular ſort of trial on her, whether from without only in reſpect of perſecution, or within only in reſpect of diviſions, errors and hereſies in herſelf, but a concurrence in both, and what accompanieth both, in a manner ſuitable to this type, whereby the beauty of the church formerly glorious is now marred, and more obſcured and darkened, than it was by the preceding violence and rage of the former perſecutors. This expoſition and application we will find to ſuit well with the type in its colour, ſign, word of explication, qualification of the beaſt that inviteth to come and ſee, and with the event drawn from ſtory.

1. It is ordinary in the ſcripture, particularly in Ezek. xxiv. to ſet down ſad judgments of any ſort under theſe four plagues, *ſword*, *famine*, *peſtilence*, and *beaſts*: and therefore we would not particularly aſtrict this type to one ſort of plagues, but generally comprehended all theſe ſad calamities which came upon the church, even as by ſword, under the former ſeal, is not only underſtood one plague, but all perſecutions by whatſoever mean the church was brought low and made bloody: and conſidering, that the following type cannot be literally underſtood (wherein alſo this plague of famine is included;) conſidering alſo that the effect, viz. the church's ſad condition, is rather in the event holden forth to be black, than any particular mean to be pitched upon, whereby that is brought about. We do incline to take it more largely, as comprehending the church's ſad condition in general, and all the means that are inſtrumental in bringing that about.

2. Famine alſo is figuratively ſpoken of in ſcripture, as it holdeth forth a famine, not of bread, but of the word, Amos viii. 11. and this famine more peculiarly and properly agreeth to the church.

3. Famine is ſometimes mentioned as a particular affliction of the ſaints, even as ſword and priſon are, ſo in Rom. viii. 35. 2 Cor. xi. 27. That is a famine and ſtrait even of outward things, occaſioned by the world's impriſoning, baniſhing, forfeiting, and ſpoiling of God's people of their goods, as Heb. x. 34. and xi. 37, 38. This famine agreeth to the church in her perſecuted ſtate, and as the ſword was, ſo was this made uſe of by perſecutors againſt her.

Now if it be aſked, whether this famine, expreſſed by the type, be to be taken literally or figuratively, as it more generally comprehendeth all the troubles of the church, both in reference to her outward and inward condition, according to the three acceptations mentioned? We anſwer, figuratively: on theſe conſiderations. 1. The famine here mentioned, is ſome ſad condition peculiar to the church. 2. Becauſe it holdeth forth ſuch a trouble as men are inſtrumental in, and therefore are liable to God's vengeance for it, as is clear by the fifth ſeal following. 3. More particularly, the conſidering every thing in the type will make this out.

1. It agreeth well with the type: for, blackneſs of the church is ſpoken of in ſcripture, both as an effect of outward perſecution from others, and inward careleſneſs and diviſion; from which two grounds, the church, Cant. i. 5, 6. doth derive her blackneſs. Upon the one ſide, her mother's children were angry with her, and on the other ſhe had not keeped the vineyard that was committed to her; which two had brought on blackneſs, as ſunbearing doth in theſe hot countries.

This will agree with the ſign of *a pair of balances*: whereby open perſecution is ſet forth to be done by ſeeming authority, by ſentences, preſcriptions and the like; men, as it were, weighing the violence of their hands, Pſal. lviii. 2. As if violence could be covered with pretext of juſtice, this alſo agreeth well to error, abuſing the word (which is the balance of the ſanctuary) for the covering of it.

It agreeth well to the voice of the third beaſt, whoſe qualification of prudence, learning, &c. will be tried and put to exerciſe by this ſort of famine.

4. It ſpeaketh ſuch a famine as hath a reſervation; ſo that though the beauty of the church may be marred by it, and many things corrupted, yet the main fundamental and ſoul-refreſhing truths, which are the marrow of the goſpel (called *the fineſt of the wheat*, *honey*, *wine* and *oil*, Pſal. lxxxi. 16. Iſa. xxv. are, in deſpite of all oppoſitions, keeped free for the refreſhing of God's people, by which it differeth from the overflowing of hereſies under the trumpets, where

ſome perſons are exempted, but no truth keeped free from theſe winds, chap. vii. but every green thing made to whither.

More particularly yet to make it out, we look upon it as applicable to the ſtate of the church, during the 2d century after Domitian's death, which put a cloſe to the ſecond perſecution, viz. under Trajan, Hadrian, Antonius Pius, Antonius, Philoſ. Commodus, Pertinax, Maximinus, and Severus, which taketh in five ſeveral perſecutions. The reaſons why we apply it to this time are.

1. It ſuiteth well with the ſeries formerly laid down: if the former ſeal hold forth the firſt two perſecutions, under the firſt century, as is ſaid, then this following ſeal muſt hold forth the ſtate of the church immediately ſucceeding the former.

2. Becauſe during this time, though the church's troubles continued; yet began they, after Domitian's death, to be of another nature, and to be followed in a different manner from the former, and to look liker this type, as we will ſee by conſidering the ſtate of the church during that time. 1. After Domitian's bloody rage, the church had but a little time's breathing for a year, then followed a third perſecution under Trajan, which continued under Hadrian and the firſt Antonius: all which time is accounted but one perſecution by ſome, becauſe not interrupted. Some interval again there was under Commodus, though a more groſs man than any of the former: then perſecution again brake out under Antonius Philoſ. Maximinus, and others; ſo that the church's condition is always ſuffering, even under theſe emperors who did not actively perſecute: yet becauſe they reſtrained it not, men took occaſion to vent their malice againſt Chriſtians. 2. Theſe perſecutions were moſt eſpecially followed againſt miniſters, thereby increaſing the famine of the word. Clement was almoſt the firſt martyr under Trajan; during that time alſo ſuffered Ignatius, Oneſimus, Polycarpus, and many faithful miniſters; and that perſecution of Maximinus was eſpecially directed againſt miniſters, as being in his eſteem, the ſhorteſt and readieſt way to root out Chriſtianity from the world.

3. By public edicts, all meetings of Chriſtians, for worſhip or hearing the word, were diſcharged: ſo Trajan began, not forbidding Chriſtianity, but condemning all meetings of Chriſtians as contrary to the law; by which it came to paſs, that paſtors were baniſhed, public aſſemblies deſerted, and people left without the public means, Baron. vol. 2. page 5.

4. Conſider, in theſe perſecutions, the many baniſhments and great ſpoilings of goods uſed during that time. It is marked in hiſtory, that then they endeavoured the undoing of Chriſtians by baniſhments, not only to have them at a diſtance, but that by ſore travel, and ſpoiling of all they had, they might be weakened and debilitated. At one time Trajan having tried who would own Chriſtianity in his army, and finding ten thouſand Chriſtian ſoldiers adhering to the faith of Chriſt, he baniſhed them all, with many miniſters, into barren iſlands: beſide, ſome were purpoſely martyred by ſtarving, as is recorded of one Hyacinthus, one of Trajan's own chamber; plundering and confiſcation of goods was rife, particularly under Severus. whereby, no queſtion, much poverty and great ſtraits followed on the church, Baron. vol. 2. pag. 27. 44, &c. and other writers make it clear.

5. Conſider, beſides all theſe outward trials, the church was diſtracted and overwhelmed with errors, hereſies, and corruptions, that crept in, ſuch as the Marcionits, Baſilides, Carpocratii, Valentinians, Priſcillianiſts, Montaniſts, Cataphrigians, Apolinariſts, with thouſands more, venting moſt groſs and vile errors and fooleries, whereby both the purity of doctrine was obſcured; and even, in all, a great declining from the primitive ſimplicity, under the pretext of reference to martyrs, and following of traditions, &c. All which is ſpecially marked to have begun about that time of Trajan's beginning to reign, Euſeb. lib. 3. cap. 26. & lib. 5. cap. 11. more largely obſerved, Cent. Magd. in their preface to the ſecond century.

6. Conſider that there were even failings in, and differences among good men, and great lights in the church, ſo that what time ſhe was free from outward perſecution, it was ſpent in inteſtine diviſions and debates, as is regretted by Euſeb. lib. 8. cap. 1. Papias brought in Chiliaſme, wherewith Irenius, Juſtin Martyr, Lactantius, and many others were infected. Tertulian, after great appearing for Chriſt became a Montaniſt, and many great men began to cry up free-will.

7. In worſhip, much of their former ſimplicity was loſt; the multiplying of holy days, inordinate reverencing of martyrs, at firſt honeſtly intended, were brought in, and many other things obſerved by the Cent. Magd. Cent. 2.

8. Upon these followed schisms in the church, when men drave their own devices, and did not acquiesce in the simplicity of the gospel, in God's righteous judgment they broke on these; particularly then broke up the long lasting schism betwixt the east church and the west, concerning the keeping of Easter; the church in the west, for the most part, driving to have it keeped on the sabbath following its ordinary day, moved thereunto, as they alledged, by tradition, and that difference might be put betwixt Jews and Christians in the observation of that day. The churches of the east again, pressing it to be kept on its ordinary day, alledged John's example, and the common rule, and though Irenus, and Polycarp, who was John's disciples, took much pains to prevent and remove these divisions, and for a time keeped these churches in communion together, notwithstanding of that difference; yet afterward, it broke out by indiscreet censuring and condemning of one another, to the contempt of all church authority, and rendering of the church contemptible before others: which though rising from such a small ground, yet grew to that height, that these two churches were never heartily united afterwards. Which considerations certainly shew the growth of famine in the church, and the fainting of her spiritual life being joined to persecution, while as it is, Amos viii. 9. her *sun was going down at noon*, and the famine of the world coming to that height, which followed on the former, that *the virgins were made to faint for thirst*, verse 12. all which agree well with the type.

9. Add these, the many reproaches and slanderous calumnies, that upon these occasions were cast upon the church, both by heretics and heathens, who charged all the evils, which any bearing the name of Christianity committed, upon the church, as witness Celsus his bitter writings answered by Origin, the vindication of Christians by Justin Martyr, Tertulian and others in their apologies, who reject these slanders, as belonging to the Gnosticks, Saturnians, and also others of that stamp.

10. If we consider several circumstances of the church's outward persecution, we will find it not unfitly resembled by this type, as especially in the actors, and way followed by them. The actors were not Commodus and Heliogabolus, profane wretches, (the church had peace under them) but men for civil justice and excellency of parts, such as the world never had better, as Trajanus, whose stile was *Princeps optimus*, so that the salutation to the new emperors after him became this, I wish you may be *felicior Augusto & melior Trajano*. Hadrianus had this encomium, *Restarator orbis*. The two Antonini, the first was stiled Pius, the other Philosophus. Severus, was a most severely just man. Again, their way of persecuting, was not tumultary, by raging violence joined with outward dissoluteness and tyranny in their other carriages, as was in Nero and Domitian, but (by making good laws for the common wealth, and enacting laws against Christians) they pursued them in a legal way, as an act of justice, under pretext of Christians opposition to the worship of the gods, or as a being guilty of the many slanders imputed to them; in which respect, it may be said, that these actions (in comparison of the former) *weighted the iniquity of their hands in a balance*, Psal. lviii.

11. All these persecutions, though being at their height very terrible, yet were they almost all, one way or other restrained: which agreeth well with the limitation of the commission in the type. That persecution raised by Trajan, was staid by Plinus Secundus, priconsul of Bithynia, who thus wrote to Trajan, that he supposed it unmeet to kill such multitudes of innocent men, whose law, as he calleth it, leadeth them to such strictness, as to abstain from these things wherewith they were slandered; but that they used to meet and sing Psalms, &c. (as may be at further length seen in the epistles themselves, *apud Euseb. & Cent. Magd.*) To which Trajan returned answer, that Christians should not be sought for to be punished; yea, if they were presented, and accused, that sentence should pass upon them. *Euseb. ibid.* This answer is justly taxed by Tertulian in his apology, as inconsistent with itself, that Christians as innocent, should not be sought for, and yet if presented as guilty, should be punished: for, saith he, if guilty, why should they not be sought for? If innocent, why should they be punished? Yet did this occasion much calmness to Christians, especially in these parts. The persecution stirred by Hadrian, stayed by the apologies which Quadratus and Aristides presented to him. Anton. Pius was made to relent by that apology of Justin Martyr. Anton. Philosophus, by

an extraordinary providence, was changed, and made to befriend Chriſtians, which was thus in the Marcomanick wars, he and his army were brought to great ſtraits, being overpowered with the enemy, and incloſed among mountains without water, ſo that he and they were like to periſh for thirſt, a legion of Chriſtian ſoldiers, who then were in the army, did ſeparate themſelves from the reſt, and before them all, falling down to prayer, they obtained from the Lord not only water in abundance, but a glorious victory over the enemies; the Lord cauſing it to rain with ſuch fire and thunder upon the enemy, as made them to give back. This legion upon this occaſion, was by him called *Legio fulminatrix:* and this miracle prevailed ſo with the emperor, that preſently he gave out an edict moſt favourable to Chriſtians, ordaining that they ſhould neither be ſought for, nor puniſhed, if preſented: but that their accuſers ſhould be puniſhed, ſeeing that his ſafety and the ſafety of the empire depended upon their prayers. And it is worth the marking, that ſo many perſecutions together were reſtrained by God, during this time, for it maketh it the more applicable unto the reſtraint inſinuated in this ſeal, which can be found in perſecutions at no other time.

12. We may add, that in no age the church had more well qualified men, nor at any time had more appearing for her againſt all ſorts of enemies, as may be witneſſed by the apologies of the foreſaid Quadratus, Ariſtides, Apolonius, Melito, Aſianus, Juſtin Martyr, Tertullian, and ſundry others, boldly and learnedly pleading the Chriſtian's cauſe againſt perſecutors; and were preſented to ſeveral emperors. There was alſo much diſpute with heathens, as Origin, *contra celſum;* with Jews, as Juſtin, *dialog. cum Tryphone:* and Tertullian, *adverſus gentes & Judaeos.* So alſo againſt many heritics, as witneſs Ireneus his writings, and Tertullian, *de proſcriptione adverſus Haereticos*, yea, many able and holy men appearing alſo to prevent and remove ſchiſms and differences in the church, as is evident by Ireneus and Polycarp their pains and travel to keep a good underſtanding between the churches in the eaſt, and in the weſt: not only by writing ſerious exhortations to peace, and forbearance one of another, and in reproving the vehemency of ſome, too fervently advancing their own judgment with hurt to the church's peace; but alſo by their travelling from eaſt to weſt to compoſe their differences, whoſe labour for a time God bleſt, till about Anno 200, when Victor excommunicated the churches of the eaſt, which raſh deed, is condemned by many. *Vide apud Euſeb. Cent. Magd. Baron.* in the hiſtory belonging to that time.

By which we ſee, that as there was never more to do with well qualified miniſters, ſo was the church well furniſhed with them; which doth well agree with the qualification of the third beaſt repreſented like a man in the type, as is ſaid. By theſe, Chriſtian religion was preſerved from heathens without, and vindicated from heretics within, and ſubſtantials of the goſpel kept from hurt, The white horſe was ſtill conquering, and many were brought in to Chriſt, ſo that the heathen's idolatrous temples were almoſt deſolate, no man haunting them, nor buying their ſacrifices, as the ſame Plinus in the forecited place complaineth; and yet there was no place almoſt where Chriſtianity was not: and though all other monarchies had their bounds, and were limited; yet this dominion of Chriſt's had none, but ſpread over all; and therefore behoved to be the Son of God's, as Tertullian at length proved, Apol. cap. 37. &c. Yea, Chriſtians did ſo increaſe, that (as the ſame author affirmeth) had they but withdrawn from their towns and countries, they had left them almoſt deſolate, and terrible to the indwellers that remained; and yet all this was without human force and help, but, as it were, by the alone voice of him whoſe throne is among the four beaſts. All which being conſidered, we ſuppoſe it will not be unanſwerable to the type, nor any ſtraining of the ſcope, thus to apply it, ſeeing this ſeal doth eſpecially ſpeak out theſe four, agreeing better to the event of this time than any other. As,

1. A decaying ſtate of the church in ſome things worſe than the former, whereby ſhe becometh black.

2. A remarkable reſtraint upon the inſtruments and effects of this ſad decay.

3. A ſort of ſeeming juſtice in the authors and abettors of theſe evils.

4. With a ſober improving of parts and abilities by the miniſters of the church, in a rational way oppoſing themſelves to theſe evils. All which we have found in the event, and therefore conceive it not unfitly to be reſembled by this type,

as differing both from the ſeal preceding, and the other following.

And from it thus underſtood, we may obſerve, 1. That the church is ſubject to more ſorts of trials than one; and when one cometh, there is readily a ſecond that followeth before the out-gate of that; and the laſt trial is ordinarily the ſaddeſt, and bringeth the church loweſt. *Obſ.* 2. That men may be good, civil, and moral men in things belonging to the commonwealth, and yet be exceeding great enemies to religion and the church. Or, that the moſt excellent men in the world for parts, if they be not ſanctified, are often the greateſt enemies of the kingdom of Chriſt. The church had peace under Commodus and Heliogabolus, but ſuffered by Trajan, Severus, Hadrian, and Antonius Pius, whoſe government was excellent to the commonwealth, which made many at that time, without force, ſubmit themſelves to the Romans; yet, in the matters of religion, and what concerned the church, there were none greater enemies to them; which proceedeth partly from the nature of fleſhly wiſdom, which, Rom. viii. 7. is *enmity to God;* partly, becauſe men of that temper had more ſettled principles of perſecution within them, not acting by profane fury as others, but from deluded zeal. This made them more eager, more conſtant, and more vehement in the purſuing of Chriſtians, than the principles of profanity uſe to do, as we ſee in Paul, who in his blinded zeal furthered perſecution more than many others. 3. Becauſe the more wiſe and civil one be without religion, the more fooliſh doth religion appear unto him, and more furniſhing hath he to perſecute with. 4. The perſons of ſuch men have more weight with others, to provoke them to their practice, and to abhor, as a groſs ill, the thing they perſecute. It was nothing thought of to ſee Nero and Domitian perſecute Chriſtians; but when Trajan, Antonius Pius, and ſuch like, oppoſed Chriſtianity, that made men abhor it, while ſuch men, otherwiſe blameleſs, cried out upon it: and this ground maketh the devil eſpecially aim to engage ſuch into perſecution; and therefore in the firſt ten perſecutions, we will find that the church ſuffered never more nor oftener than by ſuch men. *Obſ.* 3. A thriving eſtate of the goſpel, doth not uſually long want errors and offences from within following it, as well as perſecution from without. The black horſe followeth the white, almoſt as ſoon as the red; as Chriſt hath foretold, a ſword ſhould follow the goſpel; ſo doth Paul of hereſies, that they muſt be in the church, 1 Cor. i. 16. 1 Tim. iv. 1. How ſoon in the apoſtle's days crept in falſe teachers, and deceitful workers in the church of Corinth and Galatia? Hymeneus, 1 Tim. 1. ver. 20. Hymeneus and Philetus, 2 Tim. ii. 17. The Nicolaitans and Jezebel, Rev. ii. 3. After followed Ebion and Cerinthus. The devil in God's righteous judgment keeping this way, as it is Rev. xii. to ſpue out a flood of error after the church when the ſword of open perſecution by the dragon doth not devour her. The devil's aim in this, is, firſt to carry many away by that ſnare, who have ſtood firm againſt external violence. Experience teacheth us, that many have continued conſtant in the time of perſecution, and have not ceded to any terror, yet have been withdrawn from truth by error. 2. By this he maketh the church more hateful and odious to on-lookers, when he obſcureth her beauty by error and ſchiſm from within herſelf, than can be by perſecution from without, as in the event is clear. Hence it is, that our bleſſed Lord, Job xvii. 17, 21, 22. prayeth more for truth and unity amongſt his followers, as conducing more to their native beauty, than he doth pray for outward peace and proſperity to them. God's end again, in over-ruling this trial of the church, is, that theſe who are approven may be made manifeſt, 1 Cor. xi. *Obſ.* 4. That no trial darkeneth the church more, nor maketh her blacker than error and ſchiſm within herſelf: this ſtriketh at the ſoul and life of religion, Amos viii. 11. 13. maketh the fair virgins to faint and fail with thirſt: this maketh darkneſs where there was light; confuſion where there was order, envying and ſtrife where there was love, and giveth much occaſion to others to ſpeak evil of the church of Chriſt. *Obſ.* 5. There are ſome ſpecial times when miniſters and others ought to improve their parts for the advantage of the church, and when they muſt not only ſuffer as calves, but diſpute as men; which is eſpecially called for, when light is in hazard to be obſcured in the church.

LECTURE V.

Ver. 7. *And when he had opened the fourth ſeal, I heard the voice of the fourth beaſt ſay, Come, and ſee.*

8. *And I looked, and behold, a pale horſe, and his name that ſat on him was death, and hell followed with him: and power was given unto them, over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with ſword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beaſts of the earth.*

WE have already opened three ſeals: now followeth the fourth, which at the firſt appearing, holdeth forth ſome terrible event, more ſad than any of the former, as the particular deſcription will clear.

It hath, as the former, theſe three, 1. A word calling, *Come and ſee.* 2. A type repreſenting ſomething to come. 3. A word added for explication.

For the firſt, it is common with the reſt, when the Lamb *had opened the fourth ſeal, I heard the fourth beaſt ſay, Come and ſee.* This preface is the ſame, ſave that he is the fourth beaſt, which (chap. iv. 7.) is *like an eagle*, whereby is holden forth the ſharp-ſightedneſs and learning, with a heavenly high fleeing (ſo to ſpeak) ſtrain of ſpirit called for amongſt the miniſters of the goſpel. This fourth beaſt is reſerved for this type, becauſe then ſuch qualifications amongſt miniſters ſhould be moſt neceſſary, and alſo ſhould be by God beſtowed upon them during this time, while death was ſo frequent in the church, and temporary contentments ſo blaſted, therefore miniſters were to ſoar on high themſelves, and to call others upward with them, this fleeing and mounting being a ſpecial property of the eagle, Iſa. xl. 31. Jer. xl. 16. Job xxxix. 27. Prov. xxiii. 5.

2. For the type itſelf, the matter of it is the ſame with the former, *a horſe and a rider;* but in every other circumſtance different, 1. His colour is pale, pointing forth a further degree of the church's affliction: ſhe was before fainting and ſwooning, but now draweth near to death, as the words afterward clear. 2. The *rider* is named with a terrible name, *he that ſat on him was death:* which holdeth forth, 1. A ſpreading of death to many, ſo it is expounded, a fourth part of the earth ſhall be killed. 2. That there ſhould be many ſorts of death, and many ways to put an end to mens lives, as ſword, famine, peſtilence, &c. 3. He getteth this name of *death*, to import the cruel kinds of death which Chriſtians ſhould be obnoxious to, under this horrid and barbarous perſecution, beyond what formerly they felt. The third thing peculiar to this rider is, his convoy, which is ſuitable to his name. And further, expreſſeth the terribleneſs of the event, *and hell*, or the grave followed with him. The meaning is, that death and mortality was ſo frequent, that in every place were graves, and that this diſpenſation brought men ſo frequently to death, that wherever it came, there was need of graves to receive them. 1. We expound it rather of the *grave* than *hell* in this place, not only becauſe the ſame word in Hebrew and Greek doth ſignify both: but becauſe it is ordinary to them, in expreſſing a deſperate-like condition, to join death and the grave together, Job xvii. 1. and 13. And, 2. Becauſe this death eſpecially relateth unto the church; and therefore muſt be underſtood of the grave, rather than of hell.

The third thing is, a word added for explication, *To them was given power over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with ſword, famine, peſtilence, and death, and with the beaſts of the earth.*

In which explication theſe things are implied, 1. A commiſſion that this rider getteth; he is not abſolute, to go and do as he pleaſeth, but it is ſaid *power was given unto them:* whereby God's ſovereignty and active providence over the ſaddeſt diſpenſations of the church is holden forth. This power is ſaid to be given to them in the plural number; either becauſe, 1. It looketh both to death and the grave. Or, 2. Rather to this horſe with the former two, ſeeing all theſe ſeem to be running together in this ſeal; and the grave is rather to receive men dead, than to kill according to this commiſſion.

The commiſſion itſelf which they get, and the extent of it is, *to kill a fourth part of the earth. To kill*, horrid acts of cruelty and murder. *A fourth part*, this doth both ſhew the extent

and limitation of their commiſſion, that it ſhould be many, even *a fourth part;* and yet not all, it is but *a fourth part*, being a definite for an indefinite number. It is ſaid to kill *a fourth part of the earth:* by which is not underſtood the world as contradiſtinguiſhed from the church; that will not agree with the cry of the ſouls under the following ſeal (it being theſe that cry there, who are killed here) but we underſtand here the militant church on earth, as formerly under the ſecond ſeal; there being the ſame ſcope in both.

3. This explication holdeth forth the particular weapons, as it were, by which that great murder is to be executed, viz. *ſword, famine*, (which two were made uſe of in the ſecond and third ſeals) *death and the beaſts of the earth.* By *death* may be underſtood the peſtilence, called the mortality; becauſe ſo many ordinarily die by it. And theſe four here do certainly allude to God's four great plagues, under which ordinarily is holden forth by the prophets God's ſingular judgment. For this end alſo, *beaſts* are added; which we conceive is not ſo much properly and literally to be underſtood, as it is with alluſion unto the expreſſion of the prophets formerly mentioned; and may point at theſe three here, 1. At the greatneſs of this ſtrait, wherein ſuch a deluge ſhould at once ſet upon the church, as if God's four plagues were let looſe together, there being but one under each of the former ſeals, viz. *ſword* or *famine;* here theſe evils continue, and two more are added, viz. *death*, and *the beaſts of the earth:* which doth certainly hold forth a greater degree of perſecution than was before. 2. By *beaſts*, we may underſtand abſurd, unreaſonable, and beaſtly men, as 2 Theſſ. iii. 2. Such Paul fought with at Epheſus, 1 Cor. xv. 32. Of this ſort was Nero, 2 Tim. iv. and of ſuch the faithful martyr Polycarp complaineth in his epiſtles, *apud Euſeb.* who thought long for the lions and beaſts, unto which he was condemned to be caſten, that he might be freed from theſe beaſts (his keepers) which were worſe than the former. 3. By beaſts we may underſtand that kind of death frequently uſed by perſecutors (eſpecially in the laſt perſecutions) their hungering of ravenous beaſts, and then, for ſport, caſting Chriſtians unto them. It being thus underſtood, it may hold out that plague of beaſts, as it doth peculiarly relate to the church, in which alſo men were inſtrumental, committing that murder by beaſts under this ſeal, as by famine under the former. However, this is certain, that this pointeth at ſome dreadful condition of the church beyond the former, wherein perſecution is at an height (malice leaving no means uneſſayed for undoing of the church) and wherein the ſaints are preſt to double their cries to God for vengeance, as in the following ſeal; and ſo it appeareth to be at, or immediately before, the fall of the heatheniſh perſecution. Before we make particular application thereof, we may obſerve ſome things uſeful for underſtanding the reſt of the ſeals.

As, 1. That this ſeal, with the former two, doth ſignify ſad things unto the church; for that they are all of one kind, appeareth by the gradation which is clear and conſpicuous in them. The *red horſe* woundeth, the *black horſe* fainteth, the *pale horſe* killeth. 2. Hence alſo it is ſaid, power is given unto them together, as having one commiſſion. And, 3. Conſidering that ſword, famine and death are joined together under this ſeal, to ſignify a ſtrait in the higheſt degree: when they are ſeparated, they muſt alſo be underſtood to point at things of the ſame kind; and therefore whatever is found to be the nature and object of any of thoſe contained in the three ſeals, muſt be underſtood of all, tho' in a different degree. Seeing then that ſome of them hold forth the afflictions of the church, it muſt be ſo in the reſt alſo. 2. It appeareth that by theſe riders we are to underſtand the diſpenſation, or event itſelf, ſignified in theſe ſeals more than any particular actor, who is either the ſupreme or inferior cauſe of it; here the rider is death; and conſequently we may call the firſt *victory;* the ſecond *war* or *violence;* the third *famine*, by the ſame reaſon whereby this is called *death.* 3. That one ſeal doth not end, in reſpect of the event contained in it, when another beginneth. Here are both *ſword* and *famine* under this ſeal, tho' *death* and *beaſts* be added to it. 4. We may gather, that theſe types are to be applied to ſpecial times, and do not only hold forth in general the kinds of rods and judgments, which were to come upon the church; for the repetition of *ſword* and *famine* by this ſeal ſaith, that ſuch judgments were to continue during the time this ſeal relateth unto, as had been exerciſing the church under the former ſeals, otherwiſe the repetition were needleſs. 5. It appeareth, that theſe plagues are not literally to be underſtood according to the letter of the word of explication, and therefore muſt ſome way be figuratively taken,

elſe it cannot be told how to expound that of *hell following*, and *beaſts*, if it be not to hold forth, by alluſion to them, ſome ſad diſpenſation on the church, as hath been ſaid.

In application of this propheſy to a particular time and event, there are two opinions, even amongſt theſe who agree in this, viz. that the firſt period of bloody perſecution, which ends about Conſtantine's time, about the year three hundred and ten, is typified by this propheſy of theſe ſeals. Some make four ſteps of theſe perſecutions; the ſecond ſeal, that is, the firſt ſeal that typifieth perſecution, viz. the ſecond; for the firſt is of another kind, comprehending the firſt two perſecutions of Nero and Domitian; the third ſeal to them comprehendeth the third perſecution of Trajan, with the fourth of Anton. Philoſ. the fifth, of Severus; the ſixth, of Maximinus. Under the fourth ſeal, they take in the ſeventh perſecution raiſed by Decius; the eighth, raiſed by Gallus, or Valerianus, or Voluſianus; and the ninth, rather intended than executed, by Aurelianus, who being ſo terrified by thunder, immediately after his ſubſcribing of the edict, that he inſtantly recalled it. Theſe who ſo reckon under the fourth perſecuting ſeal (which is the fifth in order, wherein the cry of the ſaints is expreſſed) do comprehend that great and laſt perſecution of Diocleſian. By this reckoning, this ſeal relateth to the events, betwixt Decius' perſecution incluſively, and Diocleſian's excluſively; and the fifth ſeal following, doth contain the hiſtory of the laſt perſecution in its higheſt degree of cruelty on the earth, here is no material hazard in this; yet conſidering, that by the ſeal, perſecution is ſet forth at its height, ſo that if we look to the *rider*, *death* or his convoy, *hell*, or the grave, or his commiſſion to *kill* ſo many, or his weapons, having *ſword*, *famine*, *death*, and *beaſts*, going together, we can hardly conceive perſecution at a greater height: and therefore we incline rather to make but three ſteps in theſe perſecutions, and ſo to include that laſt and moſt horrid maſſacre by Diocleſian under this ſeal, and to take the ſeal following, as expreſſing no new matter, but added for explication and conſolation, in reference to the foregoing ſad events; and therefore differeth in the type, common to the firſt four ſeals, as will be more particularly clear in the opening of it.

This ſeal then containeth the ſad condition of the church, under the laſt perſecution of Diocleſian, taking in with it the former interval after the perſecution of Decius, 1. Becauſe in his time, perſecution came to its height, the church having now all her former trials lying upon her, and new degrees added to the former; partly, becauſe it is the trial immediately going before the change of the church's perſecuted condition (the cry of the ſouls, and the comfortable anſwer in the ſeal following, being the reſult of this ſad condition;) partly, becauſe the hiſtory in the event, and particulars of theſe perſecutions, will be found exceeding anſwerable to this type: which we ſhall conſider, 1. In general; And then, 2. In the particular circumſtances thereof.

1. In the general, the church, after Decius his perſecution, almoſt (except in that of Gallus and Aurelianus) had peace in a great meaſure from outward perſecution, for the ſpace of forty four years together; but during that time, had fallen from the ſimple purity and power of the goſpel into jarrs, diviſions, and ſtrivings amongſt themſelves (as Euſeb. lib. 8. cap. 1. and many others obſerve) by which God was provoked, and the church made contemptible: upon which, followed this horrid perſecution, begun in the nineteenth year of Diocleſian, about the three hundred year. This Diocleſian, being engaged in many wars, chooſed, for a colleague to himſelf in the empire, one Herculeus Maximianus; and while their wars increaſed, every one of them choſe a helper to themſelves, who were called Ceſars, yet had not the ſtyle of Auguſtus, as the emperors had. Diocleſian choſe one Maximinus to help him in the eaſt, who is alſo called Jovius. Maximianus chooſed Conſtantius, governor of Britain; he was Conſtantine's father, and a good man. Theſe emperors ſet themſelves together to root out Chriſtianity out of all the provinces of the empire, joining together craft and violence for that end. 1. Putting to the choice of the ſoldiers and officers to ſacrifice with them to idols, or to quit their ſervice. 2. Making that ſame offer to magiſtrates, with promiſes to both if they ſhould obey. 3. By throwing down all churches. 4. Inhibiting all meetings of Chriſtians, and ſuch like. And when theſe wrought not their end, they fell to open violence, giving out public edicts againſt Chriſtians, ſtirring up all againſt them, and following their cruelty ſo hotly, with a profane emulation, who ſhould go beyond others in perſe-

cuting (ſave Conſtantius who was ſtill friendly to Chriſtians) that almoſt no province of the empire was free: and the number of martyrs, is by all, during that time, counted innumerable.

To make out the conformity of the event with this type, take theſe particular conſiderations, which will evidence the horridneſs of this perſecution, which is called *Turbo perſecutionis*. 1. That it was univerſal through all the empire, and executed by ſo many prime perſecutors, combining together in ſeveral parts for that end. 2. For length of time, it continued full ten years in this heat. 3. Particular inſtances of ſome places may give us to conjecture at the whole; in particular places often there would be hundreds in a day, whole churches full, burnt at once; ſome whole cities, refuſing to ſacrifice to idols, and calling themſelves Chriſtians, were burnt; whole legions of Chriſtian ſoldiers (being in number ſix thouſand ſix hundred and ſixty) were put to death. One legion is inſtanced, who, after a moſt godly oration to Maximinus, by Mauritius their commander, with him were killed, becauſe they refuſed to act in perſecuting Chriſtians, (even after they twice were decimate for that cauſe) though they willingly yielded to ſerve againſt all public enemies. In ſome places, the blood of the ſlain, of itſelf, made little brooks, and coloured great rivers, as it is in Fox, page 103. and Euſeb. lib. 8. chap. xi. 12. alſo chap. x. who affirmeth, he hath ſeen the actors of that perſecution ſo outwearied, and their ſwords ſo blunted with killing, that they behoved to be relieved with freſh actors. In one month of that time, ſeventeen thouſand are reckoned to be killed, and by *mede in locum*, out of famous writers, that in Egypt alone (which was but one little province of many, belonging to the empire) there were one hundred forty and four thouſand martyrs; which may give a hint of what great number the whole put together might draw to. 4. The diverſity of deaths, uſed by theſe perſecutors on the Chriſtians, may be gathered. *Firſt*, From the many engines purpoſely made for that end, as iron grates to roaſt on, braſen bulls, iron pikes in barrels, and ſuch like, never heard of before. *Secondly*, The many ways uſed to kill them, drawing with horſes, cleaving with trees, caſting to wild beaſts, ſending to ſea in boats without any proviſion, and thouſands of this kind to be ſeen in Fox's table of theſe tortures, and in Euſeb. lib. 8. who affirmeth, *There was an emulation among the wicked people, who might invent moſt torturing deaths unto Chriſtians*. 5. This cruelty may appear by this, that none of whatſoever relation were ſpared, friends, nieces, children were put to death: yea, this Diocleſian put his own wife Sirena to death upon that account. And as no natural relation, ſo no good offices of the moſt faithful friends, found place to divert that rage. It is reported of one Euſtachius, who having returned victor over theſe enemies againſt whom he was ſent, that, on the day of his triumph, and entry to the city, he and his family was put to death, becauſe he refuſed to ſacrifice with the emperor at his entry, profeſſing himſelf to be a Chriſtian unto the emperor, who out of honour to him had gone forth to meet him. 6. Add to theſe, the great mortality and deaths that were throughout the world in this Diocleſian's time. It is recorded by Euſeb. lib. 8. cap. 10. *That men died faſter than the living were able to bury them*: by which it came to paſs, that dogs were ſo accuſtomed to eat dead mens fleſh, that they became a terror to the living, leſt they ſhould eat them alſo, which made them, in all places, endeavour the killing of dogs, as is recorded by him. 7. Conſider, that many excellent miniſters ſtepped out at this time to comfort God's people, and to draw their minds upward to a creature-contemning and ſpiritual walk, as Arnobius and Cyprian, who, upon a very like occaſion, wrote his treatiſe, *de mortalitate*, under the ninth perſecution. From all which conſiderations, we may ſee an event anſwerable to the type, which may be well called death, with ſuch a convoy, commiſſion, and arms, as this rider hath; yet was there even ſuch a reſtraint, as made the church have ſtill a being in deſpite of them, as will be more clear in the following ſeals. From which alſo we may gather theſe obſervations.

1. That there may be many ſad trials paſt unto God's people; and yet more ſad before them; or, that the ſaddeſt trials come often laſt, like women's travailing, the ſharpeſt ſhowers come laſt immediately before a delivery. There is no warrant for God's people to limit their own trials, or to ſit down upon beginnings. 2. After-trials have ordinarily ſome other circumſtances and aggravations beyond the former, as we may ſee by the gradations of theſe ſeals. Trials are like phyſic to God's people; therefore there is a neceſſity of new ingredients to purge away ſuch humours and corruptions

as former potions have not reached. 3. When trials begin on God's people, they ordinarily come to ſome great height ere there be a turn. 1 Sam. iii. 12. God hath ordinarily ſome more than ordinary cauſe in bringing them, which he will accompliſh: and often men are not brought to his deſign by ſmaller rods; therefore is there yet ſeven times more, and ſeven times more added unto the former, as it is, Lev. xxxvi. 4. God will ſometimes give perſecutors great ſeeming advantage, and will bring his church very low under them. We might be aſhamed to fret or repine under our ſufferings, which are not worth to be mentioned in compariſon of theſe here. 5. Though death and the grave, &c. be terrible; yet God hath them ordered in all the circumſtances of them, they are limited by him, and are not boundleſs in their commiſſion. They are ordered by him, and neither death, famine, nor peſtilence walk at random. It is obſerved, that the peſtilence in Hebrew is expreſſed by a word DEBER, which ſignifieth ſpeech or command, becauſe, however it walk in darkneſs as to men, yet walketh it not one ſtep without God's word of command. This may be ſaid of all other trials or deaths, which are as preciſely regulated by God. 6. We may gather, that the moſt horrid maſſacres of God's people cannot wrong them, nor mar God's deſign concerning them. All theſe trials do but (as Polycarp ſaid of the beaſt's teeth to which he was to be caſten) as a mill, grind them, that they might as good wheat be fitted for their Lord's table. 7. We may gather, God's peoples happineſs, and the evidence of God's love to them, do not conſiſt in outward things, their lot is oftner ſuffering from one ſeal to another. Death, the king of terrors, Job xviii. 14. marcheth upon them, while as the world ſeemeth to be in covenant with him. Theſe are old truths, *That through many afflictions is the way to glory, and whoſo will live godly, ſhall ſuffer perſecution.* God's people would make for trials, ſeeing theſe words are yet unſcraped out of the bible; and the hiſtory of the times do confirm it: for, however there may be difference in the naming of inſtruments, timing of events, and other circumſtances among writers; yet, in the main they agree.

LECTURE VI.

Ver. 9. *And when he had opened the fifth ſeal, I ſaw under the altar the ſouls of them that were ſlain for the word of God, and for the teſtimony which they held.*

IN the former three ſeals we heard many ſad events propheſied of, to befal the church, every one ſadder than the former, till at laſt death and the grave came as the yondmoſt ſtep of temporal affliction, ſo that men may now be in a doubt what had become of the many ſouls that had been murdered for Jeſus Chriſt, and if it had not been better to have wanted the white horſe and his rider, or not to have ſtuck ſo to the profeſſion of the goſpel, than to have ſuffered ſo many ſad things for it.

The ſcope of this ſeal is, to remove that doubt, and to comfort againſt that tentation, that though perſecution ſhould come to the higheſt they can reach unto, that is to take away the life of the body; yet was not their happineſs marred by it: they have ſouls (unto which perſecution doth not reach) which after death enjoy bleſſedneſs; and therefore their trouble is not to be ſcarred at, nor exchanged with the tranquillity of worldly men, nor ſuffering to be ſhunned for fear of any hazard which accompanieth it.

This is the ſcope, which is here made out in theſe four, 1. By ſhewing that the ſouls of believers have a life after the body is killed, and a comfortable being in the enjoying of God; I ſaw, ſaith he, the ſouls, &c. 2. By ſhewing that their death is precious in God's ſight, and that vengeance on their perſecutors is as certain, as if their cry unto God day and night, for that end, were aſcending, and he particularly taking notice of it. 3. By ſhewing the wiſe ends for which God ſuſpendeth that vengeance; which proceedeth not from his forgetting of them, but is ſo ordered for the accompliſhing of his own deſigns. 4. By holding forth God's preſent kindneſs unto the ſouls of theſe murthered perſons, in cloathing them with white robes, ſo that the ſuſpenſion of God's vengeance upon their perſecutors, is no let nor interruption to their preſent happineſs or comfortable enjoying of God. This is the ſum of the words, which are more doctrinal than prophetical, tryſted with the former ſad condition of the church, to be a conſolation unto believers, and

an encouragement againſt the former great ſtraits, as is ſaid. We take up the matter in theſe two, 1. In ſomething which John ſaw. 2. In that which John heard: which alſo hath two parts, *Firſt*, A ſad cry. *Secondly*, A comfortable anſwer to it. This ſeal differeth from the former ſeals in theſe three, 1. That it hath no type of *horſe* nor *rider*, as all the former have. 2. That it hath no *voice*, calling, *come, and ſee*. 3. That it relateth not to any ſuch particular time as the former do; but in its ſcope is common to all theſe perſecutions. As when he ſaith, *I ſaw the ſouls of them that were ſlain, &c.* it is not to be aſtricted to the ſouls of men ſlain at ſuch and ſuch a time; but is applicable to all ſlain for ſuch a cauſe, eſpecially theſe under all the former perſecutions, as the prayer, *How long, &c.* importeth. The reaſon of which we conceive to be, becauſe the ſcope of this ſeal is not prophetically to point out new events, and to relate to a particular time, but to lay down ſome ſolid grounds of comfort to God's people, as is ſaid, concerning which, theſe things are clear, 1. That this ſeal looketh to the moſt ſad condition of the church, when ſouls are ſo put to it, to cry as if they could endure no longer. 2. That it relateth to former ſufferings, and that not for a ſhort time, but for ſufferings of ſome continuance. The complaint that their *blood is ſpilt*, implieth their ſufferings to be paſt; and their cry, *How long?* implieth their continuance under ſuffering for a time: and therefore muſt relate to the ſufferings mentioned under the former ſeals, as is ſaid. 3. That the matter contained here, muſt be underſtood rather ſpiritually, as it pointeth at the ſcope, than literally as the words bear: for, properly ſouls can neither be ſeen nor heard, and ſo alſo in other circumſtances, but the Spirit maketh uſe of ſuch expreſſions for ſetting forth the reality and certainty of the thing intended.

More particularly to come to the words, in what John ſaw, verſe 9. Theſe three are to be conſidered, 1. What he ſaw, *The ſouls of them that were ſlain*, viz. of martyrs. 2. Where he ſaw them, viz. *under the altar*. 3. We have the properties whereby he deſcribeth theſe martyrs, and differenceth them from others, *They were ſlain for the word of God, and for the teſtimony which they held*.

1. By *ſoul* here (which elſewhere is called *ſpirit*, Acts vii. 59. Luke xxiii. 46. Eccl. xii. 7.) is underſtood that immortal ſubſtance which God breathed in man's body when it was made, whereby man became a living ſoul, 1 Cor. xv. 45. The ſoul, thus underſtood, is contradiſtinguiſhed from this body, as that which cannot be killed when the body is killed, Matt. x. 28. In this ſenſe it is taken here, where there is a proof given of that which Chriſt aſſerteth in that place of Matthew cited: and though the ſoul be not the object of the eye, yet are they thus expreſſed as repreſented to John, to ſhew the reality of their exiſtence and being, even when ſeparated from the body.

2. The place where they are ſeen, it is ſaid he ſaw them under the altar. There was then no material temple (that of Jeruſalem being deſtroyed;) ſo neither by the altar can be underſtood any material altar: for, in heaven where we muſt conceive theſe ſouls to be, there is neither material altar nor temple: and to ſay theſe ſouls were under any altar on earth, (ſuppoſe ſuch were) were to contradict the ſcope, and overturn the conſolation that is intended, and would involve many abſurdities concerning the nature of the ſoul, its ſpeaking and being under an altar; which were alſo literally to be underſtood, if that concerning the altar were: both then muſt be figuratively underſtood, to ſet out one or all of theſe three, 1. The happineſs of theſe ſouls, which not only have a being, but do exiſt in a notable, ſafe, and comfortable condition, in a ſpecial nearneſs to God, as under his altar, which was ſo much delighted in, and longed after, by the ſaints in their life. It is like alluding to theſe places, Pſal. xxxi. xx. lxxxiv. iii. xci. 1. For as the tabernacle was a ſpecial ſign of God's preſence, ſo the altar was a ſpecial part of the furniture of the tabernacle; and it would ſeem that he looketh on the martyrs as ſo many ſacrifices offered unto God, as Paul ſpeaketh, Philip. ii. 17. 2 Tim. iv. 6. thereby to hold out a ſpecial reſpect that God putteth upon them. 2. More eſpecially, this expreſſion pointeth out theſe ſouls to be in heaven: the *moſt holy* was a type of heaven, as it is expounded, Heb. ix. 10. And Heb. ix. 12. it is ſaid when Chriſt entered into heaven, he entered into the *moſt holy*. The altar was before the *moſt holy;* and therefore we conceive this muſt be underſtood of the glory of heaven, heaven being that where Chriſt is; and Chriſt's preſence, (Phil. i. 21.) is the company that the ſouls of martyrs are to enjoy; and therefore it muſt be where he is, which

Chriſt on the croſs, Luke xxiii. calleth *Paradiſe* unto the thief. 3. Moſt eſpecially by the altar muſt be underſtood Chriſt Jeſus, by whom we have acceſs to God, of whom the tabernacle, and all its furniture was typical, and who is called *our altar*, Heb. xiii. 10. by whom we, and all our ſervices, ye, even the death of martyrs, are ſanctified and made acceptable to God, this we conceive, muſt be underſtood, becauſe other ſcriptures hold forth him, and nearneſs with him, to be the happineſs of ſouls departed; and becauſe it is that which made martyrs ſo deſpiſe ſuffering, that they might be with Chriſt, Philip. i. 22. and becauſe it agreeth beſt with their own prayers and deſires under ſuffering, as in Stephen, Acts vii. 59. All cometh to this, to ſhew, that they enjoyed a moſt happy condition and communion with God, but is ſet forth under an expreſſion belonging to the ſervice of the tabernacle of the Old Teſtament, as many other things of this prophecy are.

The third thing to be conſidered is, The deſcription of theſe martyrs, which is eſpecially drawn from the cauſe of their ſuffering, (it being an old maxim, *Non eſt mors, ſed cauſa mortis, quae facit martyrem*) which is laid down in two expreſſions, the firſt, is, *For the word of God;* that is the firſt character, to be adhering to the faith of the goſpel revealed in the word, and to be a conſcientious practiſer of righteouſneſs according to that ſame rule, and not ſhunning to ſuffer any thing rather than to depart from theſe. In this they were led, not as to follow their own humours, or to propogate their own inventions, or any way to ſeek themſelves, but out of reſpect unto God and his will revealed in his word. The ſecond is, *For the teſtimony which they held:* this looketh to the outward profeſſion and confeſſion of that truth, which is in their heart they believed. Chriſt calleth it, Matth. x. a confeſſing him before men; and Rom. x. the apoſtle diſtinguiſheth confeſſion with the mouth from believing with the heart: which two, being put together, hold forth a well-ordered converſation both in faith and practice. In faith, that they believed right concerning Chriſt; in practice, that they were anſwerable to it, and held forth that word of life by a good example, as a witneſs to others: and when called unto it, they did not ſhun the teſtifying of both upon any peril. In ſum, all cometh to this, by opening the fifth ſeal, was repreſented to me the happy condition of the ſouls of the martyrs in heaven, who were accounted by God to have loſt their lives, not for the calumnies and ſlanders imputed to them by men, but for teſtifying unto his truth. This being clearly the meaning of the words (the contrary whereof, viz. the miſerable condition after death of theſe who ſeem happy in the world, and are not happy in God, is joined with this in the parable of the rich glutton and Lazarus, Luke xvi.) there is no ground here, either of approving of altars under the goſpel, or of ſanctifying them by burying of the reliques of martyrs under them, which are amongſt the ſuperſtitious of the Papiſts. It is a poor altar that is ſanctified, and doth not ſanctify its offerings. Beſide, neither was there churches or altars in this time, neither could the martyrs, who were ſo numerous, be buried under them, but they were decently buried together in places called *cæmeteria*, as is plain from the hiſtory of theſe times.

From this verſe, we may obſerve, 1. That though God's people be liable to many ſufferings, yet their conſolations being conſidered, do far exceed them all. 2. That God's people are not to place their conſolation on this ſide of time: it conſiſteth moſt in their comfortable being, and enjoying of God after this. That in ſuffering times, they would comfort themſelves in the happy outgate of their ſufferings, and look more to theſe things which are eternal, than to things ſeen, which are but temporal. 4. It is certain truth, that ſouls have a life and being, when the body turneth unto the duſt, and that they exiſt, being ſeparated from bodies. The ſoul, at man's creation, was differenced from the body, as not being made of that ſubſtance, but in a peculiar way was created and infuſed by God, Gen. ii. At death the ſoul is contradiſtinguiſhed from the body, Matth. x. 28. the one dieth, the other cannot. After death they are differenced alſo (both in reſpect of the godly and wicked, as theſe places, Eccleſs. xii. 7. Philip. i. 23. Acts vii. 59. Chriſt's word to the thief, Luke vii. 23. and that parable of the rich glutton and Lazarus) abundantly do clear. 5. The ſouls of believers, eſpecially of ſufferers, are in a moſt happy condition after death, viz. under the altar, in paradiſe, Abraham's boſom, with Chriſt Jeſus, &c. God hath a ſpecial care of the ſouls of all his ſaints; they are precious to him, their reward is great in heaven, Matth. v. and ſufferers with him, they do in a ſpecial manner reign with him; which being well conſidered, there would be

no great cauſe to ſcare at ſuffering. 6. From the deſcription of theſe martyrs, obſerve, That it is not ſuffering for every thing which will denominate one a martyr of Chriſt; it muſt be for the word of God, and for that teſtimony, or it is not to be accounted. It is recorded, by Baron. anno 19. of Diocleſian, that in theſe primitive perſecutions, eſpecially that laſt, that many aſſumed to themſelves out of pride, and had aſcribed unto them by others the title of martyrs unjuſtly; wherefore it was appointed, that where any Chriſtians ſuffered, the cauſe of their ſufferings ſhould be diligently obſerved, that theſe who were found worthy, might be enrolled, and that none other but ſuch ſhould be accounted ſo. This afterwards turned to much ſuperſtition, and gave occaſion to that ſuperſtitious canonizing of ſaints, which afterward followed in the church of Rome; yet had it an honeſt intent in the authors thereof: As, firſt, To keep the credit of martyrdom from that contempt which came upon it, when men that were ſcandalous in their converſation, were ſo reputed. 2. To bound that carnal itching pride in many, who becauſe of that honour to be accounted martyrs, thruſt themſelves unwarrantably into ſuffering. This honour was eſpecially denied to three ſorts of ſufferers, 1. To theſe who by profaneneſs in their converſation, hereſy, in their doctrine, ſchiſm in their practice, had walked unbecoming the goſpel. Hence the catholics, ſo the orthodox were called, when they were led to ſuffering with Marcionits, Novatians, or others, ſuch like (for ſometimes perſecution raged upon all that were Chriſtians by name) did ſtill diſclaim all fellowſhip with theſe heretics in their errors, as not accounting them witneſſes to Chriſt in their ſufferings. A ſecond ſort that were denied, were ſuch as without God's call, by their raſhneſs, occaſioned their own ſuffering, ſuch as theſe who being unaſked, profeſſed they were Chriſtians, and that they had the Bible, but would not give it. A third ſort refuſed, were ſuch as had fainted in their confeſſions formerly, though afterward they ſhould become ſufferers: This was not done, as if they accounted them not martyrs indeed; but that thereby they might prevent fainting, when any ſhould be called to a teſtimony. So Baron. page 746, and 760. where he ſetteth down the decree of one Menſurius, a biſhop in Africk, ordaining none that occaſioned their own ſufferings, to be enrolled, and giving this reaſon for it, *Quia non divino inſtinctu ducti, ſed temeritate acti, id faciunt.*

7. *Obſerve*, That the giving of a teſtimony by outward confeſſion of the truth, when called for, is neceſſary and commendable, as well as ſoundneſs of faith; yea, it is oftentimes the outward teſtifying of the truth before men, more than the faith of it before God, that bringeth on ſuffering: and there was nothing more abhorred in the primitive Chriſtians, than diſſembling of a teſtimony, to evite ſuffering, as appeareth in Auguſtin's writings, *de Mendecio & contra Mendacium*, and the writings of others to that purpoſe: wherein three ſorts, that crept in in theſe times, are ſharply condemned: As, Firſt, Theſe who called themſelves Nicodemites (but falſly from Nicodemus, who is ſaid to come to Chriſt by night, and not openly) alledging it to be enough to be inwardly ſound, and to keep their heart, mind, and intention clean, tho' they did not evidence or expreſs that ſoundneſs to others: ſuch, thought they, might be Chriſtians, and yet let none other know it. A ſecond ſort were the Priſcillianiſt's, who being moſt vile heretics, (particularly aſſerting the ſoul to be a part of God's ſubſtance) did alſo maintain and practiſe this, that they might hide their opinions, and carry ſo with theſe they converſed with, as if they were of one mind with them. A third ſort were ſuch, as, out of a miſled zeal to diſcover the former, did counterfeit as if they had been maintainers of that error, to make theſe heretics the more freely to communicate their tenets unto them. The primitive fathers utterly condemned all theſe, as inconſiſtent with Chriſtian ſimplicity, which requireth a teſtimony of the mouth, as well as faith in the heart.

Obſ. 8. That every truth of the word may be a ground of ſuffering warrantably: For the leaſt thing that hath a truth in it, as well as the more concerning fundamental truths, are the word of God, and ſo not to be diſpenſed with by his people.

9. Every truth in the word hath an outward teſtimony joined to it, and ſometimes may be called for upon very great hazards.

10. When it is called for, this teſtimony, or confeſſion to any truth before men, is no leſs neceſſary, and ought as peremptorily to be held and ſtuck to as the former: therefore it is called, Rom. x. Confeſſion unto ſalvation, and called for by a peremptory certification, Matth. x. 32, 33.

Obſerv. 11. That theſe who are found in the faith of the word, will be alſo exceeding tenacious of their teſtimony. In ſcripture, and in primitive times, we will find the ſaints ſticking at, and hazarding themſelves on things which appear of very ſmall moment, yet were to them of great concernment, becauſe of the teſtimony which was involved in them, which they would not let go. Such was Mordecai, Eſth. iii. Dan. vi. his not ſhutting of his windows. When this perſecution of Dioclesian began, the perſecutors ſought but the Bibles, the poor's coats, money or cups, (wherewith they ſerved) to be given them, as ſome evidence of their ceding; but they refuſed to accept deliverance upon theſe terms: yea, when the ſoldiers, partly wearying to be ſo bloody, partly deſirous of ſeeming-victory over Chriſtians, did profeſs themſelves content to take any old paper or clout in place of the Bible, or poor's coat: they refuſed to give any *ecvola* (as it was called from the Greek, ἐκβαλλω) or caſtaway clout; yea, when ſoldiers would violently pluck ſuch things from them againſt their wills, they would follow them, profeſſing their adherence unto the truth, and that they had not any way willingly delivered theſe things, as is to be ſeen in Baronius, anno. 303, page 748. It is reported of one Marcus Arethuſius, who was put to torment under Julian, becauſe he would not build the idol temple which he had formerly demoliſhed, when they were content to accept ſome part of the expenſes from him, and to ſpare his life, he refuſed to give *obolum*, or one penny, *Sozom. lib.* 5. 9. *Cent. Magd. Cent.* 4. *page* 797. *et* 833. Tertullian alſo (*de Corona militis*) maketh mention of a Chriſtian ſoldier, who when others after their victory carried their crowns upon their heads for honour of their idols, he, notwithſtanding of all hazard, carried his in his hand, profeſſing himſelf to be a Chriſtian. By which, and many other inſtances, we may ſee how reſolutely they held faſt their teſtimony: from which eſpecially they were called martyrs, or witneſſes; and by which often, not only many weak ones were ſtrengthened, but alſo many perſecutors convinced, and made to cry out, *Certainly great is the God of the Chriſtians*, while as they ſaw that no allurements on the one ſide, nor terrors on the other, could make them looſe their grips, but ſtill truth and Chriſt were born witneſs unto, and well ſpoken of by them. That is a good word which Polycarp had to the proconſul (who took much pains to draw him to pity himſelf, and to deny Chriſt by his ſwearing by the life or good fortune of the emperor) he refuſed, ſaying, theſe fourſcore and ſix years have I ſerved him, and he hath never once done me wrong, how then can I deny him?

LECTURE VII.

Ver. 10. *And they cried with a loud voice, ſaying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, doſt thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?*

11. *And white robes were given to every one of them, and it was ſaid unto them, that they ſhould reſt yet for a little ſeaſon, until their fellow-ſervants alſo, and their brethren that ſhould be killed as they were, ſhould be fulfilled.*

WE come now to the ſecond thing in this ſeal, and that is, what John heard in theſe two, 1. A ſerious ſuit. 2. A gracious, yet a wiſe return. The ſuit is in theſe words, ver. 10. *And they cried with a loud voice, ſaying, How long, Lord, doſt thou not avenge our blood?* &c.

Concerning this cry, we would premit theſe generals,

1. We are not to conceive that ſouls audibly ſpeak to the ears of men, more than they are viſible to their eyes, ſeeing they want material organs. It is therefore to be underſtood with reſpect to the ſcope only, as we ſaid in the former. 2. Neither have ſouls in glory any ſenſe of ſufferings, as if they were affected with them; it is not conſiſtent with that happy eſtate wherein they are, as abſolutely free of all tribulation and anxiety, and will not admit of any ſuch thing. 3. Nor do they carry any revengeful thoughts to heaven, to deſire vengeance for particular wrongs done unto them: that agreeth not to ſaints, as ſaints on earth, much leſs in heaven, where there is a perfect purity. 4. Neither are they conſcious of the particular ſufferings of ſaints on earth, Iſa. lxiii.

16. yet may this cry of vengeance be applied to them in a threefold ſenſe, 1. As it expreſſeth their reſpect to their head Chriſt, whoſe final victory they in a holy way long for, deſiring to have all his enemies under his feet, as will be at the laſt day, which is the day of their full redemption. 2. As it proceedeth from their ſympathy with the reſt of the members of Chriſt's body; in which reſpect, they may be ſaid to long for the perfecting of the bride, and the vindicating of her in general from all her ſufferings. 3. It may be underſtood of the guilt that ſticketh to their perſecutors, from their innocent ſuffering, which in ſome ſenſe pleadeth for vengeance from God on the perſecutors, even after their death, as it is ſaid of Abel's blood, Gen. iv. that it cried to God againſt Cain: to which this doth allude, ſo that crying for vengeance ſignifieth this much, that their innocent ſufferings are not forgotten by God, but are as effectual to procure vengeance from him who is holy and true, as if they were daily crying for it.

More particularly, this prayer hath three parts, 1. The petition itſelf, viz. vengeance. 2. The object againſt whom they pray. 3. The arguments whereby this petition is enforced.

The petition is in theſe words, laid down by way of complaint, *Doſt thou not avenge our blood?* Including in it a deſire that their blood might be avenged, in the ſenſe formerly laid down. We take it mainly to reſpect God's final ſentencing of perſecutors at the laſt day of judgment. 1. Becauſe many of theſe, whoſe guilt made them liable to this vengeance, during the former perſecutions, were already dead, and ſo were without the reach of temporal judgments. 2. Becauſe it is ſuch a vengeance which is ſought, that putteth an end to perſecution, as the reaſon of ſuſpending this vengeance, which is given in the anſwer, cleareth it, viz. that their brethren and fellow-ſervants were yet to be killed, and therefore there behoved to be a ſuſpending to ſatisfy that deſire. 3. Becauſe the guilt of ſaint's blood draweth on that judgment, and the ends mentioned, viz. Chriſt's final victory, and the ſaints abſolute freedom, do import no leſs; yet may have its partial fulfilling, by temporal judgments, at particular times upon particular perſons, as might contribute in part to the vindicating of truth, and the former ends, ſuch as God's judgments upon perſecutors, under the following ſeal, may be ſaid to be, always reſerving the full deciſion between God's people and their enemies, until the great day, wherein this petition ſhall be fully ſatisfied.

2. The object of this petition, *the men that dwell on the earth*, not as if all that were upon the earth were included under this imprecation, there being many godly then living in the world, but they are ſo deſigned, 1. Becauſe often, and particularly in theſe times, the generality of the men of the world are perſecutors, and by acting, conniving, approving, delighting, or ſuch like ways, do make themſelves guilty one way or other of the blood of ſaints. 2. They are ſo ſtiled, to ſhew what ſort of men they mean, viz. wicked men; or great men, who aimed no further than this earth, and to have a portion in this world; and ſo are contradiſtinguiſhed from the godly, who, though they ſojourn on the earth, yet do not dwell, nor have their converſation there, but in heaven. In which reſpect (John xviii. 16.) they are ſaid not to be of the world, as the former, (Pſal. xvii. 14.) are deſcribed by this, that *they are men of this world, which have their portion in this life, &c.*

3. The motives, whereby this petition is preſt expreſsly, are in theſe words, *How long, O Lord, holy, and true?* which we may take up in theſe three, two of them being from two eſſential attributes of God, made uſe of here as moſt ſtrengthening and encouraging to their faith in this petition. The firſt is from God's holineſs, *O Lord, holy, &c.* Lord, ſay they, thou art holineſs itſelf, and cannot but approve holineſs in others, and diſapprove wickedneſs where it is, ſeeing thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, Heb. i. 13. Pſal. xi. 7. Can it be then that our innocency and righteous cauſe ſhall ſuffer? And their violence and oppreſſion go unpuniſhed? there is reaſon from thy holineſs to expect the contrary; and therefore we pray for it. The ſecond motive is drawn from God's faithfulneſs, *and true:* this reſpecteth God as he hath engaged himſelf in his word, as if they ſaid, thou haſt promiſed to own them that own thee as we have done, and thou haſt threatned judgment againſt them that wrong thee and thine, as theſe perſecutors have done, and thou art true in performing and executing whatever thou haſt promiſed or threatned, therefore thou muſt

avenge our blood upon them. Each of theſe grounds doth ſtrongly, by itſelf, plead in this caſe, there being in them a twofold obligation, if we may ſay ſo, on God, in reference to this end. His holineſs ſwayeth him to maintain his people's innocency, and to reprove their enemies malice; his truth alſo engageth him to make out his promiſes to his people, and his threatnings to his enemies; but when theſe two go together, God's holineſs, and God's truth, in ſuch a caſe there is inexpreſſible comfort to be drawn from them. There need no other midſes to plead with God, but what is in God himſelf. His own attributes, conſidered in themſelves, and as flowing to us, and acceſſible to us by his truth, as he hath revealed them in his promiſe and covenant, do furniſh all manner of conſolation: and theſe two ought never to be ſeparated in our pleading with God. 1. What he is in himſelf. 2. What he hath graciouſly engaged himſelf to be in his word. The firſt is, the fountain or ocean, wherein what is needful to us, breedeth and aboundeth. The ſecond is, the ſtreams whereby what is in him, as the fountain, is communicated to us. The firſt giveth us ground to conceive largely of the fulneſs that is in him; the ſecond (viz. his truth) giveth us acceſs to approach unto him for partaking of it, ſeeing without this, God, conſidered in himſelf, would be terrible to us, as we are now in our ſinful condition. And this is the reaſon why theſe two attributes are conſidered together in this place. The third motive is in theſe words, *How long, Lord?* &c. which is not to expreſs any complaint on God, or any unbelief in them, (the titles they give God do clear both theſe) but the words, conſidered with theſe titles, do inforce the ſuit, thus our ſufferings have not been for a ſhort time, but we have lien long under them, and they are now come to an height, that almoſt we can bear no more: therefore is thy holineſs and faithfulneſs the more concerned to avenge us, and not to permit us to ſuffer, and the enemy to triumph alway. So that as theſe words do imply the continuance and heigh of a ſad condition, they do alſo plead pity and a favourable return exceedingly from God, who ſympathizes in his people's ſtrait; therefore is the word how long uſed by the ſaints, when they are, as it were, at an extremity here on earth.

The other thing that John heard, viz. the return of this ſuit, followeth, ver. 11. fully conſolatory, having theſe two things in it, ſerving to that ſcope. 1. Something is done unto them. 2. Something is ſaid unto them. *Firſt*, Before any thing be ſaid unto them (for God dealeth not by bare words with a praying people who are in ſtrait) *White robes were given unto every one of them.* The thing given is, *White robes*, which (from chap. iii. 4. they ſhall walk with me in white) is clear to be underſtood of heavenly glory, ſouls being capable of no other raiment. It is ſaid to be given them, not as if they had been at any time without it (all things here not being literally to be underſtood in the time, more than in the thing that is given) but to ſhew that God's delaying of vengeance upon perſecutors, doth not prejudge the preſent happineſs of martyr's ſouls, but that this delay is abundantly compenſed by God, who freely giveth them heavenly glory, ſo that the other is no ground of complaint to them.

This is the ſcope, as appeareth by what is ſaid, *that they ſhould reſt for a little ſeaſon*, &c. as if grace ſhould give them the bud or bribe of glory, to ſatisfy them in the mean time. It is ſaid, *robes were given to every one of them*, not as if all martyrs had an equal ſhare of glory (though every one get a robe, yet there may be difference in robes) but it is to ſhew, 1. That none is miſſed, whether their parts or place be great or ſmall, high or low, Chriſt taketh notice of every one that ſuffereth, and rewardeth them. 2. It is to ſhew, that whatever be the meaſure that every one getteth, yet all get what is fitting to them, or becoming them. Glory is ſhapen out to them as cloaths are to men, every one according to their meaſure, as is fit; ſo that in heaven, every one getteth their own coat, as it were, and the cloaths that are meeteſt for them, according to their own ſtature in Chriſt, and each one may ſee their meaſure becometh them better than the meaſure of one taller than they. In ſum, it ſaith, all are contentedly happy, and none grumble at God's way in diſpoſing what is his own: although heavenly glory be the thing mainly intended here, as the laſt judgment was the thing petitioned for in the former words; yet, as in them, we included temporal judgments in ſome reſpects, ſo here we may take in, under white robes, God's owning and vindicating of the martyrs that were dead, and ſervants that were living, from the many vile ſlanders and calumnies im-

puted to them, by which formerly they were made black, as is hinted at in the third ſeal: in which reſpect now they may be ſaid to be made white, becauſe their innocency was manifeſted, and credit put upon them even before men: which in the event was fulfilled in the days of Conſtantine immediately thereafter: and often he hath given particular proofs of this, by vindicating, in an extraordinary manner, ſome of his eminent ſervants, who were not only overwhelmed with the reproaches of adulteries, murders, witchcraft, &c. But by malice ſtirring up falſe accuſers, witneſſes and judges, were condemned judicially (or in hazard to be ſo) of ſuch crimes, eſpecially by the Arian's means, until God, by terror on the conſciences of accuſers and witneſſes, or other extraordinary ways, brought truth to light, to the credit of his ſervants, as in the caſe of Euſtachius biſhop of Nicomedia, and Athanaſius biſhop of Alexandria, with divers others, wonderfully vindicated by God in their eſtimations before men, is clear.

The other part of the conſolation is contained in that which was ſaid unto them, comprehending four arguments of comfort to quiet them under the delay of God's final judgment on the perſecutors (beſide what is already ſaid) *It was ſaid unto them, that they ſhould reſt yet for a little ſeaſon, until their fellow-ſervants alſo, and their brethren that ſhould be killed as they were, ſhould be fulfilled.*

The firſt and principal reaſon of the delay may be thus conceived, God's time of final judging is not come; he hath more ſufferers to perfect, a certain number are enrolled for ſuffering as well as for heaven, many of which (eſpecially theſe who are to ſuffer under Antichriſt) have not yet obtained their crown, though theſe who cried had obtained theirs: and therefore in reſpect of God's purpoſe and decree there is a neceſſity that that ſuit of theirs ſhould be ſuſpended. This is the force of the reaſon which goeth upon theſe grounds, as is hinted,

1. That there is a determinate roll of ſufferers particularly condeſcended on by God. 2. That ſuffering hath in it a ſpecial dignity and honour unto the ſufferers. It is a gift beſtowed by God on ſome, and not on all; yea, to ſome of theſe whom he loveth, and not to all; Phil. i. 29. 3. That God's purpoſe and decree muſt ſtand, nothing can alter that (known unto him are all his works from the beginning) and in time he hath no new counſel to take concerning any of theſe things. Therefore muſt that appointment, concerning the number of ſufferers, and manner and circumſtance of their ſuffering be fulfilled. 4. That all God's decrees, even theſe that ſeem hardeſt to fleſh (as this of ſuffering doth) are wiſely and graciouſly levelled at his own glory, and the good of his people; and therefore ought, and may be quietly and contentedly ſubmitted unto by them.

The particular motives which the Lord addeth to ſatisfy them to be quiet, (though his ſovereignty were enough) are theſe four, as is ſaid. 1. That for the time their reſt was not ſuſpended until the fulfilling of his purpoſe, but that good ground was given to them of acquieſcing in the happineſs beſtowed on them; *they ſhall reſt*, &c. 2. The time of that ſuſpenſion was not long, but for a *little ſeaſon:* therefore it might be the better born: all the time of ſuffering, though ſeemingly long to ſufferers; yet, being compared with eternity, is but ſhort, and for a moment. 3. That little while's ſuſpenſion is not in vain, but for good ends: even then God is promoting his deſign of perfecting his ſaints, and making ready for that final judgment upon his adverſaries, and their cup is filling up for that end.

A fourth argument is, from the perſons who are thus to be dignified with ſufferings: they are *brethren* and *fellow-ſervants*, ſons of that ſame father, employed in the ſervice of that ſame maſter with them; and therefore they, out of reſpect to them, might quietly wait for the fulfilling of God's purpoſe of crowning them, and making them partake of the ſame dignity with themſelves.

Theſe reaſons are then expreſſed, not ſo much for the comforting of ſaints in heaven, as for the clearing and encouraging of ſaints on earth againſt the continuance of ſufferings, that they might patiently and ſtedfaſtly, under them, wait for God's final vindicating of them, and judging of their enemies.

From this ſeal we may then gather, 1. That there hath been much ſufferings of God's people before this time; and therefore this and the former ſeals, which implied ſufferings, muſt be underſtood of the church's ſufferings, this cry, *How long*, &c. Being brought in here as the reſult of theſe. 2. That theſe ſufferings were ſuch as proceeded from men, ſinfully acting therein, by which they became liable to God's vengeance,

and were not to be underſtood as of famine, peſtilence, &c. Or ſuch judgments as do immediately flow from God's hand. Theſe could not have procured a cry of vengeance againſt the men of the earth, as is in this ſeal, if they had not been actors in theſe evils. 3. We may gather, that the church's condition hath been generally ſuffering before this time, and that there hath not been any ſolemn and univerſal judgment on perſecutors before this, the cry, *How long, O Lord*, &c. implieth ſo much: and therefore, this ſeal, as it expreſſeth ſuffering, muſt relate unto the time of the church before Conſtantine: at which time, God gave a viſible teſtimony of his owning his church, and of his indignation againſt perſecutors, as we will ſee in the following ſeal. 4. It expreſſeth the church's extremity, and that immediately going before her change from outward perſecution to external peace; the vehemency of the cry, the comfortableneſs of the anſwer compared with the matter contained in the following ſeal, do confirm this, as if this were the very criſis and turn of that condition. 5. That the following ſeal is not to be looked on as a deſcription of the day of judgment, ſeeing that day, which is by this ſeal for a time ſuſpended, doth not immediately ſucceed to heatheniſh perſecution: beſide, the reaſon given here of the ſuſpenſion of that day, viz. that all their enrolled number of martyrs muſt be fulfilled, which in a great part is to be accompliſhed in the time of Antichriſt's tyranny, will confirm this, there being no poſſibility of including that perſecution of Antichriſt before the terrible events mentioned in the following ſeal.

In the opening of the words we have hinted at ſeveral doctrines, which now we ſhall not reſume, but ſhall ſhortly point at theſe obſervations further.

1. That there is no ſin that more effectually pleadeth for vengeance from God, or more certainly and ſeverely ſhall be puniſhed by him, than the ſin of perſecuting and wronging of the ſaints. Wrongs done to any innocent men in the world have their cry before God, and God is the avenger of theſe; but wrongs done to his ſaints, cry louder than the wrongs of any, even though kings. God cannot, as it were, but hear and avenge, as is clear from the parable, Luke xviii. 7. And from experience this hath been found, that perſecutors (even often in this life) have been remarkably plagued of God, as Cain, Pharoah, Babylon, Antiochus, Herod the great, who was horribly plagued of God before his death; Pontius Pilate, who was degraded and baniſhed; Herod the Tetrarch, miſerably periſhed, Acts xii. Nero, Domitian, and many others, brought death upon themſelves, as is clear from ſcripture, hiſtory of Joſephus, and the eccleſiaſtic ſtory, eſpecially *Cent. Magd. De paenis perſecutorum.* It is true, God's way in this is ſovereign and unſearchable, in reſpect of the manner and time of this reckoning: ſometimes he will ſuffer great perſecutors to die in wordly credit and peace, as Nebuchadnezzar did; and in latter times the duke of Alva the great perſecutor in the low countries; ſometimes he will pardon the perſecutor, as he did Manaſſeh; yet ordinarily doth he manifeſt his diſpleaſure, even before the world, by temporal plagues of infamy, and judgments upon them, or others, as may make the world know that he abhorreth that ſin: ſuch was God's thruſting Nebuchadnezzar for a time to the beaſts of the field; ſuch was God's plaguing of Manaſſeh for his blood in his own impriſonment, and in denuding his children of the kingdom. This proceedeth partly from the greatneſs of the ſin of perſecution, partly from the nature of it; God is more eminently and ſingularly engaged againſt it (he being in ſome manner perſecuted in his people) ſo that we may ſay, that the blood of martyrs ſoundeth alway with that word before God, which Zechariah the ſon of Jehoiada expreſſed at his death, 2 Chron. xxiv. 22. *The Lord look upon it, and require it.* This is the language of their blood, even then when their tongue may be praying with Stephen, Acts vii. 60. *Lord lay not this ſin to their charge.*

Obſ. 2. That God's people may continue long under, and be brought unto great ſtraits by perſecution, as this cry importeth, and the opening of the former three ſeals maketh appear. For until the days of Conſtantine, from the entry of the goſpel into the world, the church, for the ſpace of 300 years and ſome odds, was under perſecution, and had little breathing time for theſe many years, which is evident from hiſtory: Wherein theſe two things are clear. 1. That during that time, the church was waſted by ten ſtated perſecutions. The firſt by Nero, which began anno 67. The ſecond by Domitian anno 90. The third by

Trajan, continuing, as it is written, for 19 years, it began anno 100. The fourth was under Hadrian and Ant. Pius, as is reckoned by ſome, and began anno 126. The fifth by Antoninus Philoſophus, and his colleague L. A. Vervus, beginning anno 168. The Sixth was under Severus, which began in the year 208. The ſeventh was under Maximinus 236. The eight was under Decius, 251. The ninth was under Gallus and Voluſianus, 258. The tenth under Dioclefian, anno 300, or thereabout. Theſe perſecutions are reckoned by ſome, who account not that perſecution of Aurelianus to be one: becauſe his edict was immediately recalled, he being terrified by God, by a terrible thunder, in the very inſtant of his ſubſcribing the ſame: upon which he afterward befriended Chriſtians, ſo as he interpoſed his authority for making effectual the ſentence of the Synod of Antioch againſt Samaſatenus. Others again who reckon this of Aurelianus one, omit that fourth under Hadrian and Ant. Pius, either becauſe they account them one with that of Trajan's, there being no conſiderable interruption betwixt them, or, becauſe they were ſooner ſtayed than others were. This maketh the difference amongſt the writers, who, to adhere to the number of ten, are made to vary in the application of them; yet all agree in this general, that there were at leaſt ten diſtinct perſecutions purpoſely raiſed againſt Chriſtians, during that time: which being put together, will take up a conſiderable part of theſe 300 years.

A ſecond thing clear from ſtory is, that even during the intervals of theſe perſecutions, when the ſword was not raging by authority againſt Chriſtians, yet by tumults and inſurrections amongſt the people, and by the malice of inferior governors (who were either actors in, or connivers at, or negligent of the puniſhing of ſuch things) the church was ſtill ſuffering. In this manner was Stephen ſtoned by the people, Acts vii. James was beheaded, and Peter was impriſoned by Herod, Acts xii. This Paul and the apoſtles often ſuffered in their journeyings, even before public perſecution was ſtirred by Nero, and thus it continued almoſt thro' all the provinces of the empire, when the law ſeemed moſt favourable unto Chriſtians, there being all that time no Chriſtian emperor to own Chriſtians in their ſuffering, ſave one Philippus, who reigned but few years, was himſelf and his family murthered by Decius, who raiſed the eighth perſecution.

Obſ. 3. That God's people in a holy way may pray for vengeance upon perſecutors, as is often uſed in Pſalms: not from ſelf-revenge, or from a carnal ſpirit; but from love to the glory of God, the vindicating of themſelves, and the truth maintained by them, and ſcaring of men from this ſin of perſecution, and the hazard that followed upon it. *Obſ.* 4. That God may ſuffer the blood of his ſaints for a long time to be unpuniſhed, as if he took no notice of their prayers in reſpect of the effect. *Obſ.* 5. Even then when God ſeemeth to neglect his people, and to take no notice of their prayers, he is holy and true, and is to be acknowledged ſo. Though ſenſe would ſay the contrary, faith ought to lay this ground at the entry, *Lord, thou art holy and true.*

From the anſwer, verſe 11. *Obſerve* 1. That though God do not inſtantly grant the particulars that his people do pray for; yet their prayers are not loſt: here the thing ſought is delayed, yet a comfortable return of their prayers is made out unto them; and their prayers are not without fruit even for the time. *Obſ.* 2. God's peremptory decrees, and the prayers of his people, are not inconſiſtent; yea, his decree may aim at one thing, and the particular prayed for by his people (as it is circumſtantiated) aim at another thing, upon the matter, inconſiſtent with that; yet may theſe prayers be acceptable to God, and they in them, as is clear here, and in Abraham's praying for the bleſſing to Iſhmael, while God had appointed it for another. The reaſon is, becauſe our prayers and our practice are accepted, not becauſe they are conformed to God's ſecret will and decree, but as they agree with his will revealed in his word, which is the rule of our duty. *Obſ.* 3. Tho' prayers prevail not to alter God's decree; which muſt ſtand, yet prayers may procure much preſent quietneſs and ſatisfaction for the time. God's decrees are ſo wiſely ordered for the good of his people, that it were no advantage but prejudice to them that have them altered. *Obſerve*, 4. The moſt raging perſecutions have their bounds ſet by God, and the number of martyrs is determined, and all the perſecutors from the beginning of the world to the end, ſhall not exceed in one perſon. Which, as it doth notably hold forth God's ſovereignty and providence in the greateſt confuſion of the world; ſo doth it exceedingly contribute to the comfort of God's people under them. *Obſ.* 5. That the filling up of this roll, or

the ending of the ſufferings of God's people here on earth, and the coming of the great day of judgment, come together. Or, the final judgment of the world, ſhall immediately follow the fulfilling of the ſufferings of the martyrs. The reaſon given of the ſuſpenſion here is, that their fellow-ſervants, who were to be killed, muſt be fulfilled: and the term that is ſet for the anſwering of their power, viz. *until their fellow-ſervants, &c.* doth confirm this. For there is no delay put to judgment then, and there is no more to intervene the martyrs perfecting and this vengeance on the perſecutors. Theſe two are alſo joined, Matth. xxiv. 29. The ending of the affliction of God's people, and the coming of judgment; *immediately*, (ſaith the Lord) *after the tribulation of theſe days ſhall the ſun be darkened, &c.* There is therefore no temporal peace, or millenary kingdom, altogether free of ſuffering, to be expected before that time, which is the day of redemption from theſe ſufferings.

LECTURE VIII.

Ver. 12. *And I beheld when he had opened the ſixth ſeal, and lo, there was a great earthquake, and the ſun became black as ſackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood.*

13. *And the ſtars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree caſteth her untimely figs when ſhe is ſhaken of a mighty wind.*

14. *And the heaven departed as a ſcroll when it is rolled together, and every mountain and iſland were moved out of their places:*

15. *And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond-man and every free-man, hid themſelves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains.*

16. *And ſaid to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that ſitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.*

17. *For the great day of his wrath is come, and who ſhall be able to ſtand?*

WE proceed now to the opening of the ſixth ſeal, which holdeth forth ſome moſt terrible and dreadful diſpenſation, and that both in reſpect of the type and the word of explication, or effects mentioned for opening of the type.

The type is ſet down, verſe 12. in three expreſſions, 1. *There was a great earthquake.* 2. *The ſun became black as ſackcloth of hair.* 3. *The moon became as blood.* The effects (which ſerve for explication of the former) follow, and are of two ſorts 1. Upon the reaſonleſs creature, in three inſtances, 1. *The ſtars fall from heaven*, ver. 13. 2. Upon the heavens, *they depart*, &c. ver. 14. *initio.* The third is upon the earth, *the mountains* (which are moſt ſtable in the continent) *the iſlands* (which are moſt remote in the ſea) *are moved out of their place*, ibid.

The ſecond ſort of effects are upon reaſonable men of all ſorts, *kings, great men, rich men, captains, mighty men, bond-men, and free-men*, great terror is upon all theſe: which is two ways evidenced, 1. In what they did, *they hide themſelves in the dens*, &c. ver. 15. 2. In what they ſaid unto the mountains and rocks, *fall on us, and hide us, &c.* verſe 16. Laſtly, The riſe of all this terror, and theſe dreadful effects, is more plainly expreſſed, viz. the wrath of the Lamb, *for the great day of his wrath is come*, ver. 17.

In ſum, the words point out this terrible diſpenſation, 1. That it is univerſal in reſpect of all creatures; neither ſea nor land, heaven nor earth, nor men of any quality or condition are free, but all are ſharers of the effects of it. 2. It holdeth forth terrors on all theſe in a moſt high and eminent meaſure and degree, as the effects do clear. 3. It pointeth at the ſpecial cauſe which hath influence on all theſe effects, viz. the *wrath of the Lamb*, that is, of the mediator, *becauſe the day of his wrath is come*, &c. Which we conceive eſpecially to be added for theſe reaſons, Firſt, To hold forth the ſpecial procuring cauſe of this judgment, which is not ſo much ſins done againſt God the creator in the breaking of the law, as againſt the grace of the Mediator offered in the goſpel: therefore is *the wrath of the Lamb* eſpecially mentioned, as if he were in an eminent way avenging himſelf againſt theſe who had vilified and contemptuouſly deſpiſed his goſpel, and the profeſſors of it.

Secondly, To ſhew ſome convincing appearing of Chriſt in this terrible change, ſo as it ſhould be ſeen to be by on-lookers, and that this acknowledgment ſhould be extorted by that manifeſt appearance, even from theſe againſt whom he pleadeth this controverſy. Thirdly, It ſheweth the ſcope of all the former terrible effects that are mentioned in the type, to be the Lord's executing judgment on the great men and others of the world (who put no price upon him, but perſecuted his ſervants) and that ſo convincingly, as he might be ſeen in the purſuing of his quarrel againſt them. Fourthly, It ſheweth, tho' Chriſt's forbearance be long, yet hath he a time of reckoning, and cometh terribly when he cometh; and ſo this ſeal, wherein it is ſaid, *the great day of the Lamb's wrath is come, &c.* is to be looked upon in part, as the anſwer of the ſaint's prayer, *How long, O Lord, &c.* in the former ſeal: there they long for his coming to judgment; here it is marked, that that day of his wrath is come.

That ſome dreadful event is foretold here, is moſt manifeſt. The difficulty is, how to apply it in particular. For underſtanding whereof, we premit theſe conſiderations or aſſertions, 1. It is uſual to the prophets to expreſs great judgments (even ſuch as are in temporal things) by ſuch expreſſions, as the overturning of heaven and earth, &c. It is alſo uſual to John to make uſe of the expreſſions which are uſed by them: particularly we will find the ſame expreſſions in the prophets that are here made uſe of in the threatning and foretelling of temporal judgments, as that in the type of the earthquake, the ſun's *darkening*, and the moon's being *turned into blood*, may be gathered from Jer. iv. 23, 24, 28. Joel ii. 10. *The earth ſhall quake before them, the heaven ſhall tremble, the ſun and the moon ſhall be dark, and the ſtars ſhall withdraw their ſhining.* Hag. ii. 21, 22. *I will ſhake the heavens and the earth*, ſaith the Lord, which in plain terms followeth *I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and will deſtroy the ſtrength of the kingdoms of the heathens.* In a word, it is to foretel a remarkable ruin upon the enemies of his church. Add, Iſa. xiii. 9, 10. *Behold the day of the Lord cometh with fierce anger and wrath, &c. For the ſtars of heaven ſhall not give their light, and the ſun ſhall be darkened, and the moon ſhall not cauſe her light to ſhine.* So alſo, Ezek. xxxii. 7. *I will cover the ſun with a cloud, and the moon ſhall not give her light, &c.* In all which places, the prophets, after their manner, are aggreging temporal judgments by ſuch expreſſions.

Again, the firſt ſort of effects, of the ſtars falling from their place, of the mountains and iſlands their moving, are upon the matter, the ſame with Iſa. xxxiv. 1. *The Lord maketh the earth empty, and turneth it upſide down*, &c. with ver. 3, and 4. with Jeremiah iv. 24. Pſalm xviii. 7. Habak. iii. 6, &c.

The other ſort of effects are the ſame, *i. e.* expreſſions of terror, uſed Iſa. ii. 19. *They ſhall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth*, &c. The other part of thoſe effects we will find Hoſ. x. 8. *They ſhall ſay to the mountains cover us, and to the hills fall on us*, &c. which words are by our Lord, Luke xxiii. 30. applied to ſet out the terribleneſs of God's judgment upon the Jews, which was to come a little after at the deſtruction of Jeruſalem. From which places put together, it will appear not inconſiſtent with this deſcription and expreſſions thereof, to apply this event to ſome temporal judgment. For confirming whereof further, we may,

2. Conſider, that this event cannot be underſtood principally, and primarily of the day of judgment; but muſt be underſtood of ſomething going before that. It is true, the compleating of vengeance, to ſpeak ſo, will be then at its height: and, by proportion, we may gather from the terrible expreſſions uſed to hold forth God's wrath in a temporal judgment, the unconceivable dreadfulneſs of the laſt day, which will be exceedingly beyond the moſt temporal event. Yet, we conceive the ſcope of this place is not to hold forth that day, but ſome particular judgment, wherein God's wrath againſt the enemies of Chriſt's kingdom, is in a ſingular and extraordinary way manifeſted, for,

1. The ſeventh ſeal is yet to be opened, which containeth a great number of events in time poſterior to the ſixth, as was ſhewn, Lect. 1. on this chapter. 2. No mention hath hitherto been made of Antichriſt, either of his riſe, reign, or ruin: and it will not be conſiſtent with that immediate dependance, which each of the former ſeals hath one upon another, to ſay, that this ſixth ſeal leapeth from the heatheniſh perſecution over

many hundreds of years, and all the intervening events till the day of judgment. 3. The matter contained in it, is only terror againſt Chriſt's enemies, who are enemies to him as Mediator: which cannot be ſaid of the day of judgment, which is as comfortable to his friends as terrible to his enemies, and all ſorts of wicked men. It agreeth therefore better to ſome particular judgment, than to that general appearance. 4. If this were the day of judgment principally longed for, by the ſaints in the former ſeal, then there needed not to have been ſo many arguments to preſs quietneſs during the ſuſpenſion of that ſuit, if it were ſo inſtantly and immediately fulfilled. 5. It is not like, that the day of judgment ſhould be propheſied of and deſcribed before any temporal judgment on enemies be heard of, eſpecially ſeeing they are ſpoken of in this ſame propheſy. But concerning this, ſee more in the firſt and ſeventh lectures on this chapter.

3. We ſay, this event propheſied of here, cannot be underſtood as containing ſad things to the church, but on the enemies and perſecutors thereof: which is clear, 1. By the former conſideration, compared with the perſons on whom this judgment falleth: it is on kings, captains, and great men of the earth. Now, during the heatheniſh perſecution under the former ſeals, unto which this immediately ſucceedeth, there were no ſuch perſons in the church as theſe. 2. This is confirmed by the terror accompanying this judgment, which maketh them in their practice flee from Chriſt, and in their words cry out againſt it, as being to be reckoned with againſt their will, and as apprehending certainly wrath to themſelves from his appearing, as in the parallel places, Hoſ. x. 8. Luke xxiii. 30. is evident. All which agreeth not with the ſaints frame of ſpirit, eſpecially under affliction, who are crying, *How long, O Lord*, as under the former ſeal; and are deſcribed by this, that they love Chriſt's appearing, and are joyful of it, as of the day of their redemption. 3. Perſecution on the church, could breed no ſuch terror on the kings of the earth, as is here propheſied of.

4. We ſay this type cannot hold forth defection in churchmen, as if that were typified by *ſtars falling from heaven, darkning of the ſun*, &c. for, darkning of light, or defection of churchmen, could not breed ſuch terror on the kings, and great men of the earth, as is here: they are not uſually much troubled with theſe things; and yet it is clear, that this terror floweth as an effect from this ſad judgment, typified and expreſſed by theſe former expreſſions. And therefore, by the ſame reaſon, this ſeal is not to be divided, as if by the firſt part thereof were holden out defection in the church; and by the laſt, judgment upon enemies, ſeeing this laſt part doth clearly hold forth the effects of the former, and doth more fully explicate the ſame thing.

5. We do alſo aſſert, that here cannot be underſtood any trouble brought upon perſecutors by heathens, nor any trouble brought upon the empire, while emperors and rulers were Chriſtians, by theſe who were heathens, ſuch as that of the Goths, and theſe inundations of barbarous nations, which after the four hundred year brake in upon the empire. For, 1. The ſeries of time will not agree to that: this ſeal followeth immediately the church's great ſufferings by heathen emperors; and therefore it is not like the great mutation on the empire, when it became Chriſtian, ſhould be ommitted. 2. This judgment ſpeaketh out, eſpecially the wrath of Chriſt, and that ſo palpably, as his hand is in a more ſingular way acknowledged in it, than the prevailing of heathens againſt heathens would readily produce. This conviction, as would ſeem, of Chriſt's being acknowledged in it, flowing mainly from the inſtrument employed, and owned by him in the execution of it; and this terror that falleth on them, is not that terror as it ſeizeth on all the wicked in the general judgment, ſuch as was mentioned, chap. i. 7. Nor that which affecteth men ſimply by the dread of God's greatneſs, as he is in himſelf; but it is two ways qualified. 1. It is the terror of him that ſitteth on the throne, that is, of God, as he ruleth in his church: in which reſpect, he is holden forth, chap. iv. 5. and ſo diſtinguiſhed from the Mediator: ſo now, by this judgment on enemies for perſecuting his church, he maketh them know that he ruleth and hath a throne, particularly in Jacob, to the ends of the earth, as the ſaints prayer is, Pſal. lix. 13. 2. It is the wrath of the Lamb, appearing as Mediator, and befriending his church, which the more ſurpriſeth them, that formerly they deſpiſed both: now, they find them both in their tops, owning the deſpiſed church, and making it known that their idols, which they worſhipped, had not the ab-

ſolute and ſovereign government of affairs, but the God whom the Chriſtians worſhipped. 3. This judgment falleth eſpecially, and in a peculiar way, upon the enemies of Chriſt, as the expreſſions bear; but judgments, executed by heathens, (particularly and eſpecially theſe brought on by the Goths, Vandals, &c.) lay as heavy, if not more heavy, upon the ſoundeſt and beſt Chriſtians, as upon any other. 4. The mutation brought on by this judgment, is ſo univerſal upon all things, and ſo ſudden, being contained under one ſeal, that it can hardly be paralelled by any particular event of ſuch an invaſion: and therefore is not to be applied to them.

Upon theſe grounds it is, why we conceive this ſeal to differ from the firſt four, in theſe two, 1. The type is not a horſe and a rider. 1. Becauſe the object is not the ſame. Theſe firſt four concern the church immediately, this concerneth its enemies. 2. Becauſe though the Lord ordereth judgments upon the moſt wicked men by his providence; yet this type holds forth judgment in a more boundleſs way without ſuch limitations and reſtrictions as the former diſpenſations towards the church (typified by horſe and riders with their ſeveral commiſſions) did admit. 2. In this ſeal, there is no word of advertiſement to *come and ſee*, as was in the former four. The reaſon is, becauſe God ſendeth not miniſters unto, nor alloweth warnings upon his enemies, as he doth upon his people. To conclude then, we ſay, this ſeal relateth not, firſt, to the end of the world: nor, 2. To the perſecution of the church under Antichriſt. And, 3. Nor to the invaſion of the empire by Goths, Vandals, &c. And other heathen nations: theſe invaſions were not ſtated palpably on Chriſt's account, as manifeſtly owning his intereſt, ſuch as this ſeal importeth. It remaineth then to be underſtood of ſome ſingular and extraordinary change on the Roman empire, and its heathen emperors, whereby it becometh quite another thing, perſecution put to an end, perſecutors brought unto judgment, and that by ſuch inſtruments as manifeſted Chriſt's quarrel againſt them, and with ſuch ſucceſs as ſhould extort the acknowledgment thereof from the perſecutors themſelves. All which characters, as they are now clearly implied in this ſeal; ſo will we find them remarkably fulfilled in that great change of the world, in the days of Conſtantine the great, about the year 310. and afterwards; which came immediately upon the back of the laſt perſecution, (and agreeth well to the time) by which the whole face of the heatheniſh empire was changed, and, as heatheniſh, was overturned. So that in effect the world became another thing, than it was: which agreeth well with the type; perſecutors were viſibly puniſhed, and taken with hands hot in the blood of the ſaints; and by ſuch inſtruments as particularly ſtated the quarrel upon Chriſt's account, and therefore carried the croſs in their enſign; many emperors and great men, were brought to acknowledge Chriſt's hand and indignation againſt them; the church had freedom from outward perſecutions; Chriſtianity became in requeſt in the world, ſo that Chriſtians ſeemed now to enjoy in part the return of the prayers of theſe that had gone before them. All which, being ſo evidently fulfilled in that time, and being ſo agreeable to this type in all its circumſtances, we conceive, that the foretelling of this very event, is the main ſcope of this ſeal; for clearing and confirming whereof, we ſhall add further theſe conſiderations.

If we conſider, 1. The uſeful manner of the prophets, their expreſſing of horrible judgments, as we obſerved at the entry, it will be agreeable to them, and to John, who followeth them, to underſtand this of ſome temporal thing, eſpecially upon enemies.

2. Conſider, that it is ordinary in the ſcriptures of the New Teſtament, and agreeable to this prophecy, to ſpeak of the Roman empire, as of all the world, and of things befalling it, as of changes and events befalling all the world; ſo, Luke ii. 1. it is ſaid, that Auguſtus *decreed, that all the world ſhould be taxed*, that is, all the empire, Rev. iii. 10. And therefore it will not be unreaſonable to aſtrict theſe expreſſions to changes within this empire.

3. Conſider, that the change of religion in the empire in its nature, ordinances, cuſtoms, ceremonies, &c. and the bringing in of a different religion in its room, is ordinarily expreſſed in ſuch terms as hold forth an univerſal change upon all the world; upon heaven, earth, ſun, moon, ſeas, &c. as if all were overturned, and yet the change is not upon the world in itſelf, but upon religion, if we may ſpeak ſo, in the world: becauſe that change hath ſuch alterations with it, as if the world became

another thing; and becauſe religion being the moſt precious thing in the world, the great and remarkable changes are reckoned accordingly as it goeth with it. Hence we will find three eminent changes, and periods, in reſpect of religion, ſpoken of in this book, and all of them in ſuch expreſſions as bear forth, at the firſt view, a total and univerſal change upon all the world. The firſt is, the change of the world, from heatheniſh idolatry to Chriſtianity: this change is ſet out as a new world in this ſeal, becauſe, as it were, that heatheniſh world, wherein heathens bare rule, and idolatry was publicly countenanced and authorized, is overturned, and another world come in its room. The change of the world is from heatheniſh to Chriſtian. The ſecond great change of religion is from the ſimplicity of Chriſtianity, unto the darkneſs and doctrines of Antichriſt. This change under the trumpets is ſet forth by ſmitting of the earth and ſeas, by darkning of the ſun and moon, &c. when the mutation is upon the ſtate of religion in the world; this change is of a Chriſtian world into an Antichriſtian. The third great change is under the vials, when Antichriſt's kingdom again is brought down, chap. xvi. It is expreſſed by a mutation upon the earth, ſea, ſun, &c. when yet the judgment falleth but on the beaſt his worſhippers, and the pendicles, and ſuperſtitions of his kingdom, which may be called the Antichriſtian world: and this mutation is the overturning of the Antichriſtian, and the inbringing of a Chriſtian world again in the place of it. And this way being keeped, in expreſſing all the other changes of religion in the world, we may the more warrantably apply this here, as is ſaid. Only, there is this difference, the other changes of religion, under the trumpets and vials, are brought about by ſteps under ſeveral trumpets and vials; this change is ſet out by one ſeal together, becauſe that alteration was inſtantly, and univerſally at one time brought to paſs, which in the other change is not ſo ſudden.

4. The conſidering of that event more particularly in its ſeveral circumſtances, doth ſo fully anſwer this type, that it may well be taken in and accounted as an univerſal change upon the world. Which will appear by conſidering theſe two in the matter of fact, 1. What the ſtate of the church was immediately before this change. 2. Conſidering what the ſtate of the church became immediately thereafter.

4. The ſtate of the church before Conſtantine's government, was, for outward perſecution, under the extreameſt ſufferings that can be imagined, as was hinted at in the expounding of the fourth ſeal. Amongſt the four chief governors that then were, viz. Diocleſian, Maximianus, Herculeus, Galerius, Maximinus, called alſo Jovius, and Conſtantius, Conſtantine's father, only this laſt had a favour to Chriſtians, the other three being moſt cruel perſecutors. About Conſtantius' death, ſtarted up Maxentius to uſurp the empire at Rome, who for a time prevailed, and continued as barbarous and cruel as any of the other. Againſt this Maxentius, Jovius ſent Severus, whom he called Ceſar, who was overthrown by him; after whom, he preferred one Maximinus his nephew, who, in perſecuting, was nothing behind any of the former. A little after Licinius, who was conſtituted Ceſar in his room, (who for a time had counterfeitly befriended Chriſtians for fear of Conſtantine) yet afterward fell into moſt groſs blaſphemy and perſecution. All of theſe having this for their aim, to root out Chriſtianity, by cruelty and ſubtilty, left nothing undone to accompliſh it. Their cruelty vented in theſe perſecutions, and their ſubtilty may be gathered from the laws we find enacted againſt the church in theſe times. As, 1. That all the Bibles, cups, and church furniture, ſhould be delivered up and deſtroyed: it was from this giving up of the Bible, that Chriſtians, who made defection, were called after that Traditores, that delivering up their Bibles, &c. being accounted receding from the truth, or the teſtimony thereof. 2. That men and women ſhould not meet together for religious exerciſes, but men apart, and women apart. 3. That none ſhould teach women, but women. 4. That no meetings ſhould be keeped within the circuits of towns, but in the fields, upon the pretext of healthfulneſs. 5. That there ſhould be no meetings of miniſters or correſpondences amongſt them in ſynods or otherwiſe, which was prohibited as a thing dangerous to the ſtate. That all the old temples ſhould be built, and all the meeting places of the Chriſtians deſtroyed. 7. That no miniſters ſhould be permitted, but, wherever found, they ſhould be caſt into priſon: which laws, at laſt, ended in open perſecution againſt all that profeſſed the name of Chriſt; ſo that to be called a Chriſtian, was a moſt horrid crime. Unto theſe laws, afterward Julian (who was eminently taught

of the devil to undermine Chriſtianity after it had flouriſhed for a time in peace and tranquillity) added theſe four; or, more plainly and craftily, formed them out of what was before him. 1. That no Chriſtian ſhould be admitted to any truſt, civil or military, but he who firſt ſacrificed to idols: this was obſerved formerly under Dioclefian. 2. That the children of no Chriſtian ſhould be admitted to ſchools of learning, or be educated in human ſcience, that by that means he might bring in ignorance amongſt the Chriſtians, that they might be the leſs able to vindicate Chriſtianity, and might be the leſs thought of amongſt others. 3. That no preacher of the goſpel amongſt them ſhould have any allowance of maintenance (for before him in Conſtantine's time, they had allowance ſettled by public authority) intending thereby to overturn the church, knowing that the church cannot conſiſt without the miniſtry, neither a miniſtry without it be maintained. His fourth device to undo Chriſtianity, was, in deſpite of it, to give way to all other religions by public tolerating of them, therefore in his time was the rebuilding of the temple of Apollo at Delphus intended, and the Jews encouraged to lay the foundation of their deſtroyed temple at Jeruſalem: both which were miraculouſly by earthquakes impeded: and his practices, in reference to this, were obſerved, chap. ii. in the epiſtle to Thyatira.

From which particulars, with what was ſaid in opening the fourth ſeal, it may appear, how ſad the condition of the Chriſtian church was when Conſtantine began to govern. Let us now ſee what it became within ſome few years thereafter.

The eſtate which the church was brought unto after that time, was ſhortly thus. After Conſtantius' death, Conſtantine being declared emperor while he was in Britian, continued in theſe parts for a time, while the forementioned perſecutors, eſpecially Maxentius, who lived at Rome, were become hateful to all; not ſo much for their perſecuting of Chriſtians, as by their tyrannies, adulteries, and all ſort of vile cruelties upon every ſort of perſons: whereupon Conſtantine (called χλωρὸς from his colour) was encouraged to march toward Rome, having before him, at his end, the liberating of the empire from ſuch tyranny of ſo many tyrants: and being doubtful what religion to follow, at the noonday, or a little after, there appeared to him in the heavens a fiery croſs, with this inſcription in legible letters ἐν τούτῳ νίκα, i. e. *in hoc vince*) *in this overcome*. This viſion was ſeen by many others with him, as Socrates (lib. 1. cap. 1.) affirmeth: by which ſign he was not only animated to go to Rome while he was heſitating; but alſo to embrace Chriſtianity, and the profeſſion of Chriſt. In ſign whereof he always carried the croſs with that inſcription for his colours, and ſet it up at Rome, when he entered victor in it. This hiſtory, *Euſeb. de vita Conſtantini, lib.* 1. *cap.* 22. affirmeth he heard Conſtantine himſelf aſſert to be truth with an oath. After this, he with his army marched toward Rome, and in the way had diſcovered to him the treachery of Maximinianus his own father-in-law: by God's mercy he was delivered from it, and it returned upon the author. When he came to Rome, God delivered the tyrant Maxentius into his hand. Maxentius and his chief officers being put to flight on the other ſide of the river Tyber, was neceſſitated to return by a bridge (*per pontem Milvium*, as they call it) whereupon he had made devices in a ſecret way to have drowned Conſtantine, by which he and theſe that were with him were drowned in the river. Upon which occaſion (as Euſebius reporteth, lib. 9. cap. 8.) Chriſtians took occaſion to ſing that word in the ix. Pſal. ver. 16. *The Lord is known by the judgments which he executeth; the wicked is ſnared in the work of his own hands.* And that word, Pſal. vii. 15. *He made a pit and digged it, and he himſelf is fallen into it*, &c. After this, Conſtantine having the peaceable poſſeſſion of the weſt, had afterward two difficulties: the firſt from Maximinus, aiming to drive on perſecution, and the death of Conſtantine together, *Euſeb. lib.* 1. *de vita Conſtantini, cap.* 40. The ſecond was from Licinius, emperor of the eaſt, with whom Conſtantine had made peace, and had given his ſiſter to him in marriage, who for a time did counterfeit Chriſtianity; yet within five years became a moſt cruel enemy to Conſtantine, and all other Chriſtians, and was the author of many of the former cruel edicts, as is to be ſeen in the former places of Euſebius, lib. 1. cap. 43, 44, 45, 46, &c. Againſt theſe alſo Conſtantine ſet himſelf, not only by arms, but by prayer to God, and faſting: over whom God gave him glorious victories, as is to be ſeen, *Ibid. lib.* 1. *cap.* 51. *lib.* 2. *cap.* 11, 12, 13, 14, &c. After which followed a moſt comfortable and joyful eſtate of the church, as Euſebius hath it, lib. 2. cap. 19. Out of which general, we may gather

and obſerve theſe particulars, for making out the anſwerableneſs of the event unto this type, and the greatneſs of the change from what was before.

As, 1. This judgment was upon many great men, as Diocleſian, Maximianus, Galerius, Maximinius, Maxentius, Licinius: All which had the titles of emperors or Ceſars, beſide what came on many great captains under them, as particularly on Pontetius, Culianus, Theotimus, and many others, remarkably plagued of God, as is evident in the forecited hiſtories.

2. Chriſtianity, that was before deſtroyed, was now publicly, by authority, countenanced; idolatry that was before countenanced, is now abhorred by all; idol-temples, every where are deſtroyed or ſhut up, and Chriſtian churches built, and miniſters provided, rather more ſumptuouſly than ſparingly, as we may gather from Euſebius, lib. 3. cap. 47, 49, 52, 53, 56, &c.

3. The laws are juſt contrary to what they were; none but Chriſtians are admitted to office; and tho' Conſtantine took not the way of diſcovering his ſervants, which his father Conſtantius did, (who gave out as Jehu, that he would admit of none to ſerve him, but ſuch as ſacrificed to idols, but afterward expelled the ſacrificers, and keeped the refuſers ſaying, *They would not be faithful to him, who had never been faithful to God*) yet was he zealous in having faithful men about him, and to have religious worſhip not only in public, but particularly in his own family: ſchools were appointed, miniſters encouraged; martyrs, or confeſſors rather, who were in exile, were brought back: theſe who had been put from offices, were reſtored; ſynods were convocate and countenanced by Conſtantine's own preſence, as that of Niece was; hereſies were condemned; toleration of other religions, or of ſchiſms, amongſt Chriſtians, was not ſuffered, and many ſuch like laws and practices, juſt oppoſite to what was before.

4. Conſider the great victories he obtained over the enemies, and the account upon which he purſued them. His firſt war againſt Maxentius, was undertaken, as particularly called unto it by Chriſt himſelf; his laſt war againſt Licinius, was not occaſioned out of any temporal deſign to advance his own greatneſs; (for he was deſirous to live peaceably with him) but to reſtrain his perſecution by force, when all other fair means, attempted by him, had been fruſtrated, God giving many ſingular evidences of his owning him in theſe victories.

5. Conſider the time when theſe perſecutors were ſurpriſed, it was even in the time of their actual oppoſition to Chriſt, whileſt profeſſedly they had ſtated perſecution againſt his ſervants, and could by no means be withdrawn from it, but went on contemptuouſly blaſpheming the name of the Lord Jeſus, whom they called Novitius, in oppoſition to the old plurality of gods whom they worſhipped.

6. Conſider then the remarkableneſs of God's judgments upon theſe perſecutors, and the terrible effects both in deed and word, which they produced in them; not only to the conviction of others, but alſo to the convincing of themſelves, that Chriſt was their party; ſuch terror of conſcience ſeizing on them as was palpable before the world. Diocleſian, and Maximianus Herculeus, in the midſt of their greatneſs, and heat of perſecution, both in one day diveſted themſelves of the imperial dignity, chooſing rather to live, as it were, in the caves and dens of the earth, than to continue in their authority; a thing unheard of before in the world. This partly proceeded from diſpleaſure that they attained not their end in deſtroying Chriſtianity, but rather found it to grow under them; partly from terror of conſcience, ariſing from that, as if they had gathered clearly that they were contending with God in that. Thereafter both of them put violent hands in themſelves. Diocleſian, being ſent for by Conſtantine upon ſuſpicion, choſed rather to poiſon himſelf than to ſee him. Maximianus Herculeus endeavouring again to recover his authority, was diſcovered in his deſign by his daughter Conſtantine's wife; he was purſued, and beſieged by him, and was either killed, or, during his ſiege, hanged himſelf, as is diverſly reported by writers. The third, Maxentius, was remarkably drowned, as is ſaid before, with many of his chief officers, which made the Chriſtians compare his deſtruction in the water with Pharaoh's drowning in the red ſea. Maximinus Jovius, through intemperance becoming corpulent, was ſmitten with biles in the ſecret parts, out of which iſſued abundance of vermine, in a moſt loathſome diſeaſe, ſo that phyſicians were either ſuffocated by his ſmell, or were killed by him, becauſe they could not cure him; one of his phyſicians telling him, it was God's judgment on him for perſecution, which no man could remove. At laſt,

the conviction was ſo born in upon himſelf, that he acknowledged his wrongs done to the church, to be the cauſe of that plague; and therefore being ſtricken with terror, gave our edicts that the perſecution ſhould ceaſe, churches ſhould be builded, and that in their meetings, prayers ſhould be put up for him, as formerly uſed to be. Which edict is to be found in Euſebius, lib. 8. cap. 28, 29. where the end alſo of Diocleſian and Herculeus is ſet down. The other tyrant in the eaſt, viz. Maximinus, who was called Ceſar, had been induſtrious to invent tortures for Chriſtians, eſpecially to pull out their eyes, was at laſt defeat, and in a baſe habit made to hide himſelf, and thereafter purſued by ſickneſs, which made both his eyes to leap out; by which he was neceſſitated to confeſs, that only the God of Chriſtians was God; and that he had been miſtaken concerning the gods whom he choſe to worſhip: all which he had found to be truth by experience itſelf. Which words were uttered by him, being even expiring, as Euſebius teſtifieth, *de vita Conſtantini*, *lib.* 2. *cap.* 52. Licinius again, who could not be ſcarred from perſecution by any of theſe examples, (though in ſome thereof himſelf had been actor, whiles he was in confederacy with Conſtantine) was after many defeats and flights, convinced of his folly, and made to vent his indignation againſt theſe idolatrous prieſts, who had made him diſdain Conſtantine's God, and put confidence in the multitude of old gods, as they called them. So that he and his chief aſſociates being taken, and brought to puniſhment by Conſtantine, were made to underſtand how great and admirable the God of Conſtantine was, *de vita Conſtant.* lib. 2. cap. 18. Which remarkable judgments, and confeſſions, as alſo of many other great men, their adherents, as if they were ſpeaking out the words contained in the text, ye will find in the forecited hiſtory, and in *Cent. Magd. de pœnis perſecutorum.*

The like remarkable judgments, with ſuch confeſſions, we will not find at any time together in any hiſtory. All which conſiderations being put together, we conceive the reaſons now more apparent, why we applied the ſeal to this event, and expounded it of it, ſeeing every thing jumps ſo in the time, event, and effects, as hath been formerly hinted at.

We conceive it not needful to inſiſt particularly in expounding and applying every expreſſion, as what the darkening of the ſun, the removing of iſlands and mountains meaneth, or how they differ among themſelves. This is certain, that all the parts of that idolatrous world are comprehended under this threatning, and all ſorts of perſecutors are to be included in this ſtroke, that there are none ſo great or ſtrong as may liberate themſelves from it; and that there is nothing ſo ſtately, firm or remote, which ſhall eſcape this change. But this alteration ſhall be extended over all, ſo as the Lord alone ſhall be exalted in that day. If it be aſked, *Why this particular temporal judgment is ſet out under ſuch high and univerſal terms, as ſeemeth more agreeable to the day of judgment? Anſw.* Beſide, the cuſtom of the prophets, and conſtant ſtrain of this book, we ſay, 1. The ill was univerſal, and the remedy was very broad and wonderful, which made the change be of the larger extent. 2. It was a very great change from one extreme of ſuffering, to another extreme of outward proſperity. 3. It was a very ſudden change, few years intervened between the church's low condition and her outward flouriſhing eſtate; all which looketh like a new world. Men could hardly have believed in ſo ſhort a time to have ſeen ſuch things, had it not been by the extraordinary power of God carried on, as it were, like the day of judgment on the one ſide, and like a new creation on the other. 4. This event may in ſome ſort be a type and reſemblance of the laſt judgment, and an evidence and pledge of it unto the ſaints, who were praying for that vengeance; and therefore may be thought to be ſet forth under ſuch expreſſions, for confirming God's praying people, in the hope of that day.

We may from this ſcope take theſe obſervations, 1. That though the great vengeance of God againſt perſecutors be reſerved till the laſt judgment; yet ſometimes, yea often, God will remarkably puniſh them, even before men, as is clear in the application before mentioned, and in the obſervations on the former ſeal. We will ſcarcely find in the ſcriptures of the Old and New Teſtament, or in hiſtory, any eminent perſecutor, for the moſt part to go out of this world without ſome remarkable blot. The ſin of ſhedding the blood of God's people, is ſpoken of in the caſe of Manaſſeh, 2 Kings xxiv. 4. as a ſin which God would not pardon, as to temporal afflictions, though he pardon it to the penitent, as to its eternal puniſhment. If we can look

through the actors in these ten persecutions, this will be clear. Nero being hated of men, and pursued by the senate, killed himself; Domitian, having drawn a catalogue of such as he was to kill, in which was the name of his own wife, and other friends, they having found it, put him to death; Trajan was continually vexed with seditions, and after fell into an extraordinary disease, by which he was taken away; Adrian, being vexed with commotions in his life, died with much anxiety, as these verses expressed by him, before his death do manifest,

Animula, vagula, blandula,
Hospes, comesque corporis,
Quae nunc abibis in loca?
Pallidula, rigida, nudula,
Nec, ut soles, dabis jocos.

Maximinus being declared an enemy by the senate; was killed in his tent; Decius by the Goths (in their first invasion of the empire) with his whole army, was cut off; Valerianus was overcome by the Persians, and made use of by Sapores as a rest for his foot when he was to horse; of Diocletian we have heard already. Thus for the most part, were the persecutors dealt with by God, and died ignominiously, and oftentimes with terror and regret. Such a word had Severus at his death, *Omnia fui, & nihil mihi prodest;* such also was the end of that infamous enemy of Christians, Julian, who, in his height of contempt against Christ, was deadly wounded in battle against the Persians, and throwing his blood in the air, died with that desperate expression in his mouth, *Vicisti tandem Galilæe;* Valentius the emperor, being a great favourer of the Arians, and a great persecutor of the orthodox, (as the Arians did exceed the heathens in cruelty) was, in battle against the Goths in Thracia, wounded, and being carried to some house near by, it was set on fire by the enemy, in which he miserably perished. All which do shew God's revengeful justice in pursuing that sin.

Obs. 2. Wrath is exceeding terrible upon the stoutest men of the world. What a terribleness must there be in the great day, when wrath and terror, to speak so, are at their perfection? And what a howling and crying must that be, when all the families of the earth, and these that have pierced him, shall mourn before him? It were good to prevent this terror, and to abstain from what provoketh it. This will be found a certain truth, that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. *Observe*, 3. The great distance that is between God and creatures, and how far all of them are in his reverence, he can at one instance shake both heaven and earth, and turn the world upside-down; he can make the kings to flee, and the stoutest men in the world to cry out for fear; *He, even he, only is to be feared; and who can stand when he is angry?* Psal. lxxvi. 7. It is a wonder poor men will live under a controversy with him, and be so little affrighted of his wrath. 4. There is nothing maketh wrath more insufferable, than that it is *the wrath of the Lamb, Christ*, ver. 16. This is added as that which augmenteth their terror, and maketh their case desperate, when the Mediator is their enemy, there is none in heaven nor earth, that can befriend them; the vengeance of despised grace, executed by the Mediator, is the most dreadful vengeance. The Lord save us from that. *Observe*, 5. The fickleness of all creatures, even of the most mighty and valiant men in the world; what are they when God beginneth to reckon with them? Stars fall from heaven, great men and stout men hide themselves from the Lamb. It may learn us to cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for, wherein is he to be accounted of? 6. See the insufferableness of wrath, *the day of his wrath is come, and who can abide him?* What meaneth the great part of men who hazard without fear upon known causes of wrath, and can live at feed with God? There is a necessity of being at peace with him? This wrath of his, one day will be found unsupportable. *Observe*, 7. Judgments oftentimes fall forest upon the great ones of the world; and these that in mens account might be thought most secure, kings, great men, and mighty men, are especially stricken at; partly, because they used to be ringleaders in the sin; partly, it serveth most to the abasing of creatures, and the manifesting of God's justice and power; partly, to speak so, they think more strange of it. 8. The stouter men be in their opposition to Christ, and the more secure and confident they be in their sin, oftentimes, when wrath cometh, they are found the more desperate cowards: because, the more security be under sin, the more force and power is added unto the challenge of the conscience when it is wakened. There

is a great odds here between the language of these gallants, who now cannot abide the face of the Lamb, and the former braggings wherein often they have defied the Son of God. 9. There is no condition so hard, that the proudest men in the world will decline, nay, by the contrary they will desire it, that they may escape the wrath of God, when once the sense of it breaketh in upon them. Some gallants stand now upon their points and credit, and will not flee where their credit is concerned, tho' it should draw on sin upon them; but there will be no such sticking in the day of wrath; men will be glad to flee to the basest corner of the earth, they would choose that the greatest mountain or rock should fall upon them, and think no shame to cry for it: yea, annihilation would be welcome to them, to prevent their appearing before Jesus Christ: men, great men, and stout men, will have a far other language, if we may suppose it, at their appearing before him, than now in their grandeur it were possible for them to imagine. *Observe* 10. When God reckoneth, he needeth neither witness nor tormentors; he hath both these in the consciences of his most desperate enemies. What an awe-band is it that God hath over all men in respect of their consciences? Which being armed by God against them, would be worse to encounter with than thousands of armies? This maketh men flee when none pursueth. 11. No king, nor great one in the world, upon any entreaty, will be exempted from judgment, but appear they must, even though they cannot abide it. What a torture must it be to be distracted between these two, a necessity of appearing, and an utter impossibility to endure that appearing? Certainly if men were to live and speak, after some experience of these things, they might be supposed to become much wiser in the ordering of themselves, or at least in giving their advice to others, than they were before, as the rich glutton, Luke xvi. giveth advertisement to his brethren out of hell. 12. There is a day coming when there will be no trysting; when the Lamb cometh in wrath to reckon with despisers, he pursueth in wrath, and they would fain flee; but there is no treating aimed at on either side. 13. This day of wrath is certainly coming and will come, tho' it seem to be delayed. We may well take all the instances of particular judgments as pledges of that day. Men will once find they have wronged themselves, that they have so little believed this great article of faith. 14. When that day cometh, there will be great odds between God's people, and the rest of the world. The kings and great ones, who despised them on earth, would be glad in that day to exchange thrones with the meanest saint, and will never attain it. Wrath, when it cometh, will make the world know of what worth godliness is, and what an excellent thing it is to have a good conscience, and what advantage there is in having peace made with God through Christ Jesus. These are the true and faithful sayings of God, and who believeth them not now, will one day, with the rich glutton, find the truth of them.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *And after these things, I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.*

AT the entry of the former chapter, we divided this prophesy into three principal prophesies, holding forth and relating unto three principal periods of the condition of the militant church. The first, relating to the church's sufferings under heathens, which was particularly expressed by the seals, whereof we have already spoken. The second, concerning Antichrist's rise and dominion, holden forth by the trumpets. The third, concerning the church's outgate from under that storm, is contained under the vials. These two are yet to come. And because

the ſecond was a ſad ſtorm, which might ſhake the faith of God's people, if they were not ſtrengthened againſt it, the Lord armeth them in reference thereunto, by laying down theſe two ſtrong conſolations, 1. By ſhewing his care of his church, in providing for the ſafety of his own, before the ſtorm ſhould come. 2. By ſhewing the certainty of the church's outgate from, and victory over that ſtrait. Which two take up the chapter, and are put together in a little view and hint, before the Lord go on to deſcribe the ſtorm itſelf, that thereby the faith of God's people, and their conſolation in reference thereto, might be the more ſtrengthened and confirmed.

If we look to the order of revealing the matter contained in this chapter, it doth belong to the ſixth ſeal (the ſeventh not being yet opened;) but if we look unto the matter itſelf, and the ſcope, we will find it belong to the propheſies following, as preparatory to them, and ſet down before the opening of the ſeventh ſeal, to make the tranſition from the one propheſy to the other the more diſcernable; and alſo to make the propheſy coming the more to be adverted unto, and the eaſier to be underſtood.

The chapter then hath theſe two parts, 1. The Lord's taking care of his church and elect, before the coming of a ſtorm; by ſeparating of them, and (as it were, by his own ſeal) ſetting them apart from others, that they ſhall not be hurt by it. And becauſe theſe propheſies repreſent the events to John, as acted; therefore is this care of God's alſo repreſented to him in that ſame manner before theſe events come. The firſt is from the beginning to the ninth verſe; and the ſecond part, from the ninth verſe to the end, holdeth forth a calm and flouriſhing eſtate of the church after that ſtorm, in reſpect of number, beauty, and freedom in the ſerving of God: which relateth firſt, unto the church on earth, and in part fore-ſheweth the ſpreading of the goſpel, after Antichriſt's tyranny and domination hath brought the church low; but eſpecially is to be fulfilled in heaven, where theſe things, which in a prophetical manner are ſpoken of, and applied unto the church here, will more properly be fulfilled.

For clearing of this ſcope, and better underſtanding of this chapter, let us conſider theſe three, 1. What theſe winds do ſignify. 2. What is meaned by this ſealing. 3. Unto what time or ſtate of the church they do relate.

By *winds*, three things are eſpecially underſtood in ſcripture, which make the holding of theſe winds three ways to be interpreted.

1. By *winds*, in ſcripture, are underſtood temporal judgments on civil ſtates, Jer. xlix. 36, &c. and ſo the holding of winds ſuppoſeth a reſtraint on temporal troubles, keeping them, for a time, from breaking looſe upon the church, though they were ready even then to blow. The event is thus applied, the church hath outward peace for a little time under Conſtantine, and after, but immediately the empire was overrun by Goths and Vandals, Saracens, and other barbarous nations, who had been a little time reſtrained, that the church might have ſome breathing.

2. By *winds*, ſometimes in ſcripture are underſtood the blowings of the Spirit, eſpecially accompanying the ordinances, in keeping them clean, and making them effectual. The goſpel-ordinances, and breathings of the Spirit with them, being as neceſſary for keeping the church uncorrupted, as winds are to the air which we breathe in. See Acts ii. 1, 2. Cant. iv. 16. Ezek. xxxvii. 4. According to this acceptation of winds, the holding of them doth ſignify the reſtraining of the pure doctrine of the goſpel, whereby followed the ſpreading of hereſy, and the riſing of Antichriſt, who, ſay they, was working even in Conſtantine's time.

3. By *winds*, the ſcripture ſometimes holdeth forth ſpiritual judgments, as hereſy in doctrine, ſchiſms, diviſions, contentions, &c. Which have upon the church an impetuous force and violence like winds driving unſtable ſouls from their ſtedfaſtneſs, as the word is, Eph. iv. 14. *That we be not children toſſed to and fro by every wind of doctrine by the ſlight of men, &c.* It is ſo taken alſo, Jude xii. in reſpect of theſe who (ver. 11.) had followed the gainſayings of Core; they are ſaid to be carried about of winds, &c. Thus the holding of theſe winds is to be conceived. I ſaw, ſaith John, immediately after the church's freedom from perſecution, a new ſtorm of hereſy and ſchiſm, ready to ſet upon the church, and to carry all away before it: but it was bounded and reſtrained by God's power, till he had eſtabliſhed his elect againſt it, ſo as it ſhall have no force to overturn them.

We conceive the laſt to be eſpecially aimed at here, and that theſe winds do hold forth the growing and

increaſing of falſe doctrine and ſchiſm in the church, rather than any of the former two: 1. Becauſe this agreeth beſt to the ſcope, which is to guard the elect from theſe evils. Now, in the ſtrain of this book, we will not find the elect ſaved from temporal evils more than others: it muſt therefore be underſtood of ſpiritual judgments, and that in a high degree; from which only they, viz. the elect have a peculiar exemption, Matth. xxiv. 24. 2. This exemption doth eſpecially relate unto theſe evils of Antichriſt, whereof the world partaketh, and from which only the elect are kept clean, as will appear from chap. xiii. 8. and chap. xiv. ver. 1, 4. theſe ſealed ones are ſaid not to be defiled; by which, we may gather what is the judgments they are to be kept from, viz. ſpiritual defilement, ſeeing purity from theſe is peculiar to the ſealed ones as a fruit of their ſealing. Again, we underſtand the form of this ſpiritual judgment, to ſpeak ſo, to conſiſt rather in the actual blowings of error, than in the privative reſtraint of pure doctrine; becauſe the effects mentioned of hurting trees, earth, ſea, &c. are the effects of wind actually blowing and bringing hurt unto theſe things. Beſide, the holding of theſe winds being for that end, till the elect ſhould be marked, evidenceth that the judgment is in letting looſe theſe winds, the holding whereof is a reſtraint upon them.

To the ſecond queſtion, viz. what is to be underſtood by this ſeal, or ſealing, mentioned? We ſay, 1. That it is not any viſible or diſcernible character, as to men, which is intended. But, 2. Some ſeparating and differencing thing, whereby, as to the effect, theſe who are ſealed, are diſtinguiſhed from others that are not ſealed. In a word, the ſcope is to ſhew, that every one of God's own ſhall be as certainly kept free from the hurt of that ſtorm, as if there were a viſible mark put upon every one of them. This manner of ſpeech is borrowed. 1. From kings, that ſeal with their own ſeal what they would not have touched. 2. From the hiſtory, Exod. xii. 13. where God, being to ſeparate Iſrael from the Egyptians, in reſpect of the plague of ſmiting the firſt-born, did firſt ſeparate them by a mark, as it were, upon the poſts of their doors, whereby his care of them was ſignified, and their faith of immunity from that plague ſtrengthened; and accordingly the effect followed, none that were marked were hurt; ſo ſhall it be here. 3. It may look unto Ezek. ix. where a ſtory of ſealing ſome, not unlike this, is recorded, In ſum, it is to ſhew the ſecurity of the elect under that ſtorm: which we conceive eſpecially to flow from theſe two: 1. from God's decree of election. 2. God's care and providence in the executing of his decree of election, ſo as the ſaddeſt trial is limited in its commiſſion, in reſpect of the elect, and they are looked unto and ſuſtained under it. This agreeth well with Matth. xxiv. 24. where preſervation from error is derived from God's election; and that which is called ſealing here, we take it to be the ſame which is expreſſed, chap. xiii. and 8. by *writing in the Lamb's book of life*, mentioned there for the ſame ſcope as this is here. It agreeth alſo with 2 Tim. ii. 19. where the Lord's foundation, which is his election, is ſaid to be ſealed, becauſe of the ſureneſs and unalterableneſs thereof.

The third thing to be cleared, is, what time or ſtate of the church this relateth unto? *Anſw.* Although doctrinally the words do, in general, hold forth Chriſt's care of his church and people, in reference unto the trials which are common to them with others; and ſo this may be applied to all times, Chriſt hath a care of his church under the ſeals, and a peculiar care of his own under every trial. This is a truth: but, conſidering the words as they point at ſome particular time, and for that end, are ſet down in this propheſy, we conceive, that they hold forth God's peculiar overſight of his elect, in keeping them from the ſtorm which is threatened by the trumpets, and not from the temporal ſtrokes contained under the ſame, and ſo doth belong to the following propheſy, and not to the preceding; 1. Becauſe the ſeals hold forth eſpecially temporal judgments, the trumpets hold forth ſpiritual plagues. Now the elect, not being exempted from the former, but from the latter, this propheſy then, to call it ſo, of particular exemption, muſt belong to the trumpets which contain judgments of a ſpiritual nature. 2. If we look to chap. ix. 4. (which comprehendeth the propheſy of the firſt woe brought upon the world by the fifth trumpet) there theſe who are ſealed, are peculiarly exempted from that woe. The inſerting therefore that limitation in the commiſſion of that woe, that it ſhould not hurt theſe who had the ſeal of God, doth evidently knit this ſealing unto that trumpet, as peculiarly belonging to it, and intended for that ſtorm. 3. We find, chap. xiii. 8. only the elect excepted from the worſhipping of the beaſt; and

chap. xiv. 1. 4. we find the ſame number, who are ſaid to be ſealed here, obſerved to be kept clean, according as was deſigned here, theſe places ſhewing the effect of God's ſealing here to have been anſwerable in the event, that as he had ſealed them to be kept clean, ſo were they, by virtue thereof, actually preſerved. Now that preſervation, in reſpect of the event in theſe places, doth manifeſtly look to their being kept free of Antichriſt's corruptions, which contemporateth with the trumpets; and therefore this ſealing which holding forth God's purpoſe of bringing about that event, muſt belong to that time alſo.

The ſcope then is ſhortly this, John being commiſſionated to reveal the ſecond great ſtorm, which was to come upon the church, by the breaking out of hereſy, and riſing of Antichriſt to a height, by which many more of the viſible church ſhould be carried away than under the former perſecutions, ſo that the whole world ſhould wonder after the beaſt, and the elect be in great hazard, leſt the Lord's people ſhould faint, as if there were no church during that time; the Lord comforteth them by ſhewing the ſecurity of the elect, and immutability of election, in the moſt declining times; and that he would preſerve them from being carried away, or hurt, by that ſtorm, as if they were by ſome viſible character diſtinguiſhed from the reſt of the world for that end.

To come more particularly to this firſt part of the chapter, there are two things repreſented in it, 1. A ſad judgment to the church; this is implied, verſe 1. 2. Chriſt's care in preparing for, and guarding his church from it.

In the firſt we have theſe four things to conſider, 1. Wherein this judgment or trial conſiſteth. 2. The inſtruments intruſted with the overſight thereof are ſet down. 3. Their poſture is deſcribed. 4. The object of the judgment is pointed at.

1. The trial is in *the blowing of winds*, even *four winds*, by which we underſtand ſpiritual dangers of hereſies, diviſions, ſchiſms, &c. as it is before ſaid: which are compared to *winds*, 1. To ſhew the violence and force of error, which impetuouſly carrieth man away with it; therefore it is compared to *a flood*, chap. xii. and is called *ſtrong deluſion*, 2 Theſſ. ii. Which place relateth to the ſame event. 2. They are compared to *winds*, to ſhew the effects of error amongſt unſtable ſouls, which drive them from former received truths to error, and from one error to another, to and fro, even as winds toſs any light matter; therefore (Jude xii.) they that are given to error are ſaid to be carried about of winds, as clouds or weather-cocks are from one ſide to another according as the wind bloweth.

3. Again, they are called *four winds*, to ſhew, 1. The plurality of errors which come one with another, and one after another, when once theſe winds begin to blow. 2. To ſhew the oppoſition of one error to another, and the inconſiſtency of them together, as well as with truth. In this, error differeth from ordinary winds; theſe blow but from one earth at once, but this ſetteth upon all corners together, the devil aiming to break in upon one ſide when he is repelled at another, and to catch one by one error, who hath not been taken with another.

2. The inſtruments are deſcribed, *I ſaw four angels ſtanding, &c.* 1. They are called angels. And, 2. Four angels. We need not diſpute much whether they be good or bad, ſeeing God who is the creator and ſovereign of both, may and often hath made uſe of them in executing of his judgments upon the wicked world: it would ſeem theſe mentioned here are good angels. 1. Becauſe for a time they reſtrained theſe winds, ready before this to have broken out, but were kept up as in priſon by them, till Chriſt ſhould give orders. It is true the winds are from evil ſpirits, and prime miniſters of Satan; but the holding of theſe winds, and the timing of the blowing of them, ſo as might further God's deſign moſt, are good, and ſeem to be acts of Chriſt's kingly office executed by angels, who have that committed to them for the church's ſake: and therefore it may be ſaid of them, that power was given them to hurt the earth, becauſe that cannot come to paſs but by their leave, who have the overſight of that deluge of error intruſted to them. 2. The angels who ſpeaketh to them is as joint ſervants of God with him, and as employed in the ſame work, as it is, ver. 3. which maketh it appear to be elect angels, employed in that work for the good of elect ſaints. They are called four, becauſe there were four winds, and there being hazard from ſo many earths, God will have his care and ſovereignty, ſeen in having an angel for every danger.

3. We are now to conſider their poſture; which is ſet down, *Firſt*, In their *ſtanding on the four corners of the earth*; which importeth here two

things, 1. The eminency of the judgment, it was ready to break in on all corners. 2. It ſheweth the vigilancy and activeneſs of theſe inſtruments in executing what was committed to them, with a readineſs to advert to Chriſt's orders, and to obey them. *Secondly*, As they are *ſtanding*, ſo they are *holding the four winds of the earth*, which confirmeth as is formerly ſaid; and beſide, implieth a degree of force in the winds, and of activity in the inſtruments, forcibly, as it were, holding them. *Thirdly*, The end why they hold the winds is, *that the winds ſhould not blow upon the earth:* which is not ſimply to reſtrain them from hurting the earth, but for a time, until the elect ſhould be prepared and provided for it, as the verſes following will clear.

The fourth thing in the verſe is, the object on which theſe winds do blow; it is implied in this verſe to be the earth, the ſea, and trees; for the reſtraining of theſe winds from blowing on them for a time, ſuppoſeth them to be the object of that ſtorm, as is clearly expreſſed, ver. 2, 3. *it was given to them to hurt the earth*, &c. Theſe three are moſt ordinarily obnoxious to the hurt of winds, and therefore are mentioned here. The earth lieth open to winds, being plagued by earthquakes, overthrowing of houſes, ſpoiling of corns, fruits, &c. the ſea being ſo liquid and unſtable, is ſubject to toſſings and riſings, whereby ſhipwreck and other inconveniences follow. 3. Trees are more ſubject than other things, becauſe of their height, which maketh them the more obnoxious unto, and the leſs able to bear with the impetuous force of the ſtormy winds, whereby ſome are rent, others are overblown, &c. The ſcope is, to ſhew, that as the wind ſeizeth on theſe things as the proper object of its hurt, ſo error hath its own object, upon which the hurt thereof will be no leſs effectual.

More particularly, by earth, &c. here cannot be underſtood theſe without the church, (error not being a plague wherewith ſuch are ſcourged) but we muſt underſtand profeſſors of the viſible church, becauſe the event (which followeth by the trumpets) is made good on them; and therefore this earth is not diſtinguiſhed from the viſible church by any external profeſſion, but from the inviſible church, in reſpect of ſecret election, as from what proceedeth is clear.

That theſe three, *earth*, *ſea*, and *trees*, are mentioned together, as the objects hurt by this ſtorm, may be done in alluſion to three ſorts of profeſſors, over whom error eſpecially prevaileth.

1. The earthly-minded profeſſor, who ſuppoſeth gain to be godlineſs, lieth open to this ſtorm, when ſet upon by a tentation to error, which is backed with worldly wealth, eaſe, credit, preferment, &c. Of ſuch the ſcripture in many places ſpeaketh, who, upon that account, have been enſnared with this bait, Phil. iii. 19. 2 Pet. ii. 15. Jude 11. And upon this account it is that, 1 Tim. vi. 10. *the love of money* is called *the root of all evil, which while ſome covet after, they have erred from the faith.*

2. By *ſea*, may be ſignified unſettled light profeſſors, who, like Reuben, are unſtable like water, and fixed in nothing; therefore are they, Jude 13. called *raging waves of the ſea, and wandring ſtars; and clouds that are carried with a tempeſt*, 2 Pet. ii. 17. a light profeſſor is an eaſy prey to error.

2. By *trees* may be underſtood profeſſors, who, in reſpect of profeſſion, gifts of knowledge, utterance, &c. may be ſaid to be high above others, and no leſs high in their own conceit; being by knowledge puft up, though in reſpect of true fruits exceeding barren; for, if theſe that are real Chriſtians be corrupted to trees, indeed bearing fruit: (which ſort of Chriſtians, chap. ix. verſe 4. are exempted from this judgment) Chriſtians who are but in profeſſion ſo, yet much in their own conceit, may be called trees, as they are by Jude, verſe 12. and 2 Pet. ii. they are called preſumptuous, as high above others in their own conceit; which ſort of profeſſors, are as obnoxious to error as any other.

The ſum of this verſe is, no ſooner was the church freed from open perſecution, but the devil ſtirreth up errors of all ſorts, and that with great violence; whereby, in God's righteous judgment, many ſecure, earthly-minded, unſtable and proud conceity profeſſors were to be carried away; yet were they for a time reſtrained by God's power, *till*, &c. From which obſerve,

1. That error and hereſy waiteth upon the church's outward proſperous condition; and no ſooner is ſhe freed from open perſecution, but as ſoon the devil waiteth on to ſow theſe tares, chap. xii. when the child is delivered from perſecu-

tion, the devil, the ſerpent, ſpueth out a flood after her; it was ſo in Conſtantine's time, unto which this relateth: the church was ſcarcely landed from that ſea of perſecution, when the hereſy of Arius, and other diviſions, ſet vehemently upon the church, as we will ſee in opening of the trumpets. It was ſo in the time of the goſpel's breaking forth again in Germany; floods of Anabaptiſts, Libertines, Antinomians, &c. followed it, and ſomewhat of it hath been made out in our own experience in this iſland. The devil, who is a murderer, and a liar from the beginning, waiteth all opportunities to deſtroy, if ſo he may gain by error what he could not attain by violence. Beſide, men uſually then becoming more ſecure, and falling aſleep, he hath the fairer occaſion to ſow his tares, which he doth not neglect. 2. Error and hereſy is one of theſe plagues whereof God maketh uſe of in his juſtice to puniſh the ingrate world, who have had the goſpel in peace, and have abuſed it. Therefore when deluſion cometh in its greateſt height, as 2 Theſſ. ii. 10. Or, a falſe prophet cometh to ſpeak lies in the name of the Lord, Deut. xiii. 1, 3. They are both ſaid to be ſent of him, as a juſt reward of rejecting the truth. 3. The abounding of error is a ſore plague: and therefore toleration (which we conceive to be no other thing upon the matter, but the letting looſe of theſe winds) muſt be a ſad ſtroke to many profeſſors; by this they are toſſed, ſnared, and made drunk with a fill of their own ways, and many carried headlong to the ruin of their ſouls. By this the beſt things of the church, viz. its truth, purity, unity, &c. are blaſted. Have not Arianiſm, Pelagianiſm, Popery, and other errors wronged the church more than many years famine, wars, and peſtilence; and deſtroyed more ſouls than theſe have done bodies? It is a wonder the world ſhould think ſo light of ſo heavy a plague. 4. When error cometh as judgment, it cometh exceedingly fitted and ſtrengthened for carrying on its point. There is a deluge or flood of them together; therefore it is called ſtrong deluſion, and a ſpirit of error, 2 Theſſ. ii. 11. Becauſe as it hath from God a commiſſion, and cannot be quiet till that be executed, more than the bloody ſword can be, Ezek. xxi. ſo it is armed ſuitably for that end, ſometimes with variety of errors, ſometimes with the number of followers, ſometimes with countenance from great ones of the world, and temporal advantages, ſometimes with eminency of gifts, in the authors and abettors thereof: theſe, or ſuch like, going alongſt with the tentation, make it ſet on the more ſtrongly, and with the greater difficulty to be reſiſted. 5. There are ſome errors that are inconſiſtent together, and oppoſite one to another, wherewith yet in God's ſecret juſtice the devil may be permitted to aſſault and trouble the church: the Lord thereby aimeth the more to further the trial of the ſincere, and diſcovery of the counterfeit; the devil thereby aimeth to undo all, by prevailing againſt them upon one ſide or another, that if one error do not take, he may eſſay about to find out that which is ſuitable to their humour, and to ſet on them where he ſhall find them weakeſt. At leaſt by theſe diverſities of errors, he maketh the truth the more diſputable unto the men of the world. In the primitive times ſome denied Chriſt to be true man, as Apollinaris; others denied him to be true God, as Ebion, Arius, Plotinus, &c.

Theſe again differing among themſelves, Arius calling him God, but a created God in time; Photinus and his followers aſſerting him to be but mere man; ſome made him to conſiſt of two perſons as well as two natures, others running to the other extreme to ſhun that, affirmed him to have but one nature, as he is but one perſon; this was the hereſy of Eutyches, the former was ſpread by Neſtorius; Sabellians made but one perſon, as there is but one God, as the Antichriſtians do now. Thoſe called Tritheits made three gods, as well as three perſons. Auguſtine de hereſi. 66. nameth ſome whom he calleth Coluthiani, whoſe error was, that no evil was from God, even theſe evils whereby he puniſhed profane men, he nameth alſo ſome whom he calleth Floriani, attributing all evil, even that which was ſinful to God. In the matter of diſcipline ſome were too rigid, as the Novatians and Donatiſts, &c. admitting no penitents to church-fellowſhip, who had once given offence, tho' they granted they might receive pardon from God. Others again running to the other extreme did too ſoon, without any evidences of a change, re-admit the ſcandalous, not only to church-communion, but alſo to have truſt, and bear office in the church, the riſe of this is attributed to one Pheliciſſimus, by Baronius, anno. 235. page 481. The like might be inſtanced in many errors, as by comparing the error of Papiſts upon the one hand, giving too

much to works, and Antinomians upon the other hand, giving too little; betwixt prelacy monopolizing government in the perſon of one biſhop, and independency, beſtowing it indifferently upon all the members of the church, and in many ſuch caſes. Theſe are enough to clear the truth of the thing, and to make believers watchful, and to put on the whole armour of God, leſt what one temptation upon one ſide doth not, another may. 6. Conſidering this ſtorm to accompany the church's outward peace, *Obſerve*, That oftentimes the purity of doctrine ſuffereth moſt in the church's outward proſperous condition, ſometimes by the devil's flight, ſometimes by the ſecurity of the church herſelf, becoming ſecure or proud under her external peace.

LECTURE II.

Verſe 2. *And I ſaw another angel aſcending from the eaſt, having the ſeal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the ſea.*
3. *Saying, hurt not the earth, neither the ſea, nor the trees, till we have ſealed the ſervants of our God in their foreheads.*

WE have had ſome little view of that ſad condition, which the church was to be into, by the ſtorm of hereſy from all earths blowing upon her: which ſtorm, we conceive, foretelleth the riſing of the Arian, Macedonian, and other hereſies, eſpecially the riſe and growth of Antichriſt and the church's defection under him, 1. Becauſe theſe winds did immediately ſet upon the church, after her freedom from open perſecution, and ſo falleth in the very ſame time unto which this propheſy belongeth. 2. Becauſe the event, being compared with the propheſy, will be found exceedingly agreeable to it; yea, the ſcope of this, being to ſhew the next great trial of the church after the cloſe of open perſecution, it muſt be underſtood of theſe foreſaid errors and defection, which are the ſecond mean uſed by the devil to undo the church. 3. What we ſaid in the former lecture, clearing the ſcope of this propheſy to be God's guarding of his people againſt that ſtorm which cometh by the trumpets and beaſt, chap. viii. 9. 13. doth alſo confirm this, that the ſtorm here principally meaned, is that defection under Antichriſt, ſeeing this ſeal is particularly to guard againſt it, which cometh with power and lying wonders, 2 Theſſ. ii.

We come now to conſider the conſolation which the Lord giveth unto his people, to guard and comfort them againſt that ſtorm. It hath two parts, as is ſaid. The firſt ſheweth God's care of them before the ſtorm come; the ſecond expreſſeth their happy outgate from it. The firſt is from the ſecond verſe unto the ninth; and the ſecond from the ninth verſe unto the cloſe of the chapter.

The firſt conſolation, is deſcribed in theſe four. 1. The inſtrument of it. 2. His going about it according to his commiſſion. 3. The perſons whom this conſolation concerneth. *Laſtly*, The event is obſerved to be anſwerable to what was intended, all being ſealed who were deſigned to be exempted by God.

1. The inſtrument, verſe 2. He is called *another angel, &c.* He is deſcribed in three. 1. That he is an *angel.* 2. *Aſcending from the eaſt.* 3. From his office or truſt, that he *had the ſeal of the living God.* 1. By *angel*, we underſtand no created angel but Chriſt Jeſus the angel of the covenant, called Michael, chap. xii. For, 1. It is Chriſt who chiefly taketh part with the elect, and provideth ſo that none can pluck his ſheep out of his hands; and with his angels, chap. xii. fighteth againſt the dragon and his. 2. Becauſe the keeping of the ſeal of the living God (as great Lord-keeper or chancellor under him) belonging only to the Mediator. 3. In the words following he crieth authoritatively, and giveth orders to the other angels who were overſeers of the judgment; by which it appeareth to be ſome eminent angel unto whom theſe properties do agree, which is none other but Jeſus Chriſt, though he may have other angels employed under him, as it is chap. xii.

2. He is ſaid to *aſcend from the eaſt:* either alluding unto Chriſt's names of *ſun, light, ſtar, morning*, &c. ſhewing that as all light cometh from the eaſt, ſo all comfort cometh by Chriſt, who

ſeaſonably and refreſhfully manifeſteth his care of his church, as the riſing of the ſun after darkneſs: in which reſpect, Matth. xxiv. 27. Chriſt's coming is ſpoken of as lightning from the eaſt, or it may be in alluſion to that entry of the temple upon the eaſt, by which only the prince was to aſcend, Ezek. xliv. 2, 3. whereby may be ſignified, who this is that cometh into his church in a ſovereign princely way.

3. He is ſaid *to have the ſeal of the living God;* to ſhew his immediate truſt under him, (the keeper of the ſeal among men being next unto the king) whereby he hath abſolute power to exempt from trials or not; which is, upon the matter equivalent to that of his having the keys of the houſe of David committed unto him.

2. His manner of executing of his office, or truſt, is expreſſed in theſe three, 1. In that he is ſaid *to cry with a loud voice unto the four angels, &c.* By which is holden forth, 1. His authority in commanding. 2. The eminency of the hazard that made him cry to have it prevented. 3. Carefulneſs in him to have it for a time reſtrained. The ſecond thing in the execution, is, the parties to whom he crieth, that is *four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the ſea.* By which we may gather, 1. That the commiſſion of theſe angels, was not principally to reſtrain judgment, but to execute it. 2. That there is a power and authority derived from God, even in theſe judgments whereby the earth is hurt. 3. That angels are ſubject to our bleſſed Lord Jeſus, not only in receiving of their commiſſion, but in the execution of it; they cannot act but by orders from him. 4. That he crieth firſt to them and to all of them, ſheweth both his care of his people, when they are not minding their own hazard: he is providing for them; and alſo his wiſdom, in taking the right way in manifeſting of it.

3. There is the matter of his cry, verſe 3. ſaying, *hurt not the earth*, &c. *till we have ſealed*, &c. which words hold forth, 1. Chriſt's great deſign in his coming and ſuſpending this judgment, it is the ſafety of his people. 2. We may ſee his peremptorineſs in ordering all things in reference to that end. This judgment is not ſimply diſcharged; for, afterward it may hurt the earth, but it is ſo bounded and ordered, and that peremptorily as not to blow or hurt till God's people be provided for it, and that they may be keeped from the hurt of it, the reſtriction, until, &c. beareth out this.

3. The objects about which this care is taken, are *the ſervants of our God*, ſo called, not as all creatures are, nor as ſome ſpecial miniſters are, but as ſuch, who, by ſpecial compact and agreement, have given up, and covenanted themſelves to be ſo, and in their converſation carry ſuitably to that engagement. Thus all Iſrael, eſpecially true Iſrael, are called the Lord's ſervants, Levit. xxv. 55. In oppoſition to idolaters who worſhipped other gods, and thus true ſervants are deſcribed by this, that they deſired to fear his name, Neh. i. 11. In oppoſition to hypocrites, who ſay and do not. In ſum, by ſervants are underſtood ſuch as adhere to God in a declining time, and do not enſlave themſelves to Antichriſt with the reſt of the world, as it is, chap. xiii. He ſaith *of our God*, becauſe Chriſt, as Mediator and head of the body, ſtandeth in a joint relation to God with his people, as it is, John xx. 17. *my God, and your God*, &c. which is a ſpecial conſolation unto them, and marked here as a ſpecial privilege.

4. The effect of the execution of his commiſſion, is marked, verſe 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. wherein his faithfulneſs in ſealing of the elect is ſet down, 1. Generally in the number itſelf and of whom they were, verſe 4. 2. More particularly, they are diſtributed in the verſes following. The ſcope of all which, is to ſhew, 1. The exactneſs of this angel's performing of what was intruſted to him. 2. That none miſſed who were in his roll. 3. To ſhew that it were the very perſons deſigned of God, and therefore they are marked here and there of ſeveral tribes, and not indiſtinctly together. That circumſtance, verſe 4. *and I heard the number of them that were ſealed*, is added to ſhew the certainty of John's record, he being, as it were, an ear witneſs thereunto. That we may more particularly take up the meaning of this, we are to enquire, 1. What is meaned by Iſrael, out of whom theſe are ſaid to be marked. 2. What is meaned by the particular diſtribution of them in ſo many tribes, and ſo many thouſands of every tribe; by Iſrael and the tribes thereof, ſometimes in ſcripture are underſtood the Iſraelites who were come of Jacob according to the fleſh; this is the moſt proper and uſual meaning. Sometimes again, by Iſrael is underſtood the church of God under the goſpel, who profeſs the faith of Abraham, of what-

ever nation and people they be of, as Gal. iii. 29. and vi. 16, &c. called Iſrael, 1. Becauſe they are a ſpiritual ſeed to Abraham, who is the Father of all them that believe. 2. Becauſe they are admitted to the ſame eſſential privileges and promiſes which the Iſraelites once had, Rom. xi. 17, 24. They are ingrafted in the ſame olive-tree; and now in Chriſt Jeſus there is neither Jew nor Gentile. 3. It is frequent to ſet forth the worſhip of the New Teſtament under the names of that which belongeth to the Old, and to ſtyle the goſpel-church by the name of Jeruſalem which is above, and therefore it is agreeable to this, that the profeſſors of the New Teſtament ſhould paſs under the title of Iſrael, eſpecially in this propheſy, in which the old titles are ſo frequently applied unto the new ſtate of the church. We conceive, the laſt, viz. the ſpiritual ſeed of Abraham, or the goſpel-church, to be meant here by the tribes of Iſrael, and not Jews by nature only. And that, beſide the former general reaſons, upon theſe three conſiderations.

1. Such are underſtood by Iſrael here, as were to be kept free from Antichriſt's pollution: now theſe are not only Jews, but mainly Gentiles, as the event and time, to which it is applicable, doth evince. 2. If by this ſealed number of a 144000 we are to underſtand all theſe, who during Antichriſt's tyranny, ſhall be kept free of his pollutions, as if they are to be contradiſtinguiſhed from the plurality of the church, who wandereth and goeth a whoring after the beaſt, then they cannot underſtand them to be Jews only, but in the pure part of the church of whatſoever nation they be: but the former is clear, viz. that by theſe are to be underſtood all the pure part of the church, as contradiſtinguiſhed from Antichriſt's followers, as will appear, 1. By comparing the end of their ſealing here with chap. ix. verſe 4. and xiii. verſe 8. for they that are ſealed here are the ſervants of our God, viz. all who adhere to him. 2. The end of their ſealing, is, to keep them from that defection whereinto all others not ſealed are involved, as the effect cleareth. 3. Theſe that are paſſed by, are left open to this ſtorm, and carried away with it; therefore this ſealing muſt take in all the elect during that time, of whatſoever nation they be, ſeeing no elect can be underſtood to be unſealed, and ſo left open to this ſtorm, as is clear, chap. ix. 4. They muſt therefore be underſtood under the name of Iſrael who are thus ſealed: 2. It will further appear by comparing this with chap. xiv. 1, 2, 3, 4. where theſe 144000 are particularly mentioned as the virgin-church, diſtinguiſhed from the adulterous world, and that at the turn of Antichriſt's dominion, as if it were particularly recorded, that notwithſtanding of Antichriſt's tyranny, and the world's defection with him, yet all whom God had appointed to life, were kept from that defection; and therefore this number muſt comprehend all ſuch (being a definite for an indefinite) who during his tyranny ſhould be kept free; and therefore it is not to be aſtricted unto the natural Jews. 3. The diſtinguiſhing of Jews here from that innumerable company, verſe 9. of all nations, doth clear this; for they are diſtinguiſhed, not in reſpect of nation or kindred, as if by each of them were ſet forth ſome part of the goſpel-church, cotemporary one with the other, but in reſpect of divers ſucceſſive ſtates of the church, belonging to divers times, as that however the goſpel-church immediately after the Chriſtian religion ſhall obtain liberty and authority, ſhall be brought unto great ſtraits, and reduced to a few number (as God's church was in the days of the Old Teſtament) yet it ſhall afterward break forth and flouriſh among all nations, ſo that the church in the latter days ſhall be as far extended for number and diverſity of people, beyond what the church ſhall be under Antichriſt, as the goſpel-church was at its firſt ſpreading, extended beyond the church of the Jews: and therefore the whole pure profeſſors of the church, during this ſtorm, being comprehended under theſe that are ſealed out of the ſeveral tribes, it cannot be aſtricted unto the natural Jews.

That this compariſon and oppoſition of Jews with Gentiles, or the ſmaller number with the greater doth belong to ſeveral ſtates of the church, will appear by this, that theſe ſealed ones are living in the time of a ſtorm and great tribulation, and while as pure profeſſion, and profeſſors of Jeſus Chriſt, are exceeding rare, as the ſcope here, and the places formerly cited, chap. ix. 13, 14. do clear. That innumerable company again, are remarkable for their number, and are ſaid to have come out of great tribulation, as if now the ſtorm were paſt, as victors and conquerors having palms in their hands. This innumerable company therefore muſt denote a following outgate of the former ſtorm; and ſo by each of them, ſome conditi-

on of the whole gospel-church, and not of Jews or Gentiles severally, is typified.

The second thing to be cleared is, wherefore the number is so peremptorily determined, and particularly distributed in several tribes. *Ans.* 1. By what is said, it may be seen, that this definite number is indefinitely to be understood, not as if they were just so many in all, or in every tribe alike. But, 2. For these reasons, 1. To shew that they were particularly determined by God, and known to him. 2. That though the defection was universal and great, yet there should be a considerable number reserved, as was of 7000 in Elijah's days. That yet in comparison of the whole world that was to follow the beast, that number was to be very small, as it is said in Isaiah, *Though the number of Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet but a remnant shall be saved.*

More particularly, this number is proportioned amongst the tribes, to shew, 1. That God not only numbereth them in gross and in common together, but hath the very particular and individual persons, who are constituent of that number, marked and determined, to say so, both *numero numerante & numero numerato.* 2. To shew God's sovereignty and good pleasure, in choosing some of every kindred and tribe, and his care in providing for them whom he hath chosen, of whatsoever tribe they be.

Observe, 1. That error oftentimes bringeth the church; yea, the saints in the greatest hazards. What maketh Christ cry so, and maketh all this business? It is to mark the elect, which supposeth them to be in great hazard: yea, that, Matth. xxiv. 24. *If it were possible, the very elect should be deceived*, sheweth it cometh near the march, even as near as possible; yea, often there is more fear and hazard to the elect, their spiritual estate by error, than there is by persecution; yea, by gross sins and temptations to them, as murder, adultery, &c. And more are taken off their feet by the one than by the other, because it cometh under some pretext of holiness and piety; in which respect it is said *the devil*, in this temptation, *transformeth himself into an angel of light*, 2 Cor. xi. believers had need to be watchful against all evils, but in a special manner against this; it is no little difficulty, in a corrupt time, to stand it out. *Obs.* 2. The greater the danger be, Christ hath the greater care. This maketh him cry and come down, whereas no such particular act of his marked when the church was suffering, chap. vi. he had rather keep them from sin than suffering; yea, often error hurteth more than suffering doth. More particularly, *Obs.*

1. Christ is the great overseer of what concerneth his people; none can hurt, but as he giveth orders; all that executeth judgment, are in a dependency on him: which is a great consolation to his people. 2. He is never so angry at an ungrate world as to forget one elect; in the midst of this storm, he remembreth them. So God had respect to one Noah in the world, and to Lot in Sodom; they could do nothing who were to execute that judgment, till he was set free. 3. God hath some elect, and a church under the greatest defection, even seven thousand, when Elijah thinking there is not one, which should make us warry in censuring times and places to be altogether ungodly. 4. No elect shall be finally seduced; that is not possible, Matth. xxiv. 5. That impossibility of final seduction dependeth not on themselves, but on God's decree and care of sealing them, and preserving them from it, which maketh it true alway, Rom. xi. 7. *the election hath obtained*, and none but they, for *the rest were blinded.* 6. If it be asked, why these sealed ones, who are the elect, are called servants of our God? I answer, It is a description of the elect from their holiness, a fruit and effect of their election; and to clear it, there is a twofold seal, 2 Tim. ii. 19. one known to God, *he knoweth who are by his decree.* The other is the fruit and evidence of the former, and in these come to age, never separated, *Let them who name the Lord depart from iniquity.* In this last respect, they are called servants of God, for these reasons, which are so many grounds of doctrine.

1. That wherever election is, there is, or will be, holiness and obedience, as a fruit of it; holiness and obedience is a proof of election as to men, or to one's own conscience; they are of equal extent. Hence, Eph. i. 4. we are elected to be holy: let not these things that God enjoineth be separated. 2. None but these who are servants to God in some real manner, can promise to themselves any benefit of election, or freedom from any plague, and especially from this plague, Ezek. ix. these are marked only who were mourning for the abominations of the rest, and keeping themselves free. Losing a good conscience maketh shipwreck of the faith, 1 Tim. i. 19. Let none plead for any

benefit of election whatsoever without this. 3. All that, in some measure, honour and obey God, are keeped from evil, and may promise to themselves immunity, as far as is requisite, when others cannot; 2 Tim. ii. 21. *If a man purge himself from these things, he shall be a vessel of honour, reserved for the Master's use.* 4. Holiness hath many advantages; it is the best guard against errors, to receive the truth in love: it hath often an outward protection, as in Lot, Noah, &c. Psal. xxxiv. *The angels pitch their tents about them. Obs.* 5. Christ and we have but one God, John xx. 17. *I ascend to your Father, and my Father, and to my God, and your God. Lastly*, God hath still a care of his servants. The sum of all this is, if Christ's care be much worth to souls, and it be advantage to have it, be stirred up to holiness as ye would be sure of it: and, as ye would be keeped free from the sins and judgment of the time, and have peace in yourselves, be servants of our God, and give up yourselves to him.

LECTURE III.

Ver. 4. *And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.*

5. *Of the tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.*

6. *Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Naphtalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.*

7. *Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.*

8. *Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.*

THE fourth verse containeth the particular number of these that were sealed, a certain number in both the reckonings for an uncertain. The scope of it is the more effectually to bear out the consolation for strengthening the faith of God's people by such a particular numeration. 1. It is summed, ver. 4. whereof is spoken before. 2. It is distributed amongst the tribes, ver. 5, 6, 7, 8.

The scope of the distribution, beside what is said, is by continuing the matter of speech, used under the Old Testament, of Israel, tribes, Jerusalem, &c. to hold forth the Gentiles privilege of being ingrafted in the Jews room, and that God kept the same way with them as with Israel, having admitted them to that same covenant.

It will not be meet, nor needful, to enquire after mysteries in the number or names; It is like, the Lord giveth his church the title of Israel, followeth the reckoning of twelve tribes, and multiplieth that by twelves, which cometh in whole to that number one hundred forty and four thousand. We shall only touch these things as considerable: 1. That in the order, the age is not kept, and the children of the bond and free woman are promiscuously named, to let us see, that in Christ Jesus there are neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free; and that external privileges are of no value, Gal. iii. 28. 2. Judah is preferred and first named, and Reuben, though the first-born, passed by, 1. To shew that relation to Christ, who was of the tribe of Judah, and of whom David was, casteth the balance as is the main privilege. 2. Reuben lost his birth-right by defiling his father's bed, and Simeon, by his killing the Sichemites: whence it is clear, that guiltiness cutteth men off from privileges, and hath a broad and long tail of curses for a long continuance, Gen. xlix. 3, 4. 3. Neither Dan nor Ephraim are mentioned, but for Ephraim Joseph is named; Dan is also omitted, 2 Chron. i. 3, 4. when all the other tribes are reckoned in their genealogies; so also Ephraim and Manasseh, in Deut. xxxiii. It would seem for these reasons; (for that conceit of omitting Dan here, because Antichrist is to come of him, is a groundless fable, and rejected by Bellar. lib. 3. de Pontif. cap. 12. who then expoundeth the scriptures ordinarily alledged, for proving that in a different sense:) 1. To shew God's sovereignty, manifesting itself, especially in his passing by some of mankind, and reckoning others in his roll, no less guilty. 2. To conform the number to the

ordinary reckoning of Iſrael by twelve tribes and no more, wherefore ſtill one is omitted in the former reckonings. This number had not been keeped, if Dan had been numbered when Levi alſo is mentioned. 3. Dan was ſoon overtaken with idolatry, ſo was Ephraim, Judges i. 18. therefore not meet to be mentioned among theſe, or as types of theſe who were to be keeped clean from that ſin. 4. Levi is mentioned here, though not in the dividing of the land of Canaan; to ſhew, that tho' God allow not much temporal eſtate on his miniſters, yet will he not prejudge them of his protection under ſtraits, either ſpiritual or temporal, nor of the victory over them.

Theſe are all who are ſealed of the numberleſs multitude; and this equal number amongſt the tribes is not underſtood, as if all were equal in reſpect of the effect; but, 1. To ſhew it is indifferent to God to take of this or that nation now, as there was to him no difference amongſt the tribes of Iſrael. 2. That there is need of a ſpecial and particular care, and that he conformeth his care ſo, not in groſs and common, but particularly taking notice of them in a definite ſum. Hence obſerve,

1. From the complexneſs of this ſealing and number, and from the name that theſe ſealed ones getteth, viz. that they are called the tribes of Iſrael, that believers, under the New Teſtament, are God's Iſrael, ingrafted in their room, and ſerved heirs to all their eſſential privileges and promiſes, and heirs of Abraham, as believers were under the Old Teſtament; whatever typical promiſes were peculiar to that people, we are not to claim, yet, certainly theſe privileges or promiſes that belonged to their eternal well-being, or were neceſſary to their ſpiritual growth and happineſs here, believers under the New Teſtament are ſerved heirs thereunto, Gal. iii. 29. *If ye be Chriſt's, then are ye Abraham's ſeed, and heirs according to the promiſe.* *Obſ.* 2. Folks may be partakers of many outward privileges, and yet theſe not ſecure them from an approaching plague, if they be not partakers of ſpiritual privileges beſide. Iſrael were all God's people and children; to them pertained the adoption and covenants in reſpect of external adminiſtration; and ſo it was with the church of the Gentiles which ſucceeded: but, Rom. ix. 6. *They are not all Iſrael, who are of Iſrael;* neither becauſe they are the ſeed of Abraham are they all children, neither is he a Jew who is one outwardly. *Obſ.* 3. That Chriſt's care is very ſpecial of his elect, wherever they are he taketh notice of them, in all their difficulties he hath a ſpecial and peculiar eye over them, he doth not gather them by heaps, but one by one, Iſa. xxvii. 12. not by gueſs, but by ſpecial deſignation, he ſeeth to their preſervation, John x. 3. *He calleth his ſheep by name, and leadeth them out:* the moſt inconſiderable of them are provided for, and ſheltered from this ſtorm. This is much for the conſolation of believers, and it is the very end why this numbering and ſealing is ſet down here, to tell that not only Chriſt hath a care of all believers in general, but of every one of them in particular. *Obſerve* 4. That ſealing and defending againſt declining of defection in error, is no common privilege; they are marked here one and there one, who are made partakers of it, a few of ſome tribes, and of ſome none, to ſhew the ſingularity of this mercy, and to point, as at our Lord's care, ſo alſo at his ſovereignty who pitched upon whom he will, to preſerve from the trials of the time: it is not becauſe they are better than others, but their through-bearing lieth in his purpoſe about them, and his ſealing, diſcerning and differencing of them from others. *Laſtly*, There are but very few, conſidering the multitude that periſheth, that ſhall be keeped free and ſaved in ſuch a trial: it will be a rare thing to ſtand, when the ſtorm of error bloweth; many ſhall follow the pernicious ways of falſe teachers, 2 Pet. ii. 1, &c. If it were poſſible the elect ſhould be ſeduced, Rev. xiii. The world wondereth after the beaſt, ſo that it concerneth us to be humble, watchful, and on our guard, that we be not led away with the error of the wicked.

LECTURE IV.

Verſe 9. *After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds, and people, and tongues ſtand before the throne, and before the Lamb, cloathed with white robes, and palms in their hands.*

10. *And cried with a loud voice, ſaying, ſalvation to our God which ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*

THE Lord, having deſcribed to John and diſcovered to him, in the beginning of the chapter, the hazard the church was in by a coming ſtorm, he layeth two grounds for confirming the faith of his people. The firſt, is, the care of the elect under that ſtorm, to ver. 9. The ſecond, is, the happy eſtate the church ſhould be in after that ſtorm ſhould be over.

For clearing the meaning of this part of the chapter, we are to enquire in theſe particulars, 1. Who are to be underſtood by theſe that are here mentioned and left innumerable? 2. To what time it relateth, or what ſtate of the church, whether militant or triumphant? 3. What is the ſcope of it, and the reaſon of ſetting it down in ſuch expreſſions? Then we ſhall particularly open the words, which have two parts, 1. What generally John of himſelf ſaw and heard concerning the happy and comfortable ſtate of that great company, to verſe 13. 2. What further was taught him by one of the elders, inviting him to enquire further concerning them.

For the firſt, what this company, that have palms in their hands, is? We ſay, 1. They differ from the hundred forty and four thouſand mentioned before. 1. In number, being more than they. 2. In extent, their reckoning was out of tribes, as it were, of one kingdom; theſe are out of all nations, kindreds, &c. 3. In reſpect of poſture or place, the hundred forty and four thouſand are ſealed ones on the earth, ſecret and hid; this company is ſeen openly profeſſing, ſtanding before the throne, and it is not ſaid of them, they were marked. 4. The former are ſealed for a coming ſtorm, to ſhew the danger they were to be in, and as having no commerce with others. Therefore it is ſaid, chap. xiv. 3. *No man could learn their ſong but themſelves.* This great company have palms in their hands, as an open ſign of victory; therefore are they ſaid, ver. 14. *To be come out of great tribulation*, and their ſong is public, with a loud voice Beſide, that by that tranſition. *After theſe things I ſaw*, is particularly holden forth a different company, to repreſent a different thing, relating to a ſubſequent ſtate of the church, in reſpect of its numerouſneſs and proſperity, oppoſite to the former.

This company then being different from the ſealed ones ſpoken of before, we ſay, they belong not to that time, but they follow it. Which appeareth. 1. By that tranſition, (as we hinted at before) *After theſe things, I ſaw*, importing not only an order in what he ſaw as to his ſeeing, but as to the things ſeen, that is, after a ſealed company ſucceeded a great innumerable company, for liberty and publickneſs of profeſſion, not needing to be ſealed. 2. They are come out of great tribulation, ver. 14. but the former ſealed ones were under it. The ſealed ones were ſtrivers; theſe are victors, therefore muſt ſucceed them, as victory doth to fighting. 3. More particularly, by theſe ſealed ones, are underſtood the hundred forty and four thouſand mentioned, chap. xiv. 1, 2. Which belongeth unto, and is cotemporary with the propheſy of the trumpets, as appeareth by chap. ix. 4. and xiii. 8. and xiv. 3, 4. But this by innmuerable company, we conceive, are to be underſtood the ſame who ſtand on the ſea of glaſs, having gotten victory over the beaſt, having harps in their hands, chap. xv. 1, 2. The properties, exerciſe and caſe agree to both; which number, are after the everlaſting goſpel is preached through the earth, chap. xiv. ver. 9. and the cry of Babylon's begun ruin is proclaimed, and ſo belongeth to the propheſy of the vials.

Out of all which, then, we conceive, that here is hinted at, and held forth the increaſe and liberty of the church after the darkneſs of Antichriſt ſhall be over, and the goſpel of new, as it were, ſent through the earth, ſaints then ſhall be innumerable, and full victors and conquerors, in compariſon of their paucity and reſtraint, under Antichriſt's growth and height.

The ſecond queſtion, is, to what time or ſtate of the church it relateth? *Anſ.* For the time, it is ſignified before to belong to the vials, which hold forth the enemies ruin and the church's

riſing, yet, becauſe there are three ſteps or degrees of the church's victory, 1. From Antichriſt's begun ruin, till by degrees it be fully conſummated. 2. From his ruin to the end of the world, in the church's trials with Gog and Magog, &c. 3. The church's entry into the new Jeruſalem. All which degrees are begun, continued, and perfected under the vials. It may be aſked, to which of theſe degrees, or if to all of them, this belongeth? We think indeed it looketh to all theſe, holding forth the happineſs of God's people in their victory over Antichriſt, and in their outgate from theſe troubles and trials, ſhewing how happy they ſhould be when theſe ſtorms ſhould be over, which in part is begun here; but leaveth them not till it put them in heaven and glory there. 1. Becauſe that compleateth their victory; and victories here are but parts, types, and earneſts of their victory there. 2. Becauſe that victory is the main and common conſolation of all fighters; and ſo ſuiteth well and beſt with the ſcope, as taking in all. 3. Becauſe all thoſe ſteps of victories belong to the vials, and are one continued and purſued victory from its beginning to its cloſe. Neither, ſecondly, do we exclude, but include the church's happy and flouriſhing condition on earth, not only for the former reaſon, whereby it is clear they cannot be ſeparated; but alſo becauſe of its ſcope, which is to ſhew the church's eſtate here in time; and the other characters of its being ſubſequent immediately to the ſealed company, as ſucceeding to them, as alſo its being cotemporary with the vials in their riſe and progreſs, confirm this.

For the third queſtion, What is the reaſon that the temporal and flouriſhing condition of the church militant, is ſet down under ſuch noble expreſſions as agree to the church triumphant? *Anſ.* 1. Becauſe it is one continued victory, the begun happineſs and flouriſhing condition of the church, and their happy condition in glory hereafter being divided in ſo many parts, and heaven is the laſt, longeſt, and fulleſt part of it. 2. Becauſe it is ordinary in this book to deſcribe and ſtile the church militant, by heaven; and the beauty and glory of the church by that of heaven; the happineſs of the church here, by the happineſs of heaven hereafter, 3. The expreſſions of the prophets ſpeaking of the goſpel's flouriſhing, or of a flouriſhing eſtate of the Jewiſh church after the captivity, are thus large, as Iſa. xxv. 8. and xxxv. 10. and xlvii. 10. and li. 11. which expreſſions may be borrowed, as many other, from the prophets in this book; and are both to ſet forth the excellent eſtate of the church in itſelf, during that time, and alſo being compared with its former obſcure condition, it is like heaven in reſpect of what it was. 4. The outward judgment on perſecutors, chap. vi. was deſcribed by hell and the laſt judgment, the one being to them the beginning of the other: ſo, upon the contrary, this happy eſtate of the church is deſcribed by heaven, in oppoſition thereto, as is ſuitable.

More particularly the words hold out the begun happineſs of the church here, after Antichriſt's begun fall, and her growing in that happy condition, never to be ſo darkened again as formerly, till it be perfected in heaven. The conſolation hath two parts, as we ſhewed before, 1. What John ſaw and heard, from verſe 9. to 13. 2. A more particular explication of the former, from verſe 13. to the end.

The general deſcription of what John ſaw and heard, hath two parts, ſuitable to chap. iv. and v. One is of the redeemed church preceding. The ſecond is of the angels going alongſt with them. The former, ver. 9, 10. to the latter, ver. 11, 12.

The firſt of them is ſet out in theſe circumſtances, 1. In the order as they ſtand, *After this I beheld, and lo a great multitude*, to put difference betwixt one thing and another in time, yet immediately following it: the meaning is, when the former ſtrait of the church was over, and the hidden ones keeped ſecret under God's ſtamp, I ſaw a great multitude come out, and publicly avow and profeſs Chriſt's goſpel. 2. They are deſcribed by their number, *it was great and innumerable*, not to God, who hath them all written by name in his book; known to him are all from the beginning. 2 Tim. ii. *The Lord knoweth who are his.* But, 1. It was a *great multitude* in itſelf *that no man could number*, as the ſtars and ſand of the ſea are called innumerable and Abraham's ſeed. 2. Comparatively, or in compariſon of the little number that was before under Antichriſt's dominion; that might have been within men's reckoning, but this was hugely beyond it. 3. They are deſcribed from their extent, of *all nations, kindreds*, &c. in oppoſition to the former paucity of tribes, which might be in one kingdom when the church was ſhut up, now there ſhall be an enlargement as obſervable, as at the goſpel's firſt ſpreading, to point at the ſpreading that the riſe of the goſpel ſhould have after

Antichriſt's begun ruin, it ſhould be ſuch as was after Chriſt's aſcenſion. 4. They are deſcribed from the place where, and the poſture wherein, they ſtood, they are *before the throne of God*, and they ſtand there. 1. *Before the throne*, that is, in the church; here they are brought in, that were ſtrangers before, and in heaven they ſhall be compleated hereafter: for we underſtand the *throne* here, as chap. iv. as repreſenting either the place of glory, or God's favourable preſence to his church. 2. They *ſtand* there: which pointeth at two things, *Firſt*, Their dependance on God and Chriſt; they ſtand as ſervants attending their maſter, as ver. 15. preſenting themſelves before him after their victories. *Secondly*, Their public owning and acknowledging of him for their victory and liberty. *Thirdly*, They ſtand *in white robes, and palms in their hands: with white robes*, a ſign of glory, chapter iii. 4. and a ſign of innocency, chap. xiv. 4. and victory, xix. 8. having a more beautiful luſtre upon them than before; with *palms in their hands*, a ſign of victory and joy in a full meaſure, ſuitable to theſe who had gotten their heads above all difficulties, Matth. xxi. 8. 5. They are deſcribed from their work and exerciſe, which is ſet down, ver. 10. in the matter and the manner. 1. In the manner, they *cry out with a loud voice;* to ſhew, 1. The reaſon they had to bleſs him. 2. The good will and heartineſs they had to do it. 3. The publicneſs of their profeſſion, and the ſpreading of it, whereas the ſong of the hundred forty and four thouſand was ſecret; none could learn their ſong, chap. xiv. This is public and avowed, they care not who hear their ſong. 2. The matter of their ſong is in few words, but very material. In general, it is to aſcribe to God the glory of their victory, as to the author of it, and to Chriſt as Mediator, as the great mean and procurer of it. It taketh in the riſe, progreſs, and perfecting of their happineſs, ſpiritual and temporal, it is all ſalvation, and ſalvation from all things that may hurt his people. More particularly, this ſalvation is aſcribed to God, as the fountain and efficient cauſe, in whoſe counſel the work of ſalvation bred, and was concluded; and it is aſcribed to Chriſt, as the meritorious cauſe and procurer of it. To point out, 1. That their ſalvation is in him, and belongeth to him. 2. That their ſalvation is no where elſe to be gotten, Iſa. xliii. 1. and 21. appropriateth it to God, ſo as it excludeth all others. 3. It is an attributing not only ſalvation in the general to God, but this ſame particular delivery from Antichriſt's ſin, ſnares, his idols and ignorance, Pſal. iii. 8. 4. It is the giving or aſcribing the glory to himſelf alone, and ſo an acknowledging of the freeneſs of it, that it was for no deſerving or worth in them.

5. Chriſt is joined with God, becauſe all grace and ſalvation is given in him, and for him to the church, he is not miſknown in the adminiſtration of grace, therefore neither ſhould he be in his peoples thankſgiving. 6. His ſalvation is mainly, as he is a Saviour to ſave from ſin, Mat. i. 21. Therefore this loud cry, in uttering and attributing *ſalvation* only *to God* and *to the Lamb*, is not in reſpect of the outward delivery alone, but in reſpect of the doctrine of juſtification, which was before obſcured and divided amongſt many merits and mediators: now it is vindicated, and they publicly and openly confeſs it, and aſcribe it to God only, as the fountain and efficient cauſe; and to Chriſt alone, as the meritorious, laying the weight and the honour of their eternal ſalvation on God and Chriſt alone, without parting them among any other, or mixing in merit, purgatory, pennance or any other thing of that kind, as formerly had been done.

This then is the firſt part of this general deſcription, which is John's deſcribing the happy condition of the redeemed church; or, our Lord, to ſtrengthen the faith of his people, revealeth the happy outgate ere ever the ſtorm come on. Hence obſerve,

1. The moſt ſad and foreſt ſtorms of the church and people of God, have a reſt and a victory at the back of them: The moſt ſad eſtate of the church, has a happy and glorious victory following it. There was a ſtorm ſpoken of before, and what a glorious outgate is here! This is a truth that holdeth good, whether we expound the words of their temporal or eternal ſalvation, it is a comfortable concluſion laid for the comfort of God's people, and fully proven, Heb. iv. 9. *That there remaineth therefore a reſt to the people of God;* and let it be fixed in us, the beſt eſtate of God's people is ever hindmoſt; their laſt eſtate is their beſt, juſt contrary to that the wicked have to expect: when the temporal happineſs of the wicked ſhall turn in a curſe, then fighting and weeping ſhall paſs away from the people of God. 2. God's propoſing this outgate before-hand for their comfort, ſheweth, that there is no ſolid way

to bear a trial well without the faith of the outgate, and that the eyeing of the outgate of a ſtorm, while folks are under it, or their thinking on the happy eſtate that followeth difficulties, is the beſt way to moderate one under difficulties; therefore when the Lord threatned the captivity, he gave them many promiſes in Iſaiah concerning their return from it, ere it came on, to arm and guard the faith of his people from ſinking under it. This ſuſtained alſo Moſes, Heb. xi. 25. and Paul, 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. There is an amiable ſight beyond all ſtraits, if we would by the right proſpect view them. 3. Heaven and glory is the compleat outgate of believers trials, and ſhould be believers main conſolation while they are under trials; for though the temporal happineſs of the church be holden out here, we ſeclude not, but include (as we ſhew in the expoſition) their happineſs in heaven, where their victory is perfected: if in this life only we had hope, of all men we are the moſt miſerable. 4. Heaven and glory muſt be an excellent thing, a very happy ſatisfying comfortable condition; a brave life.

1. The moſt excellent company, God and the Lamb, the congregation of the firſt-born. 2. An excellent place, before the throne, beholding his glory and ſharing of it; and if a place in heaven be more glorious, this is it. 3. Though many angels and ſaints be with them, yet they are mainly taken up with beholding God, ſhining in the Lamb. 4. Their adorning and ornament, they are always walking in white; pure, clean, and conſtantly victorious; their vile bodies may conform to the glorious body of Chriſt. 5. They have palms in their hands, triumphing and rejoicing. 6. Their work and taſk is always to be ſinging; the ſong of free grace maketh heaven ring; and they weary not in it, but are always praiſing God, as there is always ground; by praiſing, enjoying; and by enjoying, praiſing him: if ye would have a happy life, is there any life like this? Better ſtand here and look on, than ſit on the thrones of the world. Look if ye have the faith of enjoying it. Is there not a poſſibility of it? Or, think ye all this is ſpoken for nought? No, believe it, they are the true and faithful ſayings of God; John's teſtimony is, that he ſaw it in the Spirit, and it is left on record to the church for confirmation of her faith, and if there be not a happineſs beyond it, nor comparable to it, chooſe it; it were begun happineſs to be brought this length. There are many of you who hear me that will miſs this brave life; if God help you not to ſtand before him here, and here to begin your ſong, you will not ſtand nor ſing before him hereafter; and a woful miſs will it be. 5. Folks in heaven are not ſilent; as many as are praiſing; dumb Chriſtians are not heaven-like, *They that dwell in thy houſe will be ſtill praiſing thee*, and it is a part of their bleſſedneſs ſo to be exerciſed. Pſal. lxxxiv. as the ſaints enjoy God, ſo they praiſe him; they ſpeak to his praiſe, and honour him in their converſation, they have good matter of a ſong, and good-will to ſing; and it is an ill token when folks preſume to come to heaven, and yet have no good-will to honour God here. 6. As this company repreſenteth the church militant. *Obſerve*, That the enlargement of the church, and its thriving, even in external profeſſion, is a beautiful ſight. To ſee a church, 1. In doctrine pure. 2. In the number of profeſſors many. And, 3. Public in their liberty and boldneſs. And, 4. In their authority weighty; it is like the company of two armies, and that with banners, to ſee many profeſſors and a ſuitableneſs in their practice, pure doctrine, and pure ordinances, powerful and fruitful: though folks call them forms, there is much of God's beauty that ſhineth in them; and if it be a beautiful ſight to ſee a church thriving in purity of doctrine and ordinances, and diſcipline in order and decency, it ſhould be as ſad a ſight to ſee the carved work pulled down, Antichriſtian darkneſs, or that which is no better, coming in, and confuſion inſtead of order; as the one ſhould refreſh us, the other ſhould weight us. 7. A flouriſhing condition of the church for number and liberty in profeſſion often go together, as we may ſee by comparing this eſtate under the vials with the former. The one is the ordinary mean of engaging men to the other, and the marriage of the one cannot but marr the other. 8. From the matter of the ſong, it telleth us what is to be gotten in God and Chriſt, even compleat ſalvation of all ſorts, and from all fears and dangers. Needeth any believer then to fear, ſeeing God and the Lamb have ſalvation? Salvation belongeth not to armies of men, to men of high place and power, nor to men of riches, wit, and policy, but to God; it is his peculiar property and prerogative; and what leſs then have God's people at one time nor at ano-

other, ſince he hath ſalvation at command? and he can give it commiſſion when he will, and when he commiſſionateth it, it will come, Pſal. lxviii. 20. *Our God is the God of ſalvation:* ſalvation holdeth of him, and to whom but to him belongeth the iſſues from death? Let none then aſcribe it to any other, nor ſeek it elſewhere, nor let any be diſcouraged, when they deſire it, it is in a good hand, Iſaiah xliii. 11. He will not give his glory to another; he beſtoweth it, and the Lamb purchaſeth it. 2. Let it comfort God's people in an anxious time. The faith of God's having ſalvation in his hand, may guard the heart and keep from much perplexing anxiety that folks are put to under difficulties, Pſal. iii. 8. *Salvation belongeth to the Lord, thy bleſſing is upon thy people.* 9. *Salvation to our God and to the Lamb:* they aſcribe it to him, that hold it of him, *Obſerve*, That nothing is more heaven-like, than a humble holding of ſalvation of God, and aſcribing to him the glory of it. This is heavens's ſong, heaven is full of it, to denude ourſelves, and hold all of free grace, to aſcribe ſalvation freely to God and to the Lamb. And as this becometh glory well, ſo it glorifieth God, while folks are labouring under a body of death, to ſay, it is not to them, but to him, that the glory of their ſalvation belongeth; to waſh their hands of any good given them, or that they may expect to acknowledge his freedom in that which they are to get, as well as his riches in that which they have gotten, this is the likeſt life to heaven, to be ſtill praiſing free grace. 10. Heaven, and the ſong that will be in heaven, may comfort God's people, even in time, under theſe difficulties they meet with here; the hope of what is coming, may allay, and only can allay the bitterneſs of what is preſent.

LECTURE V.

Ver. 11. *And all the angels ſtood round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four beaſts, and fell before the throne on their faces and worſhipped God.*

12. *Saying, Amen: bleſſing and glory, and wiſdom, and thankſgiving, and honour and power, and might be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.*

13. *And one of the elders anſwered, ſaying unto me, what are theſe which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?*

14. *And I ſaid unto him, ſir, thou knoweſt.*——

WE told you that the ſcope of the Spirit in theſe words, is, to give a little glimpſe of the glorious out-gate the church of Chriſt ſhould have after the ſtorms of Antichriſt, and theſe corrupt teachers that were coming to lay the church low. This out-gate is, 2. Generally repreſented to John from verſe 9. to verſe 13. and then more particularly explicated by an elder to John, from ver. 13. to the end.

The firſt hath two parts: the firſt whereof, is, the repreſentation of the redeemed church, ſtanding before the throne with the white robes, and palms in their hands, and a ſweet ſong in their mouth, whereof we have ſpoken. In the 11th and 12th ver. there is a further enlargement and explication of that glorious eſtate of the church, and the ſaints happineſs, by bringing in *all the angels*, admiring God's goodneſs to his church, and taking a ſhare of the ſong of praiſes with them, it being ſuch a glorious piece of work, as would ſerve not only all the ſaints, but angels alſo: So then in theſe two verſes, is ſet down the angels approbation of, and concurrence with the redeemed church.

The ſcope of it, is, to ſhew, 1. The harmony that is among ſaints and angels in their praiſing God. 2. To ſhew how excellent and glorious a ground of praiſe, a flouriſhing and victorious eſtate of the church, hath in it; and that by it God giveth evidences of his glory to angels, principalities, and powers, &c. Eph. iii. 10. 3. To ſhew, that angel's delight in the church's flouriſhing, and in the thriving of the goſpel. Luke xv. 7. there is joy in heaven at the convertion of a ſinner: ſo here by holding forth the in-coming of many ſinners, and the ſpreading of the light of the goſpel, all the angels are made chearful at the news of it. 4. To ſhew the excellency of the thing; the exceeding greatneſs of the glory of God, and the excellency of the work of praiſe, it will and doth take up angels to go about it, it is a work becoming even them. The

glorious condition abiding the church, ſhall furniſh all the angels in heaven matter of praiſe; and the hope of ſuch a glorious out-gate, might exceedingly comfort John and others, who were to live under thoſe difficulties.

More particularly, this company of angels is ſet out, 1. In their poſture, *They ſtand;* and they are ſet out in the ſame poſture, chap. v. The reaſon of their ſtanding, is, to ſhew not only their reverencing of God, but their great dependence on God, as ſervants waiting for direction from him, and their readineſs to obey what orders he giveth them. It ſignifieth alſo their privilege to ſtand there, Deut. x. 8. 2. They are ſet out in the place where they ſtand; *It was about the throne, elders and beaſts*, as we ſhew, chap. v. to ſignify the end of their ſervice; it is to watch over the church that is between God's throne and them, they are without as a guard and wall to the redeemed church; they are *miniſtring ſpirits, all of them, for the heirs of ſalvation*, Heb. i. 14. Therefore it is ſaid, *All the angels;* they ſurround the throne and the church, keeping them in, and keeping out from them any thing that may annoy them; and conſequently, they are round about the innumerable multitude mentioned before, ver. 9. who were before the throne: yea, it would appear that theſe, being here omitted, (though that be their place, and elders and beaſts, mentioned to ſtand there where formerly they ſtood) muſt be comprehended under the elders or beaſts, ſeeing the place and guard is all one, and the diſtinction that is put between them, is but a difference of the whole catholic church, ſignified by the elders, from ſuch a particular company brought through Antichriſt's tribulation, verſe 14, and 15. and at ſuch a time, and in ſuch a caſe as a part of the whole; and, in theſe reſpects, diſtinguiſhed from the whole, which ſtrengtheneth the expoſition we gave before of theſe elders repreſenting the church of God; for probably they had not been omitted, if they had been a party diſtinct from the church, otherwiſe than a part is from the whole: neither can any other reaſon be given, why theſe elders do not join in praiſe with the church or angels, as chap. iv. and v. &c. when the praiſe is ſo ſolemn, but becauſe their joining, or praiſe, was formerly expreſſed by the company mentioned, ver. 9, 10. For it is not to be imagined they were now ſilent at ſuch an occaſion. 3. They are ſet out in their worſhipping, or *falling on their faces;* which is to be ſpiritually underſtood, ſeeing angels have no bodies, and cannot be properly ſaid to fall on their faces. It is to ſignify their acknowledgment of the exceeding great diſtance between God and them, the moſt holy creatures, and the reverence due from them to him, as Iſa. vi. they are ſaid to cover their faces with wings, becauſe of the adorable holineſs of God, to which even they wanted a proportionableneſs; ſo here they are ſaid *to fall on their faces*, to ſhew the exceeding great diſtance that is between the majeſty of God, and the moſt excellent creatures. 2. To acknowledge the greatneſs of the work they had in hand, viz. the praiſing of God for the enlargement of the church. 4. They are deſcribed in reſpect of their ſong, which is ſet down, ver. 12. wherein we have three things conſiderable; or, which we are to conſider in three reſpects, 1. In reſpect of the matter, expreſſed in ſeven words, *Bleſſing, honour, glory*, &c. like the matter of the ſong, chap. v. all to one purpoſe. 2. In reſpect of its object. 3. In reſpect of its manner.

To ſhew, 1. that words are wanting, and cannot be gotten, even by angels in heaven, to expreſs the glory due to God; they are ſwallowed up with it, it goeth beyond their conception and expreſſion; for it over-reacheth all created expreſſions and apprehenſions ſo far, that it is no marvel it do ſo here. 2. To ſhew, that whatever is glorious, or a ground of thankſgiving, or the object of praiſe, or the ſubject of commendation, it is in him, and in him alone, and to be attributed to him with all humility by the moſt glorious creatures; it is in him, and not in them, a conſideration, 1. Exceedingly upſtirring to praiſe and admire him. 2. To cry down compariſon all other things, as weak and empty. 3. Comfortable to God's people, who have all theſe things in him alone. There is no ground of praiſe imaginable, nor any thing which might have laid, or may lay, any obligation on a creature to God, as having obtained a good turn, but that is in God, and may be expected from him. 4. To ſhew our duty both in dependence on him, and thankſgiving to him. 2. This ſong is to be conſidered in reſpect of the object of it: in which reſpect, it differeth from the ſong of the redeemed to God and the Lamb, yet they meet in one; for it ſecludeth not the Lamb, but taketh him in with the Father and Spirit. This being divine worſhip, proper and peculiar to God, Chriſt in it is looked on as

God; and God here essentially to be considered. Whence we may gather, how to interpret their song, chap. v. the one no question, being of equal extent with the other. 3. This song is to be considered in respect of its manner. 1. That it is in generals, as most comprehensive; for Psal. cvi. 2. *Who can shew forth all his praise? his thoughts to us-ward past reckoning*, Psal. xl. 5. 2. That it beginneth and endeth with amen, as consisting more in their affection and wish, than in their expression, beginning with a conviction that it overpowereth them, yet undertaking it, as Psal. xl. 10. and going on, and no more satisfied at the close than when they began, but ended just so as alway beginning, and beginning so as never to end; an evidence of a good frame of these that praise; they are as ready to begin when they have done, as when they began, rather thinking their praise consenting to praise, than actual praising.

Observe, Here, 1. What a God this is whom we worship, whom all the angels do thus worship and adore, and stand in such reverence of, that they cover their faces, Isa. vi. they want words, and are swallowed up through the deep apprehension of the majesty, glory, greatness, and goodness of God: what a God must this be that they reverence, stand in awe of, and are so affected with the glory that shineth in him? They do his will perfectly, and yet they fall upon their faces before him. What a dreadful God is this? and what poor thoughts have we of him? Little knowledge of him, maketh us have so short and low conceptions of him; had we a glimpse of his glory, sitting on his throne of majesty, it would dazzle us; and if angels thus exalt him, what should we do? *Observe*, 2. These who are nearest to him, and partake most of him, will press most for exalting him, and will be most taking up, with the glory that is in him; It is not good to be satisfied with our own conceptions of God; angels are not so.

From the matter and occasion of the song, *Observe*, That the flourishing estate of the church is one of the greatest evidences of God's glory in the world, and one of the greatest grounds of praise. By the flourishing of the church, I mean, the multiplying of professors, purity of ordinances, backed with power, and some suitableness in the practice of professors. This is it that wakeneth and beginneth the angels song, and the song of the redeemed, and carrieth it on: the glory of wisdom, power, free grace and love, shineth here; Eph. iii. 10. *That he might shew unto the principalities and powers, by the church, the manifold wisdom of God.* He maketh them wonder to behold so much wisdom, in suiting grace to sinners case and need; so much condescendency, in pardoning freely; so much power, in overcoming men's stubbornness, &c. and shall they wonder at this, and praise for it? and shall not we wonder and praise, and be affected with it for our own good, who are partaking of that they praised for before-hand, for that we have these prue ordinances after the removal of Antichristian darkness? It is a proof of this truth, and a part of the accomplishment of this prophesy, and should stir us up to make this use of it.

Observe, 3. If things be well searched in God, there is nothing that can be a ground of praise but it is in him, and may be expected from him, *Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour*, &c. *Blessing* is all matter that may give occasion to bless him for making us blessed; glory taketh in all glory, every thing that maketh God glorious, or us to account him glorious, and glory itself; and matter of thanksgiving, wisdom, honour and the rest, are in him; nothing is meet for the end, or meet as a mids to bring about that end, but it is in God; blessing being the end, there is wisdom, power, and might to bring about that end; they have then good ground of praise, that have God to be their God.

From the 13. verse to the end, followeth a more particular inquiry concerning that number, which is followed with a more full description of them; and it hath three steps, or parts, 1. The elders question to John, ver. 13. or, rather, two questions, *What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?* 2. John's reply, ver. 14. *I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest*, 3. The elder's particular description to John of that blessed and happy company, 1. From whence they came. 2. What are they now. And 3. How they came at that happy condition. We need not stand here to dive who this elder is: It suiteth with the scope and form of this prophesy, thus to express it by way of dialogue, it being a question not of doubt or reformation to him who propoundeth it, but for incitation to him it was propounded unto, to enquire more into it, as a thing worthy to be known, and useful for opening the rest of the prophesy. This is the scope of the query, to make

John ask; yet considering that John here personates one that is a believer; and that by *elders* are understood, probably, members of the true church. It is not impertinent to look on it as signifying the help and usefulness of one member of the body to another, it may be, of more abilities in many things than themselves, as we shew before, chap. v. It holdeth out, in a word, four generals, 1. That when the people of God are dull, he wanteth not means to waken and rouze them up. 2. That God will make use of weak means and instruments sometimes to stir up these that are more strong. 3. John personating all to whom this prophesy should come, he would have him more particular in the inquiry after the knowledge of these things contained in it, which should stir us up to search, and not to slight what he revealeth. Yea, 4. It implieth, that God will have many precious things revealed, we, in the mean time, neither understand them, nor enquiring after them, till he stir us up.

John's reply, is, verse 14. modest and short, *Sir, thou knowest:* wherein, beside John's reverend way of speaking, there is implied, 1. John's ignorance, he denieth that he knew, only he saw them, he knew no further concerning this company. 2. A desire to be taught of him who knew what they were. It is a reverend humble insinuation of his expectation, that he should tell and answer his questions, which accordingly followeth, as if he had said, Sir, thou canst answer thy question thyself, and I expect thou wilt do it; it is no shame to be ignorant of some things, especially in this prophesy, and to vent our ignorance, so as we may have our knowledge helped. John hath advantage by this, he hath a more full explication of what he knew not, holden out to him. It were good we walked in the sense of our ignorance, and made more use of the means of knowledge.

For the elders answer, it hath three things in it, 1. What the former condition of the redeemed church was, *great tribulation*, probably relating not to the common afflictions and tribulations that all that will live godly must suffer, but these trials signified by the trumpets under Antichrist. 2. What their present estate was, exceeding prosperous, ver. 15. to the end. 3. How they past from the one to the other, it was by washing their garments, and making them white in the Lamb's blood.

Observ. 1. That the first view or representation of things is not enough for us: we can see, and hear, and understand little, till it be pressed on us. 2. God loveth that we be taught, and provideth means for instructing and upstirring of his own, so far as he thinketh needful. 3. If it came not of him, the best would lie in ignorance, and, it may be, not endeavour to know, partly thinking it desperate, and presumption, to enquire into it; partly negligent, and not thinking it needful, but curious, as many do, to enquire into these things, and so abstain from the search of this prophesy. The best have need of upstirring; and by these questions, not only John is stirred up for the time; but in him, all that might after read these prophesies, to enquire after them. 4. John's answer is humble and reverend, 1. Teaching us rather to acknowledge our ignorance that we may learn, than to hide it and continue ignorant. 2. That many may be, and are ignorant in the matters of this prophesy. 3. That no occasion of learning would be omitted, nor no instrument or mean excepted against, but all made use of for learning. 5. God's end in posing with hard questions, is, to help to know what we understand not. This question propounded to John, is neither to shame him, nor draw him in a snare, but to bring him to clearness in that he was dark in.

LECTURE VI.

Verse 14.----*And he said to me, these are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

15. *Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.*

16. *They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.*

17. *For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*

THAT which we have now to ſpeak of, is, the elders reply to John, wherein he inſiſteth in the deſcription of that excellent company, ſo that the words continue the deſcription of the former innumerable multitude, in theſe three, 1. What was the condition they were brought from, or what had been their former condition, *Theſe are they which came out of great tribulation.* 2. By what means they had come from, or had gotten victory over, or freedom from that great tribulation, *By waſhing their robes, and making them white in the blood of the Lamb.* 3. From the 15. ver. and forward, he inſiſteth in deſcribing what their preſent and happy eſtate and condition was.

For the firſt, ver. 14. they are ſaid *to have come out of great tribulation. Tribulation* is ſpoken of, Acts xiv. 21. in general, as the way to heaven and glory, but this being ſpoken of as a great tribulation, in an eminent degree, and that company ſomewhat ſingularly differenced from others, by this, that they are come out of it, it would appear, that by it is meaned the tribulation under Antichriſt's perſecution, and by that company, theſe that are brought through after his begun fall, and chap. xv. are ſaid to have gotten the victory over him: for that difficulty under Antichriſt, is the main one after heatheniſh perſecution, and that to which this former ſealing relateth, as is ſaid.

For the ſecond, the mean of their throughbearing to this happy eſtate is mentioned alſo, verſe 14. not their own innocency, they needed waſhing; nor their own ſufferings or works, theſe made them not white; but it was the blood of the Lamb, by taking themſelves allanerly to his ſatisfaction, they attained this righteouſneſs, and were made partakers of this bleſſed eſtate, by which alſo they are ſaid to prevail, chap. xii. That red blood can make bloody ſouls white, it is of ſuch an excellent virtue. Theſe folks, when the reſt of the world were worſhipping idols, and all that profeſſed Chriſtianity were following a ſelf-righteouſneſs, and abſolution by pennance, indulgence, &c. fled to Jeſus Chriſt for refuge, and they, by this righteouſneſs and ſatisfaction alone, are made white, pardoned of ſin, and brought to this happy condition, and not by any thing in themſelves? tho' they keeped themſelves free from the corruption of the time, yet this effect is not attributed to that, but to their waſhing, &c.

For the third, their preſent happy condition is enlarged in the laſt three verſes of the chapter, and ſet down only as a conſequent of their ſuffering, but flowing from their making uſe of the Lamb's blood as the cauſe thereof: Therefore that is, not becauſe they ſuffered ſuch tribulation, but becauſe they waſhed their robes, and made them white in Chriſt's blood.

Their happy condition is ſet out in theſe following circumſtances, or ſteps, which ſhew what a happineſs they were brought unto, 1. In the place of enjoying their happineſs, *before the throne of God, and in his temple*, which is in his church here begun, by fellowſhip in his ordinances, and in heaven compleatly, when they are preſented before God's throne in glory. 2. In their ſervice, work, and the uninterruptedneſs of it, *they ſerve him night and day*, and have place among angels that ſtand by, Zech. iii. freed from ſelfiſhneſs and a body of death; and not doing this ſervice by fits, but conſtantly, alluding, probably, to the prieſts, which in their courſes were admitted night and day to be in the temple, Pſal. cxxxiv. 1. This is a ſpecial part of their happineſs, that enmity now in them, againſt the ſervice of God, being taken away, that their delight therein is not marred: and this is brought in, 1. To ſhew their privilege, that they did not need a prieſt, nor intervenient means to help them. 2. To ſhew there was no intermiſſion in their ſervice, no whoring from God; but, as the angels in heaven, ſo do they the will of God chearfully and delightſomely. A third ſtep of their happy condition, is in the end of ver. 15. and is ſet out by enjoying of God's company, which is the object of that bleſſed condition, *he that ſitteth on the throne ſhall dwell among them*, that is, they ſhall not be at a diſtance with God, nor he at diſtance with them; but he ſhall make himſelf familiarly known to them, and there will be no intermiſſion of their ſenſe and joy. They ſhall not have communion with God by ſtarts, but he ſhall conſtantly and fully manifeſt himſelf as dwelling in one houſe with them, and they in his company for ever. This word dwelling, is to ſojourn in a tent, ſpoken of Chriſt's being in the fleſh, John i. 14. which may look to God's making himſelf manifeſt in ordinances, till this tent be taken down; thus it agreeth to the church-militant, wherein no ſuch interruption of God's preſence ſhall be after

that time, as had been before under Antichriſt. The fourth ſtep, or part of their happy condition, is in verſe 16. wherein their happineſs is ſet out by their freedom from all croſſes, and natural defects and infirmities, and men's violence. Their is neither hunger nor thirſt, nor ſcorching heat of the ſun, that is, no perſecution, if figuratively taken, as Matt. xiii. nor diſtemper of air or weather, nor any thing hurtful or noiſome to the body, if properly taken. There was, by the former phraſe, no ſinful defect, and now there is no ſinleſs defect, which Chriſt was ſubject to while he was here on earth, ſuch as hunger and cold, and wearineſs: there is nothing of that kind in heaven, nothing to diſtemper their happineſs, or to impure their bleſſedneſs; not the leaſt blaſt that floweth from their natural infirmity within, nor from without, by annoyance of the weather, as it is here on earth. The fifth is a main ſtep of their happineſs, and it is given as the great ground and reaſon of all the reſt, and ſerveth to confirm it, verſe 17. *For the Lamb which is in the midſt of the throne, ſhall lead them;* it ſhall be ſo, and can be no otherwiſe, for the Lamb, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, who is God on the throne, equal to the Father, his care over them will be ſuch as will admit no want, but will furniſh all good: and this is to ſet out in theſe two, 1. He ſhall feed them; which comprehendeth all care over them, and tenderneſs to them in him; and alſo taketh in all proviſion needful for their well-being in providing for them, and feaſting them, and overſeeing them, to keep them from any hurt, as a ſhepherd doth his flock, Pſal. xxiii. He ſhall take them in his ſpecial guiding, without intervening of ordinances or miniſters. 2. It is ſet out in the excellent paſtures he ſhall feed them in, not as puddles or ſtreams, nor every fountain, but *living fountains of waters*, which dry not up, able to quench all thirſt, and to cool from all heat: called *living fountains*, 1. In oppoſition to all earthly conſolations, which are but as ſtanding and dead puddles or ciſterns, or ſtreams at beſt; but there are at his right hand fulneſs of joy, and pleaſures for evermore, Pſal. xvi. Fountains and living fountains. 2. To ſhew the diverſity and abundance of conſolation that is to be had, and will be gotten in the preſence of God, and of the Lamb in heaven. And, 3. Living fountains, to ſhew the inexhauſtibleneſs of them: it is cloſed with a word to confirm the former, *God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes*, that is, God ſhall put an end to all their miſery, and there ſhall be neither ſigh nor tear there, nor cauſe of tears, tho' they have never been in their life without tears on their cheeks; yet, no ſooner ſhall they enter in that bleſſed place, but God's preſence, and a glimpſe of his favour, ſhall ſo wipe them away, that none of them ſhall ever ſtick there any more, nor be ſeen there again. There are none among that happy company, that either actually weep, or ſhall have cauſe of weeping, or ſorrow for ever.

There are ſome of theſe excellent expreſſions applied by Iſaiah to the church after its captivity, as may be ſeen, Iſaiah xlix. 10, &c. and xxv. 8. and xxxv. 10. and li, 11. &c. whereby it may not be inconſiſtent with the ſcope, to look upon this deſcription as pointing at the begun victory of theſe ſaints here, but perfected in heaven, as we ſhew you at the entry on this part of the chapter: however, more literally, it agreeth to heaven: and therefore we ſhall draw our obſervations moſt from that conſideration of them, and only apply them to the church's happy eſtate here, 1. As begun. 2. As comparative with former ſtraits. 3. Becauſe in itſelf excellent and eminent by theſe privileges it enjoyed. Hence,

Obſerve, 1. God's people, in difficult times, would be acquainting themſelves with, and confirming themſelves in the faith of the happy eſtate of glory; for this end, it is ſo ſtudiouſly propoſed, much pains is taken to reveal and hold it forth: and the Lord ſtirreth up John, and in him other believers, to look upon it, and to believe and comfort themſelves from the happy eſtate they ſhall meet with when their ſuffering ſhall have an end. 1. To prevent their fainting in as far as heaven maketh an end of all their difficulties. 2. To make them ſubmiſſive, becauſe that time is coming. 3. To make their life lively and comfortable by the knowledge and faith of it, and the frequent meditation on it. This maketh a chearful, comfortable and ſubmiſſive way of living under croſſes and difficulties; this maketh believers long for heaven, and to comfort themſelves in their abiding empty-handed for the time. 2. Theſe are they that come out of great tribulation. Then tribulations, and great tribulations are the way to glory, to them whom God loveth moſt: Jeſus Chriſt himſelf drank of the brook by the way, Pſal. cx. 7. and was made low before he was ex-

alted, and his members follow the head in a conformity of ſuffering, Rom. viii. 28. Acts xiv. 22. Suffering could not look ſo grim and terrible-like, if what were on the back of it were well looked to. Let none think the worſe of glory, or that the happineſs of God's people is of leſs worth, becauſe tribulations are in the way to it; neither let any prize any eaſy life in this world with God's curſe, this is far better with all the tribulations that accompany it. 3. They have waſhen their garments in the blood of the Lamb, who came through tribulation. *Obſerve*, Theſe that are moſt righteous, whether in active obedience, in keeping the law and commandments, or, in paſſive obedience, in yielding their bodies to be burnt, they have need of Chriſt's ſatisfaction to make them white: theſe worthies keeped themſelves free of the pollutions of the time, and ſhunned no ſuffering: and yet upon this account they appear not before God. Holineſs is good, but in our ſeeking to appear before God, we are to ſeek to be found in Chriſt, Phil. iii. 9. Or, take the doctrine thus, no merit of ours can bring through neither temporal nor ſpiritual judgments. Theſe were free of common guiltineſs, and ſhunned not, but endured all tribulations; yet none of theſe are grounds of their through-bearing, but the waſhing of their garments in Chriſt's blood. 4. As the greateſt tribulations have an out-gate; and the greater the tribulation be, the greater and more glorious is the out-gate; and the greater the fight be, the victory is the more remarkable; therefore are all theſe ſingularly pointed at here. So the blood of Chriſt is the beſt and only out-gate from tribulations; fleeing to Chriſt for refuge, is the only beſt way to eſcape all tribulations temporal or ſpiritual: for, we ſuppoſe; this coming out of tribulation, looketh to temporal affliction as well as delivery from eternal wrath. And indeed if the miſknowing of Jeſus Chriſt, by a people that hear the goſpel, be the great cauſe of their temporal ruin, trouble and overthrow, Luke xix. 42, 43. *O that thou had known, in this thy day, the thing that belong to thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes. Therefore the days ſhall come upon thee, that thine enemies ſhall caſt a trench about thee:* if the neglecting of him haſten judgment on the ungodly world, then fleeing to him muſt be the beſt way to ſhun judgment, to take away the controverſy, and to get an out-gate from tribulations when they are lying on. And there is nothing that we would more take notice of in this time; there are none but they would know how to be rid of trial and trouble that is lying on, this is the beſt way that can be taken. Jeſus Chriſt taketh away the controverſy, and maketh the ſufferers white; *we are conquerors; yea, more than conquerors through Chriſt who loved us*, Rom. viii. 35. 1. He ſtrengtheneth to ſtand and fight. 2. He hideth ſin and removeth guilt, which is the riſe of the controverſy. 3. He giveth peace and a ſettled out-gate; and out-gates from tribulation any other way, whether by outward means, as armies, friendſhip, &c. or inward, as in our own holineſs or ſatisfactions are but the paſſing from one ſnare to another that is worſe, and from one plague to a greater curſe: and folks can never be ſaid to come out of tribulation, while they ly under the wrath and curſe of God. Mic. v. 4. only this man ſhall be the peace, *when the Aſſyrians ſhall come into our land.* 5. From the happy condition of Chriſt's followers, *Obſerve*, That it is an excellent and unſpeakable happineſs, an excellent condition, delightſome and lovely, that believers are to look for in heaven, when the tribulation ſhall be over: it is not only an out-gate, but an excellent out-gate. We cannot ſpeak of it to you, only, (beſide what was ſaid of it, verſe 9, 10) take a ſhort view of what is ſaid of it here, 1. For its place, it is here before the throne of God, beholding him, to have a place among them that ſtood by in God's temple: this is the firſt ſtep of their happineſs. 2. Their decking, is white robes and palms in their hands, as ſo many conquerors and triumphers. 3. Their company, God and Chriſt, angels and ſaints, meaned by the elders. 4. Their work, is to ſing and praiſe chearfully. Again here further, it is ſet out in theſe properties, 1. It is a ſinleſs happineſs; no backdrawing from God will be there, but a doing of his will with delight, and without interruption or wearineſs night and day (that is continually) for there is no night there; it is a part of their glory, and the firſt ſtep of it, to be quit of ſin; there they will not be put to pray, *Let thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven*, but there will be an actual doing of it ſo. 2. That day is coming, when there will be no more crying out under a body of death; the body of death will not then rebel, there will not be one law againſt another, not an inward man, or mind and fleſh, but

perfect in holineſs, without a ſinful defect: no reluctancy, no ſin nor miſery. 3. To do this in his temple, is to ſignify their dignity and eminency, and the dignity and eminency of their ſervice; they need no prieſt now to go into the moſt holy; all are there admitted thus to miniſter. 4. The great object of their eternal bleſſedneſs is God; they enjoy him fully, familiarly, and conſtantly, which is meaned by his dwelling with them; they are ever in his company, God and they in one houſe, and upon one throne, and to have common ſociety with him, it is wonderful, and the height of all. 5. There is no ſinleſs defect there, nor any croſs, either of infirmity or heat of perſecution, no violence nor cry in theſe ſtreets, no complaint of plundering or oppreſſion, no ſequeſtration, no quarterings there, no poverty, not a poor perſon among all that company, entry into heaven putteth a cloſe to all theſe, none of them are admitted to follow a believer further than the ports of the city; it muſt then certainly be good to be there. The Lamb's ſweet company, and the enjoyment of him, compleateth all; we hold both grace and glory of him, we have a ſpecial relation to him, he is in our own nature there, God-man in one perſon, the greateſt glimpſe of the Godhead will probably be attained in him, and all tears will be wiped away; whatever may comfort a believer will be given, and what diſquiets a believer will be removed; there are three things that diſquiet a believer, that will not be in heaven. 1. Sinning and interrupting of God's ſervice, and neither ſin nor temptation will be there, no devils nor corrupt nature, fleſh and blood enter not there. 2. Interruption of the ſenſe of God's favour, which is now but at ſtarts, as he is pleaſed to let it out; but no interruption of favour there; as they ſerve him day and night, ſo he dwelleth among them, the communion is conſtant. And, by the way, obſerve, that an uninterrupted ſerving of God, and an uninterrupted communion with God, and enjoying of him, go together. 3. Outward perſecutions and wants, pinches and ſtraits, none of theſe do follow the ſaints into heaven; and, in oppoſition to all theſe, they enjoy God in a moſt excellent way, and the company of the Lamb, and are feaſted by living fountains of water; and if any thing be more delectable than another, they have it, and that in abundance, freſhly flowing for ever.

Uſe. 1. Long in a holy and warrantable way to ſhare and have experience of this happy condition, and labour to entertain clearneſs of right and intereſt in it. 2. Back your longings with endeavours to be at it. It is to be feared that many of us, when we ſhall yield our breath and ſoul, do find that we have looked on heaven as a ſtory. 3. Mortify your members which are upon the earth: what are all idols when they are laid in the ballance againſt this happineſs, in its higheſt degree with its ſoul-ſweetning circumſtances? What happineſs ſo deſirable as this? or, to be compared with the enjoying of God, wherein there is perfect holineſs without ſin, and compleat happineſs without ſtop or interruption? 4. Be comforting yourſelves from, and confirming yourſelves in the hope of this happineſs; all ye who are fled to Chriſt for refuge: ſuppoſe ye be under tribulation now, there is a time coming when ye will get out of it: and though a body of death trouble you, and wants, oppreſſion, poverty, hunger, nakedneſs, &c. keep you at under; yet, when ye come to heaven, ye ſhall be troubled with none of theſe things; none are poor, but all are rich there; none are naked, but all are cloathed with white robes; none are hungry, but all feaſted and well fed: and ſuppoſe ye have a heartleſs time here, yet then there is no fear, no ſin, nor ſorrow, nor cauſe, nor occaſion of it.

The reſult of all this, is, to commend to you theſe two directions. 1. Seeing all this happineſs cometh through waſhing in the Lamb's blood, think much of believing, make that knot ſure, it is that upon which heaven hangeth: looſe that knot, and heaven will fall by from you. This carnal ſecurity, that is among the moſt part of you, is not believing; ſearch and try your condition, make ſure your calling and election, and ſeek to know that is ſure and out of queſtion. 2. Seeing heaven is ſuch a happy life, and there is a reſemblance of it here, aim at the beginning of it: and we will find ſomething of it in theſe words, as they relate to the church-militant, 1. By ſerving God, and by holineſs ceaſing from ſin. They that ſerve God moſt uninterruptedly, are likeſt heaven; count it your happineſs to be worſhipping and ſerving God without intermiſſion. The more ſpiritual, conſtant, and immediate our ſervice is, the more it is like heaven; thus we enter into God's reſt, Heb. iv. 10. when we ceaſe from our own works and do his. 2. To be enjoying God's

company, though not in that immediate way as in heaven, yet by faith in him, and by his Spirit in us, and by the having our converſation lift up to him, Col. iii. 1, 2. This is the earneſt and firſt fruits of glory, much nearneſs and communion with God maketh us like heaven; the likeſt thing to it in the world, is to dwell in him and with him. 3. To be in Chriſt's flock under his care and tutory, fed by him, and led by him, and feeding on him, and yielding ourſelves up unto him. 4. A contentedneſs with our preſent condition and lot in the world, as he is pleaſed to carve it out to us, to learn in every eſtate to be content, Philip. iv. 6. in the enjoying of God, and Chriſt's care of us. 5. Wainedneſs of affection from carnal and worldly delights, not engaging in, nor thirſting after theſe. Paul oppoſeth a heavenly converſation to this, Philip. iii. 19, 20. In a word, ſtudy to reach a further length in holineſs, and endeavour after a more full communion with God, and in all other things give him his will. There might be ſome more foretaſte of happineſs had in theſe things. Lord make us ſerious in ſeeking after them.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *And when he had opened the ſeventh ſeal, there was ſilence in heaven about the ſpace of half an hour.*
2. *And I ſaw the ſeven angels which ſtood before God, and to them were given ſeven trumpets.*
3. *And another angel came and ſtood at the altar, having a golden cenſer, and there was given unto him much incenſe, that he ſhould offer it with the prayers of all ſaints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne.*
4. *And the ſmoke of the incenſe which came with the prayers of the ſaints, aſcended up before God, out of the angel's hand.*

WE have heard how, under the former ſix ſeals, the Lord hath been revealing and foreſhewing the ſtate of the church here on earth, till that firſt great change of bringing Chriſtianity in requeſt publicly, and making it to be owned and countenanced by authority in the world, by reaſon whereof, idolaters and perſecutors ſhould be diſowned and diſcountenanced; ſo far the ſixth ſeal came to foreſhew, and hold out the ſhaking and overturning of that idolatrous world, and bringing horror and trembling on perſecutors; before he came to proſecute the opening of the ſeventh ſeal (which bringeth the hiſtory of the church, that continueth to the end of the world, in two periods, one, of the trumpets; another, of the vials) he hinted in the former chapter at this ſad ſtorm which was coming on the church from all airths, and at our Lord's ſtepping in to hold theſe winds from breaking looſe, till he had ſealed a number that he was to preſerve, from being carried away with the errors of the time.

In this chapter, and the three following, is contained the third viſion or ſecond general propheſy of this book, viz. the viſion of the trumpets: and becauſe (as we ſaid before, in laying down the ſeries of the ſtory at our entry to chap. vi.) the ſeventh trumpet bringeth in the laſt plagues of the ſeven vials, as the ſeventh ſeal bringeth in trumpets, therefore we comprehend the ſecond propheſy under the firſt ſix trumpets, which reacheth from the beginning of this chapter to the 15 verſe of chapter xi. when the ſeventh trumpet ſoundeth.

This propheſy or viſion hath three parts, the firſt is preparatory to the ſeventh verſe of this chapter. The ſecond is executory, or the main body of the prophetic viſion, to the end of the ninth chapter. The third is explicatory of, and conſolatory againſt the two laſt great woes in the ninth chapter, eſpecially during the ſecond unto which it is cotemporary, as appeareth, verſe 14. chapter xi. when it is ſaid the ſecond woe is paſt, then, and not till then, including all the former events ſince the trumpet ſounded, as belonging to that time, and cotemporary, at leaſt, with theſe woes.

Before we enter particularly on the words, be advertiſed concerning theſe four things to be adverted to therein. The firſt is, concerning the con-

nection of this propheſy with the ſixth ſeal, in the cloſe of the ſixth chapter; for although the ſeventh chapter intervene, yet the ſeries of the ſtory leadeth us to join the ſeventh ſeal after the ſixth, as the ſixth was after the fifth, &c. Now, the ſixth ſeal taking its beginning in Conſtantine's time, and taking in the overthrow then given to the perſecutors of the Chriſtians, and the change which was made in the Chriſtian world, where the firſt period cloſed, it will be about the three hundred and tenth year of Chriſt, or a little after, taking in the peace that, for a time, the church enjoyed then, whereby we may the more eaſily count the beginning, and the riſe of theſe trumpets, and the evils prognoſticated by them, to be the next enſuing evils after that interval of peace, or during the time thereof, ſeeing the interval is not long, as appeareth from Chriſt's cry, chap. vii. 2. 2. The ſecond thing to be adverted to, is the iſſue, or cloſe of theſe ſix trumpets; which is clear, chap. xi. 14. compared with 15. to be at the cloſe of the ſecond woe, at the blowing of the ſeventh trumpet, which bringeth in the laſt woe, and ſeven vials, whereby Antichriſt's kingdom is overthrown, the everlaſting goſpel preached through the world, and nations that were not Chriſt's before, now become his; which clearly is at the time of Antichriſt's greatneſs ſo bringing him to his height, and the church low till the ſeventh angel ſounded, that bringeth the vials; the firſt whereof, is poured out upon theſe who have his mark, chap. xvi. which fall of Antichriſt, according to ordinary computation, beginneth, anno 1517. when Luther firſt preached the goſpel, or anno 1559. when the liberty of the profeſſion thereof was firſt confirmed; whereof we ſhall ſay more, chap. xi. This only pointeth out the period to be at the fall of Antichriſt's abſolute tyranny. 3. The third thing is the cotemporarineſs of theſe trumpets, with the beaſt's riſing, chap. xiii. which belonging to one time, as appeareth by what precedeth and ſucceedeth to both, and ſpeaking alſo the ſame judgment, as appeareth by this, that the ſame thing, viz. God's ſealing protecteth from both, and the ſame perſons are hurt by both, viz. theſe who are not ſealed: therefore a ſpecial reſpect muſt be had of clearing one of them by the other, and making one of them agree with the other. 4. A fourth thing is, that we conceive the ſtorm ſpoken of in the former chapter, by the angel's holding the four winds, to be the ſame mentioned in the trumpets. For, 1. If this ſeventh ſeal be knit to the ſixth, then it comprehendeth this mentioned in the ſeventh chapter, which was but by way of digreſſion hinted at in the ſixth, the better to prepare for a full view of it afterward: for that ſtorm muſt belong to the ſeventh ſeal, or the ſixth; but not the ſixth, which deſcribed an event of another nature, and an other object, viz. the church's enemies: therefore it muſt belong to the ſeventh, which hath two prophecies, of diſtinct natures, viz. *trumpets* and *vials*, anſwerable to the two different parts of the ſeventh chapter. 2. That ſtorm was foreſeen there, and reſtrained: but here it is executed. 3. It was then keeped up till the elect ſhould be ſealed againſt it, and under the trumpets, chap. ix. 4. they are found ſealed and ſafe: which cleareth, that this is a ſpiritual ill threatned againſt formal and hypocritical profeſſors, which theſe trumpets bring; yea, the ſame with that in chapter vii.

The connection then is this, that after John ſaw the church freed from open perſecutions, and the perſecutors caſt down, he ſaw hereſies and errors ready to break in from all quarters on the church; yet through Chriſt's care, a little breathing time was given; they are commanded to ſit till his people were provided for; now, this being done, John goeth on in ſhewing what came when theſe winds were let looſe; yet he caſteth in a word before, to verſe 7. to ſhew they came not precipitantly, but as they had orders from him who had laid the reſtraint on them, which is cleared in three or four circumſtances of preparation.

We ſhall ſhortly go through the words more particularly. *When he had opened the ſeventh ſeal: He*, that is the Lamb, who opened ſix ſeals before, openeth now the ſeventh; which ſeventh, though divided in two periods afterward, by diſtinguiſhing the vials from the trumpets, yet it comprehendeth both. Therefore, chap. vii. a view of both ſhortly was given together. The effects that this bringeth with it, are a little ſuſpended, and ſome general preparatory circumſtances premitted, to ſhew it was a ſtrange thing which was coming.

The firſt thing which occurreth, *There was ſilence in heaven about the ſpace of half an hour.*

This is not so much the effect (for, that followeth) as that which accompanieth it, and a definite time is put for an indefinite, it is a very short while. To clear it more fully, understand heaven here of the visible militant church; it is that church whose state is here described, and there can be interruptions of noise and silence in no other heaven; so it implieth that at this time, after persecutors were down, and the winds that were ready to blow, keeped in, there was a great quietness and peace in the church for a short time; which indeed was true for some years in Constantine's days; betwixt persecutors ceasing, and the schisms and heresies of the Donatist's and Arian's arising, which was but a very short time; and this is not inconsistent with the scope, as if he had said, I saw peace a while till all was made ready for the ensuing blast and storm, which is in the words following, and till fundamental truths were confirmed publicly for keeping the Lord's people from the snares of gross heresies, which then immediately followed. Whence observe, That the church's outward peace is not long; she hath but a short time of it, half an hour's silence only. The church story, scripture, and experience prove this. Therefore, 1. Folks should not promise to themselves nor expect long peace. 2. They should improve the little time they have frugally, and not mispend it; an hour, or half an hour's time in peace in the family, or congregation, is a rich mercy, and we know not how long we have it; few churches have had so long peace as we have had in this island, therefore see it be improven well. This half hour being a definite time, put for an indefinite, sheweth that that rule holdeth not in the revelation, that whole compleat times, as hours, years, &c. may be definite for indefinite, but not so broken times, as half days, half years, and half hours, &c. For, no particular definite time can be rationally imagined to be understood by this.

Or, 2. Understand heaven here, for that heaven, where all these things were represented to John; silence in it, importeth a new transition to a strange matter, that for the stupendiousness and admirableness thereof, attracted the attention, and made all keep silence as taken up with expectation of what might be revealed, a little interim of time being between the opening of the seal, and the appearing of any thing: which suspension of the angel's outcoming with their trumpets confirmeth the first exposition, as if this prophesy began with a little quietness; and the latter is not to be slighted, because this exposition holdeth out a preparation and attentiveness requisite in us for hearing and receiving such mysteries.

The second circumstance is verse 2. When all do wait what the opening of this seal shall produce, something appeareth that prognosticateth a coming storm. *Seven angels are seen standing before God, and they get seven trumpets.* The use of the trumpets and number, I shall forbear to speak much of them, and what these angels are, till I come to verse 6. only here we conceive them to be angels that wait for God's command, it may be special angels for eminency, there being degrees among angels; or, the words may be read without the relative *the*, as differencing them, or relating to any other, which we find not before, these are the instruments, angels, they are made use of to give the alarm. 2. Their weapons, or furniture, is trumpets, to incite others rather than to act themselves. Trumpets had a twofold use, 1. To give an advertisement of some eminent assault, sounding an alarm; so it relateth to God's people to stir them up to watchfulness, and to be on their guard: 1 Cor. xiv. *If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?* 2. To call the congregation, or assembly, or host, for acting or attempting something; and so it looketh to offending, relating to the letting loose of enemies, as the former to defence, in guarding his people: however they imply God's giving special orders. In these cases, angels are ministring spirits, waiting on God for a commission, therefore the trumpets are given them, to shew they are but ministers and servants in what is commanded them, and by orders. 3. They are seven, though there were but four, chap. vii. because these keeped all airths, that the winds should not blow till they were let loose: these seven do proportion the outletting of these winds by steps and degrees; and this is done out of the Lord's goodness, that letteth not all blow at once, but one by one, that men may have warning and be armed for what cometh after.

A third and main circumstance followeth, verse 3, 4, 5. Though now the seal be opened, and trumpets be given to the angels, yet these angels are not yet to sound till orders be given, which is not till Christ's intercession intervene. His in-

terceſſion, as it is ſet down here, hath two parts, 1. His interceſſion for his people, verſe 3, and 4. in reference to the coming ſtorm, that God would not impute ſin to them, nor ſuffer them to be led away with error, as Luke xxii. 31, 32. *Satan hath ſought to winnow you, but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.* The ſecond part of his interceſſion is, in reference to his enemies; and it is a denunciation againſt the ungodly world, and that profane generation that received him not, ver. 5. It is a piece of his abſoluteneſs, commiſſionating the angels to go on and execute judgment; therefore it is ſaid, verſe 5. *The angel took the cenſer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and caſt it into the earth: And there were voices*, &c. and then the ſounding of the angels followeth: for, as he had given charge before to the four angels, chap. vii. not to hurt the earth till his ſervants were ſealed; ſo here he giveth charge and commiſſion to theſe ſeven angels to go on when his elect are ſecured.

There is here an alluſion to the high-prieſt under the law, and Chriſt is brought in, uſing theſe ceremonies that the high prieſt uſed when he went into the temple and ſanctuary: ſo we take it for granted, that this is Chriſt and no other, that cometh and ſtandeth at the altar with a golden cenſer, &c. 1. Becauſe of this work; for none can claim to this office but Chriſt alone, to offer up the prayers of all ſaints. 2. Becauſe of the efficacy or effect of this his offering up prayers; it was effectual both for his people's being accepted of God, verſe 4. and alſo againſt enemies in being terrible to them; yea, it was not the prayers of themſelves, but the incenſe which was offered with them, that made them acceptable; which can be no other thing but Chriſt's ſacrifice. 3. Becauſe all the ceremonies here uſed have reference to the high-prieſt, and there being no high-prieſt for the time but Chriſt, he who was the Antitype being come, and that Levitical ſervice being aboliſhed, it muſt needs be he. And though it be ſaid *incenſe was given him*, which Chriſt hath of his own, (which maketh ſome expound the words otherwiſe) it militateth nothing againſt it. For, 1. Chriſt's whole office is given him as Mediator, and his qualifications for it. 2. He is here ſpeaking in the terms agreeing to an high-prieſt on earth, as to have an altar, cenſer, &c. all which are not literally to be underſtood of Chriſt; for there is no altar nor incenſe in heaven, but as ſuch may be figuratively applied to him, as the Antitype ſignified by the high-prieſt; for, none other was typified by theſe prieſts interceſſions but Chriſt, who was prieſt, ſacrifice, and altar: and all the ſpiritual things of the goſpel, are ſpoken of under the types and terms of the Old Teſtament.

Without inſiſting further in needleſs myſteries, the ſcope of this interceſſion and the interpoſing of it, between the opening of the ſeal and ſounding of the trumpets, we conceive, is to hold out theſe things which are doctrines.

1. Chriſt's care of his church and ſaints, that while there is a coming ſtorm to blow on the world, and a hypocritical generation to be plagued, he ſteppeth in and intercedeth for them; in coming trials and ſtorms, he is ever mindful to pray for them, that they be not hurt by them: and we conceive its for this end brought in here, to let the church and all ſee the care of the Mediator, his compaſſionateneſs and ſympathy, and that he is as careful for preventing their ſin, as for preventing their hurt and judgment; now in heaven, as tender as when he was on earth, Luke xxii. 32. 2. It is ſuppoſed here, that a time of trouble is a ſpecial time of praying; then all ſaints pray, there is no ſtanding in a trial without praying: or, praying is a ſpecial duty or mean of defence for a trial, the prayers of all ſaints are ſpoken of here; which, in many places, are compared to incenſe and ſacrifice, Pſal. cxli. 1. Hoſea xiv. &c. yea, that all ſaints pray here, it ſheweth, they deſerve not that name who pray not eſpecially in difficult times, when a ſtorm is come or coming on the church; there is no ſaint but he is a praying ſaint, eſpecially at ſuch a time, and theſe Chriſt offereth to the Father, though with his own incenſe; it is made the mark of a godly man, Pſal. xxxii. 6. *For this ſhall every one that is godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou mayeſt be found;* and it made the mark of an Atheiſt, that he calleth not upon God, Pſal. xiv. This is clearly holden forth here. 3. That there is no efficacy in the prayers of all the ſaints without Chriſt's interceſſion; they are offered by him, the ſacrifice is laid down before him, *By him we come to God*, Heb. viii. 25. and xiii. 15. He is the *high-prieſt*, who only can enter *the moſt holy*, and through whom we have acceſs to God; there is no prayer acceptable to God as it is offered up by us, but as it

is put in his hand, in his cenſer only it is acceptable: for there are defects in the prayers of all ſaints; the moſt holy ſaint is faulty, and hath need of a Mediator to make his peace, and preſerve it, and to preſent his prayers: both the perſons and the prayers muſt be accepted through him, and whatever we expect, as the return of our prayer, it muſt be expected upon account of his ſatisfaction, and on no other ground; and nothing muſt be ſuffered to ſtick to our prayers of the conceit of our worth, or of the worth of our prayers. This is much acknowledged, but as much ſlighted: and moſt pray, as if acceſs were to be had another way, and without being ſenſible of the defects of, and guilt that is in their prayers. 4. That Chriſt offereth and perfumeth all the ſaints prayers leſs or more. There is no prayer in no ſaint that he refuſeth, whether they be weak or ſtrong, whether they be faint or more fervent, with leſs or more ſpirit and life in them, whether ſhorter or longer, well ordered or confuſed, if they come from ſaints, be warranted in the word, and grounded on the promiſe, and put up in his name, they are by him offered; all go in one cenſer, and all go up as the ſmoke of ſweet incenſe, and through him are accepted of God; he taketh the leaſt ſigh, and putteth it in his cenſer, and it hath a good ſavour to God out of his hand, he refuſeth no ſaint's prayer, nor ſendeth it back unanſwered. *Whatſoever ye aſk in my name, I will do it*, John xvi. 23, *And the Father heareth him always*, John xi. 42. What an encouragement and direction how to pray is this? and a comfort in praying? 1. That our bleſſed Mediator receiveth the prayer, and putteth it in his cenſer, putteth incenſe with it, that it aſcendeth not alone, but in his name, by virtue of his right, and in his blood it appeareth? Many right carnal, poor feckleſs prayers are ſavoury to God on this account, and none upon another: he is our Days-man, this ſhould encourage us. 2. It directeth us to employ Chriſt in our prayers, which is to have reſpect to his ſufferings, and ſatisfaction and interceſſion allenarly, both in making the prayers acceptable, and in our expecting the return of what is aſked, without reſpecting ourſelves or our prayers, except as beloved and acceptable in him. 3. It is matter of conſolation in and after prayer, and ground of quietneſs, that however our prayers be not much worth yet Chriſt's incenſe maketh them ſavoury. This being well conſidered, would teach us to make more conſcience of praying, than anxiouſly to diſpute whether we be heard or no. 5. There is an excellent conjunction here between the ſaints praying, and Chriſt's interceding, as being both uſeful and neceſſary to the obtaining of the believer's point. Their prayers and his incenſe go well together, as if none of them were profitable without the other, at leaſt for a conſcience to quiet itſelf: a praying man may expect a benefit by Chriſt's interceſſion while he improveth it, which one that prayeth not, cannot expect; both are neceſſary, but not in a meritorious way; the merit cometh alone from Chriſt, but both are called for in the command, and in the promiſe God hath knit them together. It is true, God is ſometimes found of them that ſeek him not, which is his own ſovereign way; but when we look to the promiſes, and the ground of our expectation, we will find them all qualified with ſeeking, Ezek. xxxvi. 37. *Notwithſtanding I will be enquired of by the houſe of Iſrael for all theſe things.* Let all theſe be joined together, ſeparate not what God hath conjoined; ſeeing he hath bidden us pray, and pray in Chriſt's name, follow that way and order; for theſe who either pray none, or pray not in his name, cannot expect a hearing; theſe are knit together, as well as his ſatisfaction, and our faith.

Concerning CHRIST's INTERCESSION.

THere is no piece of the fulneſs of our bleſſed Lord Jeſus that is more rich in conſolation than his interceſſion is; and yet it is often ſuffered to ly beſide even the believer, not being improven to the excellent uſe which doth flow from it, as if there were no ſuch treaſure therein; ſeeing therefore there is ſo fair an occaſion in the firſt part of this chapter to ſpeak thereof, we may eſſay it a little in his ſtrength, not as if we could unfold this myſtery, and ſatisfy curioſity therein, nor yet as if we were to debate ſpeculative queſtions that are raiſed concerning the ſame, intending only to lay open the practical part, as it tendeth to the believer's conſolation. We ſhall therefore endeavour ſhortly to ſpeak to theſe points, 1. In general, to what interceſſion importeth. 2. How

our Lord Jeſus may be conceived now to execute this office in heaven. 3. If our Lord was interceſſor before his incarnation. 4. What is the conſolation that doth flow therefrom, and wherein it doth conſiſt. *Laſtly*, How this conſolation ought and may be improven by a believer.

To the firſt, we conceive there are four expreſſions in ſcripture, which being put together, ſerve much to illuſtrate this of interceſſion. The firſt is that, 1 Tim. ii. 5. where Chriſt is called the Mediator, or Mid-man, betwixt God and man; in which place, expreſs reſpect is had to the making of our prayers acceptable before God. Now, this word Mediator doth import theſe two, 1. A ſuitableneſs in the perſon interpoſing, to both the different parties, ſo that he cannot be ſaid to be ſtated on either ſide. 2. It importeth a work and office, that is, to tryſt betwixt theſe two parties, that the prayer and petition of the one may by his mediation find favour before the other; thus is the phraſe ſo frequent, of our coming to God by him. The ſecond word is the ſame of interceſſion, or interceſſor; which doth indeed import a guilt on their part, who are interceded for; yet doth imply alſo the interpoſing of a worthy party to intercede for ſuch perſons, and to deprecate wrath, and that upon his own account, without reſpect to what is in them. Upon this ground, Rom. viii. 34. a defiance is given to all accuſations, becauſe Chriſt Jeſus maketh interceſſion. The third word is, that he is called, 1 John ii. verſe 1. an advocate; *if any man ſin, we have an advocate;* which looketh to Chriſt's undertaking the cauſe of the believer, even in a legal and judicial way, and to make it out in a way of juſtice, whereas the former word of interceſſion, of itſelf doth look more like a friendly intreaty, This title *advocate*, importeth his undertaking of their cauſe, and that not only to ſoliſt it, but to plead it; yea, and by office to do ſo. A fourth expreſſion is, Heb. ix. 24. where it is ſaid, Chriſt hath entered into heaven, there to appear before God for us, which is yet more than the former, becauſe this ſheweth the purpoſe of his entry, which is, as it were, to be agent or ſollicitor, waiting on, and that in our name to anſwer and vindicate any thing that is imputed to us; or, as an ambaſſador that ſuſtaineth the room of ſuch before God; and ſo his appearing for us, having the perfect commemoration of his bypaſt death, cannot but effectually anſwer for, and vindicate all in whoſe name he appeareth.

If it be aſked, in the ſecond place, how may our bleſſed Lord Jeſus be conceived to go about this work of interceding or advocating for ſinners? It will not be enough to ſay, that his merit and ſufferings do continue to deſerve ſuch things, as if his pleading were only the virtue of his merit, which figuratively might be ſaid to plead for good to his people, as Abel's blood is ſaid to plead the contrary to Cain, even after his death. This indeed is true, for the blood of ſprinkling doth yet ſpeak, and that far better things than the blood of Abel; but this doth not conſtitute his interceſſion to be any part of his office, but doth rather overturn the ſame. Neither is it to be thought, that he intercedeth with ſuch geſture and verbal expreſſion as men uſe with men, or as he himſelf did in the days of his fleſh, when he offered up prayers with ſtrong cries and tears, which did become the ſtate of his humiliation, but not of his glorification. Tho' this be a myſtery, yet we may humbly conceive it in theſe particulars.

Firſt, There is in this interceſſion a ſympathy, and fellow-feeling in our Lord, which is the very great ground of this interceſſion. For, Jeſus Chriſt, though glorified, is yet true man, having the real and true properties of the human nature, which make him capable to be in another way affected with our afflictions and griefs than formerly; yea, not only ſo, but he was in his own perſon a man of ſorrows and acquainted with grief, and learned obedience by what he ſuffered, whereby not only is he man to ſympathiſe with us ſimply as a man, but he is a man experimentally acquainted with grief, and for that end that he might be the more fit and able to ſuccour theſe that ſhould be in ſuch a caſe, Heb. ii. verſe 17, 18. and iv. verſe 15, 19. Again our bleſſed Lord Jeſus, being God and man in one perſon, by virtue of his Godhead, he cannot be ignorant of the leaſt affliction of his people; and by virtue of his manhead, perſonally united to his Godhead, he cannot but be affected therewith, eſpecially conſidering his being taught by experience, for this very end that he might be a compaſſionate high prieſt, and the ſooner touched with the infirmities of others: now this ſympathy doth not only riſe from the bare ſpeculative knowledge which he hath of the afflictions of others, but it is wakened and entertained by that union of the Spirit betwixt the head and the members, whereby they become one; ſo that he that perſecuteth the one perſecuteth the other as is frequently aſſerted in the ſcripture. From all this there doth ariſe, in the Mediator ſo conſidered, an

inclination, and, to say so, a natural propenseness to have these evils redressed, so that he cannot but desire the removing thereof: and this his desire, being of great weight before God, may be well counted intercession.

Secondly, This intercession of his, may be conceived to consist in his appearing in heaven in our name; whereby the Son of God, being now man, sisteth himself as ready to make appearance for such and such sinners; so his very being in our nature there speaketh his purpose in reference to this end, and God's accepting of it according to appointment.

Thirdly, It may be conceived to take along with it his declared willingness to have such and such prayers granted, &c. This was a part of his intercession, John xvii. 24. *Father I will that these thou hast given me, be with me*, &c. where his declaring that to be his will, is a prime part of his intercession: now, it cannot be thought but that he hath a will to have the same things executed, which were engaged to him, and these particulars, which the necessities of his people shall call for, from him, granted, and that the Mediator should will such a particular for such a person, and, in an inconceivable way of his adoring the Father, present the same before him, is no little part of his intercession.

Fourthly, In all this, there is an holy and reverend, though inconceivable, adoration, whereby the Mediator, now at the Father's right hand, (and being, in that respect, less than the Father) doth in all his appearances for us, as being the head of the body, adore the sovereignty, goodness, wisdom, &c. of God, with a respect to the covenant of redemption: his saying to his disciples oftner than once, *I will pray the Father* for you, doth imply, to say so, some address to God, though we cannot conceive the manner thereof, even in reference to some particular persons, and some particular cases; and he being set at the right hand of majesty, cannot but adore that sovereign majesty.

There are some other words in scripture, which seem to import something in reference to this intercession, as that, Heb. x. ver. 13. he is *expecting till his enemies be made his footstool*, and that he may seem to be longing to have his body perfected, which is his fulness, and that in his prayer, John xvii. 24. *Father, I will that these that are given me, may be where I am*, where he may seem to be longing to have his body perfected; which desire, certainly he hath not y[illegible] laid down: But these, and others, may be reduced to some of the former branches, therefore we shall propose no more.

It will be some difficulty to clear, if Christ, before his incarnation, did execute this part of his office, and with that difference he doth it now. The scriptures indeed of the New Testament do speak of Christ's intercession, as not only posterior to his incarnation, but also to the whole state of his humiliation; which is often spoken of as that which doth qualify and fit him for this office; yea, the scriptures do ever presuppose his resurrection and ascension; yet as it cannot be denied that Christ was intercessor on earth, though he was not in the forementioned manner appearing in heaven; so it cannot be denied, that Christ did execute this office before his being man; for he was Mediator, King, Priest, and Prophet, before his incarnation; neither can any warrantably say, that believers then did want this consolation, and in scripture we will find some grounds bearing forth all the essentials of intercession; as first, In that parable of the vine-dresser's interceding with the Master, Luke xiii. we have the Mediator's reverend interposing represented to us, and that before his incarnation; beside, what is holden forth by the typical services, as praying towards the holy temple, the holy oracle, the high-priest's making intercession, as well as offering sacrifice, and such like, do evidence that respect is had to Christ's intercession. *Secondly*, We will find this sympathy and being affected with the condition of his people: that is a great word, Isa. lxiii. ver. 9. *In all their affliction he was afflicted, and in his love and pity he redeemed them and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old:* this speaketh a sympathy, flowing from a covenant-relation, even before he was incarnate. Again, Prov. viii. ver. 31. he speaketh of his delight, and rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, that is, in these that were given him, and even in the places in a manner where they were to reside: which sympathy seemeth to flow from the very appointment of him to be head to such a number. *Thirdly*, He being then Mediator, could not be an advocate, and have his judicial appearances, to say so, for his people, there being no less need then than now. *Fourthly*, As what concerneth his willingness to have his people well in that time, cannot be denied from that one place of

place of Iſaiah juſt now cited, ſo neither can his interceſſion be denied.

If it be aſked, where the difference lieth; we anſwer eſpecially in theſe three or four. *Firſt*, In the ground of the interceſſion: It was then done in virtue of the ſacrifice to be offered; now it is performed by, and grounded upon, the virtue of the ſatisfaction that is already given and finiſhed upon the croſs. *Secondly*, There is a difference in reſpect of the bleſſed Interceſſor, who, being then God, hath now taken a new relation to him, by aſſuming our nature in one perſon to his divine nature; whereby he is not only capable in a more ſuitable way to ſympathize, but actually hath ſubmitted himſelf to ſuffer, for this very end, as was formerly hinted. So that though he cannot have larger bowels than formerly he had; yet hath he now a new experimental way of being affected with our griefs, and of being provoked to heal the ſame. *Thirdly*, There followeth a difference in his manner of interceding, which is now done in our nature, for in it he appeareth before God; alſo touches of our ills, and his ſympathy with us are more ſuitable to our nature, and do more experimentally impreſs and affect him than before. *Laſtly*, There is this difference, that though before there was conſolation to his people from his interceſſion, yet it is much more now; and therefore it is ſo often and fully inſiſted on in the New Teſtament, beſide what was hinted, that then his ſympathy flowed from his deputation and appointment, but now from his human nature and the experience thereof.

To come then to ſpeak of that conſolation, and the grounds thereof, there is need hereof a ſpirit dipped therein, for fitting to conceive and ſpeak aright thereof; however, that it cannot but be ground of conſolation, may appear from theſe conſiderations.

Firſt, From the conſideration of the bleſſed Interceſſor himſelf, whom we look upon as the Father's fellow and equal, who, tho' condeſcending to take on him the place of a Mediator or Mid-perſon, yet, is he *the brightneſs of the Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon*, Heb. i. and this excellency of the perſon cannot but be comfortable to the poor baſe ſinner. Again, we may conſider him as man, and ſo as our brother; yea, as an afflicted man acquainted with griefs and tempted; and ſo we may conceive him as our phyſician, who hath not only learned, to ſay ſo, ſome ſkill in an experimental way, how to guide theſe that are tempted or afflicted; but alſo as fitted with the more ſympathy, affection, and tenderneſs to improve that ſkill for their good. Hence, Heb. ii. 18. he is ſaid to be able to ſuccour them that are tempted, he himſelf having been tempted in all things, yet without ſin: where his being tempted is ſuppoſed to be a furniſhing with excellent abilities, tenderly to ſupply and ſuccour ſuch as may be in the like caſe: the ſame alſo may be gathered from Heb. iv. 15, 16. Now, he who is thus diverſly conſidered, being yet but one perſon, what more can be imagined for comfort? for though he be high, yet have ſinners acceſs to him; and though he be man, for emboldening them to approach to him, yet being God-man he is able to ſtand before juſtice and plead, when no meer creature durſt appear.

Secondly, We may conſider the grounds of this office, and the ends thereof; to ſpeak with reverence of our bleſſed Lord Jeſus, it is nothing that is occaſional or accidental; but it doth flow from the Father's appointment who hath conſtituted him, and that by oath, to be a Prieſt for ever, Pſal. cx. And for this end doth he ſuſtain this office, and live for ever that he may ſave to the uttermoſt all that come to God by him, Heb. vii. 25. Now that this interceſſion is a thing of old, determined in the counſel of God; and that it was determined for this end, that ſinners who were baniſhed from God's preſence might again have acceſs, and find grace to help in time of need, Heb. iv. ver. 16. and x. 19. &c. This cannot but be exceeding comfortable.

Thirdly, We may conſider the comfort of this interceſſion, in reſpect of the extent and reach thereof: which we may point at in theſe four, *Firſt*, in reference to all caſes; it is a great word, Iſa. lxiii. *In all their affliction he was afflicted*, &c. and this was even in the days of old, before the Word was made fleſh; and therefore it muſt be conceived to be much more freſh and lively, in ſo far as concerneth that ſympathy which the human nature had with it. *Secondly*, This extent appeareth in reſpect of perſons; for all that will make uſe of Chriſt, and come to God, are admitted; neither was there ever a ſinner that offered to make uſe of Chriſt in approaching to God, or ſought to have peace with God through that mids, but this interceſſion did bear him through, as that great word is, Heb. vii. 25. *He is able to ſave to the uttermoſt all that come to God by him, ſeeing he liveth for*

ever to make interceſſion for them. And if men will not make uſe of Chriſt, they do in this forſake their own mercy. *Thirdly*, The reach of this conſolation may be conſidered as to the degree; it is a perfect ſalvation that cometh by this interceſſion: it is from every evil, and that to the uttermoſt, ſo that more cannot be imagined, as that ſame word is, Heb. vii. 25. *He ſaveth to the uttermoſt*, or unto perfection. *Fourthly*, Its extent may be looked to in reſpect of the parties againſt whom Chriſt intercedeth. There is no party but this doth give a daſh unto it, whether devil, challenge, temptation, or what elſe; upon this the triumph proceedeth, Rom. viii. 33, 34, &c. *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* which is a defying word to all: and theſe are the grounds, *it is God that juſtifieth; it is Chriſt that died, yea, rather that is riſen again, ſitteth at the right hand of God*, where this of making interceſſion cloſeth the triumphal defiance given by the apoſtle. All which, being put together, can it be but comfortable, that there is ſuch a compleat delivery, whether from ſin or miſery, and that of whatſoever ſort?

Fourthly, The conſolation of this interceſſion may be conſidered in reſpect of its efficacy; for, as Chriſt can refuſe no cauſe put on him, but muſt intercede, being employed; ſo he cannot *but be heard always*, as he ſaith himſelf, John xi. and ſo his promiſe is, *Whatever ye aſk in my name, it ſhall be done unto you*, John xiv. 13, 14. *yea whatever ye aſk in my name, I will do it:* where the Interceſſor being the executor of what he pleadeth for, it cannot be but comfortable, and it is ſuitable to the terms of the covenant it ſhould be ſo.

Fifthly, We may conſider the ſovereignty and freeneſs of this interceſſion, which tendeth not a little to the conſolation of God's people: for, in the exerciſe thereof, our bleſſed Lord Jeſus hath not tied himſelf to wait on our prayers, or on our ſight and ſenſe of, or weightineſs with our own evils either of ſin or miſery, but often his way appeareth to be very gracious, and ſovereignty condeſcending, that he anſwereth before we call, Iſa. lxv. 24. and that he interpoſeth, even when we are like fruitleſs trees troubling the ground, Luke xiii. and when we are ſecure not minding the ſnares the devil is laying for us, as Luke xxii. 32. he prayeth for Peter that his faith fail not, he, in the mean time knoweth not any ſuch ſnare. Hence, in the ſcripture, grace is exalted, and ſinners are invited to come with boldneſs thereunto, upon this ground of Chriſt's interceſſion as much as any: So Heb. iv. when the compaſſionateneſs of this High Prieſt hath been ſpoken to, this concluſion is drawn from it, *Let us therefore approach with boldneſs unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need:* Here grace hath a throne; and he that ſeeketh upon this account, may expect to find mercy and grace, as that which aboundeth moſt under this dominion, and about this throne. It is from this ground of his interceſſion, that ſo many evils are prevented and kept back from the people of God, which have even been at their door: and where the mercies which we obtain, and that without any direct petitioning of the Lord for them, and the many evils which we are liable to, and might and would come, if the Lord prevented not, we ourſelves in the mean time, being but little watchful to have them prevented: were theſe, I ſay, conſidered, how much? O! how very much would we find ourſelves obliged to the Interceſſor, from whom his people have all theſe? Yea, if we will conſider this freeneſs more nearly, we will find that this interceſſion and ſympathy is not broken off, and made leſs, becauſe of the believers ſin; but is in ſome reſpect the more ſtirred and provoked, becauſe this ſympathy floweth from the relation that is betwixt head and members, which ſin doth not cut off; and it is as with a tender natural parent who cannot but be affected with the child's ſtraits, even though he hath ſhamefully brought them on himſelf; yea, his very failings do touch and affect: ſo our High Prieſt's ſympathy is not only in croſſes, but it is to have pity on the ignorant, and compaſſion on theſe that are out of the way, Heb. v. and thus the very ſin of a believer affecteth him ſo, that he cannot but ſympathize, and be provoked to ſympathize with him.

O what a wonder is this, the more ſin the more ſympathy! which ought to make believers humble, and yet exceedingly to comfort them under a ſinful condition: for it is written, *If any man ſin, we have an Advocate*, 1 John ii. 1. whereby, in ſome ſingular manner, Chriſt's interceſſion is ſuited unto, appointed and deſigned for ſinners.

The laſt thing wherein we ſhall conſider the conſolation of this interceſſion, is, the ſympathy from whence it floweth, and which it carrieth along

with it; this is a main ground of conſolation, which doth ſweeten all the reſt.

We may conſider this humane ſympathy, either as it giveth a ground of conſolation to us, or as it doth ſomeway make us more capable to conceive of the conſolation that doth flow from the conſideration of the bowels of Jeſus; both which tend to our actual comfort.

That there is an humane ſympathy in the Man-Chriſt with the believer, cannot be denied, the ſcriptures (whereof ſome paſſages have been cited) are ſo clear; only we ſhall give ſome properties thereof, for helping to underſtand the ſame ſo far as we can reach.

Firſt, Then, we ſay, it is a real, and humane ſympathy: when we ſay it is real, it doth not only import, that he knoweth the afflictions of his people, nor only that he mindeth help to them, which two do agree to the Lord Jehovah; but it importeth a ſenſible, native, and, to ſay ſo, a natural touch of theſe evils; for he is not one *that cannot be touched with the fellow feeling of our infirmities*, Heb. iv. This is as one brother is affected with the ſtraits of another, eſpecially ſtraits that himſelf hath formerly felt; this muſt needs be aſſerted as that which follows the reality of Chriſt's Manhead, who, as ſuch, cannot but be ſuppoſed to have what properties are belonging to a man.

I called it humane ſympathy to diſtinguiſh it from that figurative ſympathy which was applicable to him before his incarnation. This ſympathy is really for kind, as one friend hath to another, a father or mother to their children, as frequent expreſſions in ſcripture do hold forth, and is the believing of the reality of this humane ſympathy, that openeth the door to all the following conſolations, viz. that our Lord Jeſus hath a humane heart, ſtirred and affected in that ſame manner, yet unconceivably holy, as ours are towards our friends and children in their neceſſities; and though Chriſt be glorified, yet ceaſeth he not to be true man, and ſo not to want this ſympathy.

Secondly, This ſympathy is ſinleſs in him, it hath much muddineſs and bias in us; yea, thro' ſin it is much obſtructed and cooled, ſo that ſelfiſhneſs drowneth much of this, or miſcarrieth it in the exerciſe thereof; but with our Lord Jeſus it is not ſo, he is every way pure, who knew no ſin, nor was capable to be tempted therewith. Therefore ſympathy muſt be the more excellent, in that it cannot miſtake, or miſcarry in reference to any object it ſhall have occaſion to act upon.

Thirdly, His ſympathy is perfect: and though while he was on earth, there was a purity beyond what we can conceive; yet, being now exalted to glory, even in his human nature, as all that is in him, ſo his ſympathy and bowels muſt be much more ſhining and glorious, as being now at the height of all the perfections that may make a true man in the moſt excellent manner to ſympathize with others. Therefore if we would conceive the yearning of bowels, or ſympathy of a hundred natural fathers or mothers towards their children in difficulties, yet all is nothing to this of our exalted Prince and Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe affections ſtir him, though more inconceivably, yet with more tenderneſs, faithfulneſs, and dear reſpect to the good of his people.

Fourthly, This ſympathy is the ſympathy of a man, who is God and man in one perſon, having both natures perſonally united; and what can be more for conſolation, and for the commending of this to believers? for ſo his qualifications cannot be but at the height of perfection; ſo there can be nothing hid from him, and he will not fail to be touched with their neceſſities; and which is wonderful comfort, he is touched with them, and ſympathizeth whether they themſelves be touched with them or not, whether they know them or not, or whether they make addreſs to him or not, even as a tender mother will be affected with her child's hazard, though it doth not complain. And by this, the believer hath not only affections to be warmed by the conſideration of Chriſt's ſympathy, and humane bowels, but alſo hath a ground to ſtay his faith in diving theſe, and comforting himſelf in theſe, becauſe they are bowels of a perſon who may be lippened to, and reſted upon, as no mere man can be.

Laſtly, This ſympathy of the human nature Man-Chriſt, is agreeable unto his divine will; for though there be two natures, yet there is but one perſon; and though he hath different wills, yet he cannot have oppoſite wills; and therefore what he may be conceived in his will, and pity to will to us as man, that ſame muſt be conceived to be made effectual to us as he is God, which is the concluſion of this conſolation.

Again, we ſaid, this humane ſympathy may

be conſidered, as it putteth us in a capacity to conceive of the conſolation that cometh by him; for the more ſpiritual an object be, the leſs do we conceive of it, and when the ſcripture ſpeaketh of the Lord's bowels and ſympathy, that is not eaſily reached or conceived: but when we have the bowels or ſympathy of a true man ſpoken of, we are more able to reach that, and know what it is, and ſo are more ready to be affected with the conſolation that ſuiteth ſo with us: we conceive it is no little part of the believer's conſolation, that in God's condeſcenſion, this ſympathy is ſo moulded, as to keep ſtill properties of the human nature: now the believer hath him as it were his brother, that ſucked the breaſts of his mother: now he hath him as his friend, having the ſame affections and qualifications that he himſelf hath, yet ſinleſs; now he may ſometimes gather from his own affections within himſelf, the earning of the bowels of Chriſt, or a reſemblance of what is in him, and may conclude, O what vaſt bowels and ſympathy muſt be in him! and yet all this is but a poor hint of the excellent and ſtrong conſolation that this part of our Lord's prieſthood furniſheth. What muſt Jeſus be when known and poſſeſſed? and what might his people be in the triumph of a comfortable life, if the breaſts of thoſe conſolations were ſucked by them?

The laſt thing to be ſpoken to is, how this conſolation is to be improven by believers? And tho' this be the main uſe of all, yet how great difficulty is it to get our hearts up ſeriouſly to be in love therewith, and to be longing to be made dexterous in the improving of it? the truth is, except that one Spirit touch our hearts with ſome impreſſion of that ſympathy, and kindle ſomething in us, it will want its native luſtre.

The firſt general that we would propoſe, is, that men would ſtudy to know the fulneſs that is in Jeſus, that they would conſider the High-prieſt of our profeſſion, Heb. iii. 1. and endeavour to be acquainted with his excellency; and in particular with this, that ſo there may be a throughneſs in the faith of theſe truths, whereof I fear there be too much ignorance and unbelief in the viſible church. O that men were truly convinced that Chriſt hath ſuch an office, and that now, as man, he doth with a humane ſympathy perform the ſame! I ſuppoſe there are even many, not amongſt the worſt, who yet all their days have been without the benefit of this, becauſe they have never known him, nor conſidered what uſe ſhould be made of, and what benefit doth flow from the Mediator's being man, but do ſtill carry in every thing, without reſpect thereto; and it is like, that even many very gracious ſouls have but little ſpiritual ſkill and dexterity in this matter.

Secondly, In our addreſſes to God, faith would be exerciſed on Jeſus Chriſt, even in reſpect to this part of his office, that is, that as there is a reſting by faith on Chriſt's ſatisfaction, for attaining of pardon, or what elſe is needful; ſo there ought to be a reſting on Chriſt as interceſſor, for the obtaining of what we are petitioning for before the throne. This putteth the obtaining of what we ſeek off ourſelves, and giveth the credit and glory thereof unto him.

Thirdly, Faith would not only reſpect Chriſt ſimply as an interceſſor, but as an interceſſor who is man in our nature, who hath experience of infirmities, and tender humane ſympathy towards us. The neglect of this, maketh Chriſt look like a ſtranger, and maketh the ſoul anxious even in its addreſſes to him.

Fourthly, Upon this conſideration there ought to be acceſs with holy boldneſs, the heart exulting in its approach to God, that it hath ſuch a new and living way as the vail of his fleſh, to approach to God by. It is often not only ſpoken of, but commended in the ſcripture, eſpecially in the epiſtle to the Hebrews, upon this ground, as chap. iv. ver. 16; and x. ver. 19, &c. Were this conſidered, it would baniſh the drooping, heartleſs approaches that believers make to God thro' Chriſt, as if they were coming to a ſtranger, whereas they approach to a brother, really and ſenſibly touched with their infirmities, and affected with them, as any brother on earth is with the infirmities of another.

Fifthly, The heart would keep confidence on this account, as to the event, however it be for the time: can it be but well with one with whom Chriſt ſo ſympathizeth? and ought not they then to comfort themſelves in the hope of an outgate? Paul triumpheth upon this conſideration, Rom. viii. that though there ſhould be perſecution, nakedneſs, ſword, &c. yet they ſhould not hurt him, nor ſeparate him from the love of God in Chriſt Jeſus, but that over all he ſhould be a conqueror; yea, more than a conqueror. This were well becoming

a believer in ſtraits, and were ſuitable to this ground of conſolation; and this confidence is to be humbly extended unto all ſorts of things which may mar the believer's conſolation here.

Sixthly, It is even requiſite to have the exerciſe of ſpiritual ſenſes for the right improving of this conſolation, ſo that believers would carry upon themſelves a little copy of that ſympathy that is in Jeſus Chriſt, and have ſtill upon their ſpirits an impreſſion of the reality thereof, that by meditating thereon, in lying down, riſing up or walking, &c. the heart may be refreſhed, and that excellent box of ointment may caſt a ſavour; neither can it be, that poor believing ſinners ſhould, without unſpeakable refreſhment and conſolation, conceive Chriſt Jeſus the bleſſed Mediator, to have ſuch thoughts of them, ſuch care of them in their ſtraits, ſuch a touch of, and fellow feeling with them, in their infirmities, as that a reproach upon them, a croſs or ſtrait, a hazard to ſin, or an actual fall doth touch and affect him, as the fall or ſtrait of the child doth affect a tender mother; and that we may with as great boldneſs approach to him, and have as confident expectation of a hearing with him, as children may to their moſt dearly loving mother: who can think of theſe things and not be affected? and were believers more in the thoughts of theſe, there would certainly be more comfort.

Seventhly, This would be to the believer the laſt refuge, and whatever come, it is never to be looſed or retired from; but when all looketh dark about, he is here to anchor, and on this interceſſion and ſympathy to caſt himſelf, and that not without hope that he who is a compaſſionate high-prieſt will give proof thereof, and even in the ſame particular. In a word, this conſolation might be improven againſt want and private ſtraits, againſt public difficulties: for he ſympathizeth with his church, and every member of it; it is moſt freſh in ſtraits, becauſe then his bowels are awake, moſt ſtirred and warmed; and it is a fortreſs againſt terror of death, ſeeing he died, and therefore hath the freſher ſympathy in that choke. It were even good, believers were acknowledging themſelves defective in this, and would endeavour the amending of it wherein there is hopes, that this compaſſionate High-prieſt would further them, and furniſh them with other ſort of helps and directions. To him be praiſe for ever.

LECTURE II.

Verſe 5. *And the angel took the cenſer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and caſt it in the earth; and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.*

6. *And the ſeven angels which had the ſeven trumpets, prepared themſelves to ſound.*

7. *The firſt angel ſounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were caſt upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green graſs was burnt up.*

IN the beginning of this chapter we find our Lord Jeſus taking off the ſuſpenſion and reſtraint, and making way for the breaking looſe of that judgment, which in the former chapter he had reſtrained. Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the greater Angel of the covenant, hath a double end in theſe three verſes, viz. the 3, 4. and 5. 1. To provide for his people, and to make them and their prayers acceptable to God, as the beſt guard againſt the coming ſtorm: and this is paſt in the former two verſes, viz. the 3d, and the 4th. 2. To give the word and ſign for the angels to ſound the alarm, that theſe judgments reſtrained by the four angels, chapter vii. might fall on: this is performed in this fifth verſe, wherein are two things, 1. The ſign given. 2. The effects.

1. The ſign is, that *he filleth the cenſer with fire of the altar, and caſteth it into the earth*: whereby both the ſign is given (as if he had now done that, for which he had inhibited them to hurt the earth, till it was performed, chap. vii.) and the nature of that judgment pointed at in three things, 1. In the object of it, it is caſt *into the earth*; by the *earth*, we underſtand the viſible church here, or that part of the earth where the viſible church ſojourneth, called, Matth. xiii. the field or world; becauſe as the world containeth all creatures, ſo it containeth all profeſſors, good and bad. It is the ſame earth the winds were not to blow upon, chap. vii. 1. Now they are let looſe; and it is ſuch a earth as hath trees, graſs, and green herbs growing in it; ſome whereof do wither, and are hurt, and carried away with this ſtorm, ſome are ſtill lively from, and keeped ſafe under God's ſeal

are meaned men ſealed and unſealed, which are no where but in the viſible church: and this is to be remembered in application of the trumpets afterward. 2. The ſign, expreſſing the nature of the judgment, is ſet out to be *fire-caſten*, &c. *Caſting of fire*, Ezek. x. 2. is holden forth to be a denunciation of judgment coming, and the Lord's departing from his temple; and ſo we take it to ſignify here ſome ſad judgment of a ſpiritual nature coming on the church. 3. It is ſaid to be taken from the altar; to ſhew what ſort of fire or contention it is, or whereabout it ſhould riſe; not about external civil things, but ſpiritual, according to Chriſt's word, Luke xii. 42. *I came to ſend fire on the earth*, &c. which being compared with Matth. x. is clear to be diviſions and variances about religion, kindled by a miſtaken and miſguided zeal in ſome, and by paſſion, pride, and enmity in others; it is kindled in the church, and floweth from the altar, and theſe that ſerve at it, and ſpreadeth in others, this is otherwiſe expounded by ſome, as Chriſt's ſending forth his Spirit and grace like fire in the hearts of his people: but, 1. This agreeth not ſo to the ſcope; for immediately the angels preparing themſelves, as taking the word to be given them by this. Nor, 2. Doth it agree ſo to the event or effect, which certainly is terrible, and expounded ſo through this book, chap. ix. and xi. ult. *Voices*, *thunderings*, and *earthquakes*, ſet out God's terror, eſpecially conſidering how they are linked together with judgments. And, 3. It agreeth beſt to the ſign of *caſting down fire from the altar*, which is oppoſed to his gracious *ſending up incenſe* added to the prayers of all ſaints, in the verſes before; and this followeth as his rejecting and caſting back ſuch ſervices, as it were, of others beſides his ſaints, there being a great difference between *incenſe aſcending* and *fire deſcending*: And Chriſt's uſing the ſame inſtrument, as the cenſer, for both ſheweth his doing it as Mediator, having all power in heaven and earth; and therefore it is ſaid, Luke xii. He came to ſend it not only occaſionally, but by his over-ruling, guiding, and timing of it, and expreſsly, as it is a judgment, it is ſaid, 2 Theſſ. ii. *He will ſend them ſtrong deluſions*, &c.

2. The effect of this is anſwerable, in the cloſe of the verſe, *There were voices, lightnings*, &c. which ſhew ſome terrible effect and ſtir that followed; for though *thunderings*, &c. may ſometimes be as an evidence of God's hearing prayer, 1 Sam. xii. 16. Yet conſidering how otherwiſe it is taken in this book, ſee chap. xi. 14. and xvi. 18. and that they follow the *caſting of fire on the earth*, and that the angels immediately ſound, who till now were reſtrained, we cannot but look upon it as a word given to them to make ready immediately upon the back of this ſign; the ſeven angels prepare to ſound, upon which, fire and other judgments followed, &c. And if it be aſked, why not before? It is inſinuated, they waited for orders, and the ſign and command which now they get. 2. Further obſerve, there is in theſe effects a gradation, and the ſharpeſt and ſoreſt is hindmoſt, and theſe ſteps may be for a little ſum of what was to follow by the ſounding of the firſt four trumpets, eſpecially as will appear.

Obſerve, 1. In this with its order, comparing it with what went before Chriſt's interceſſion and the ſaints, praying that judgments, even ſpiritual judgments of error, ſchiſm, diviſion, &c. may follow a praying time, and a praying frame of God's people, I mean on the viſible church, while the godly are ſerious in prayer, and hypocrites but diſſemble.

There may follow then very great ſpiritual judgments on a church, after a praying ſpirit hath been on the Lord's people in that church. All the ſaints have been praying before, though they were not acceptable, but through Chriſt's interceſſion; and yet, upon the back of that, followeth this judgment. Experience hath proven the truth of this; and it floweth partly from the malice of the devil, that rageth and worketh the more, the more inſtant and earneſt they be with God; partly from the judgment of God, plaguing godlineſs and formal hypocrites, who, in a praying time, join with the godly, but, as it is, 2 Theſſ. ii. have not the love of the truth, nor a practice ſuitable to it; and the more that ſuch pray, they draw on the more guilt accidentally, and there is the more giving up to be diſcovered; and partly, God may be forewarning, and fore-arming his people by ſuch a frame againſt ſuch a ſtorm. What marvel, if after our purity and praying, ſuch a judgment come to diſcover a multitude of graceleſs, profane hypocrites, and counterfeit diſſemblers, and to give them a fill of their own ways that were not in love with his? Beſide, God's people praying for Chriſt's

kingdom flouriſhing, and his people's proſperity, will haſten judgment on them who do not grow in it. Often inward enmity at the right way, when it is not received in love, though it may be in profeſſion, is plagued with outward outbreaking in wrong ways, more than if there had never been profeſſion. 2. This fire cometh from the altar, obſerve, that there is a fire that cometh from the altar that hath right terrible effects, i. e. by ſuch inſtruments, concerning ſuch a ſubject as belongeth to the altar, and followed that way. Or, thus, contention and ſtrife about ſpiritual things amongſt churchmen, and flowing from them to others, is a very ſad judgment, and hath terrible effects; it moſt marreth the beauty of the church, it obſtructeth the ſpiritual growth of God's people, and burneth up all their ſpiritual life. Lord, ſave us from this judgment, and make all his ſervants and people wary of the kindling of it, and make us more earneſt in prayer, that God would quench what of it is begun, leſt it go on to conſume us, *Obſerve*, 3. That theſe ſpiritual judgments are ordered and timed by Chriſt, who ſetteth bounds to them: his ſovereignty reacheth theſe things, the fire cometh not till he caſt it; the trumpets ſound not till he give them orders; 2 Theſſ. ii. he ſendeth ſtrong deluſion; Luke xii. *I come to ſend fire on the earth:* though the ſin be lying on them, and others be inſtrumental in it, yet the deluſion cometh not by gueſs; and when God in judgment plagueth, he hath his own way of ordering and timing it, as he thinketh meet; and were not his bridle put in the mouth of this judgment, we had been more conſumed with it ere now.

The ſixth verſe ſheweth, to what purpoſe this was; and in it, it is ſaid, *The ſeven angels prepared themſelves to ſound:* why not at firſt, when the trumpets were given them? *Anſw.* Becauſe, as we ſaid, they waited for orders; and now, orders being given, they delay not, but fall to do their duty: yet, 1. By preparing either themſelves, or their inſtruments for it. 2. By keeping due order, and not confounding their commiſſions, and the timing of theſe, neither precipitating without commiſſion, though furniſhed with gifts; nor raſhly, and confuſedly going about it, but with preparation and order: which things are certainly mentioned for imitation, that theſe who pray for grace to do God's will on earth, as it is done in heaven, may take this as a pattern, eſpecially ſuch as are intruſted to be heralds, and do ſound his trumpets.

1. They are ſet apart and deſigned for this office; ſo ſhould miniſters, they ſhould look well, they be deſigned for this office, and have their calling clear, as theſe ſeven angels were ſeparated from others to this work. 2. Trumpets are given them, that is, they are furniſhed with gifts; whomſoever he deſigneth for an office in his houſe, he furniſheth them, and giveth trumpets to all whom he calleth to ſound. 3. When they have gotten trumpets, they will not blow until he command to ſound: it is not gifts that warrant men to preach, but they muſt have particular orders when to do it. The word muſt be taken from his mouth, when, where, and how he ſhall order it. 4. They are prepared, adviſed, and wary in going about the work when they are called to ſound: God's giving of gifts, and orders to exerciſe them, is not enough, except men prepare themſelves for the work, and be adviſed and wary in going about it, as Paul to Timothy, 2 Tim. i. 6. *Stir up the gift that is in thee, &c.* 5. They are diligent and faithful in their execution, when they have gotten orders and are prepared; although the meſſage be heavy, faithfulneſs and diligence is a good property of a miniſter of Chriſt. 6. They keep an orderly way of proceeding in diſcharging their duty, every one in their ſtation, and not in a confuſed way: ſo it becometh miniſters: and miniſters being reſembled to angels; and their giving of warning to the ſounding of the trumpet, their office and duty may be thus pointed at here. *Laſtly*, Sounding of a trumpet, implieth diſtinctneſs. 1 Cor. xiv. and ſtatelineſs and power in the manner of carrying their commiſſion, giving alarm convincingly and plainly, which notably agreeth to miniſters.

Followeth, from the ſeventh verſe and forward, their ſounding: where there is in every trumpet, 1. The ſounding. 2. The effect or conſequent of the ſounding; and that is the judgment that followed. 3. The object of the judgment, the earth. And, 4. The extent, fruits and effects of the judgment.

To underſtand more particularly this propheſy of the trumpets, which is an hard place, and needeth God's ſpecial direction in it, which we humbly deſire, we premit theſe conſiderations or obſervations, which may in ſome things fix us in the opening of it.

1. For its beginning, riſe, and cloſe; it is cleared before, to riſe after the breaking of that little peace the church enjoyed under Conſtantine, and to cloſe at Antichriſt's begun fall, when he is brought to a height, and the vials begin to be poured out.

2. It is not only cotemporary with, but hath reſpect unto the prophesy of the beaſts, chap. xiii. and chap. xi. ver. 7. As alſo the riſe and cloſe of that propheſy of the beaſts, will fall under the ſame times and marches: whereby it appeareth (conſidering alſo, chap. vii. 1. &c. and what was ſaid there) they do moſt directly belong to the church, and that in ſpiritual trials.

3. Conſider that the fifth trumpet looketh clearly to Antichriſt and his diſcovery openly, as appeareth by comparing verſe 4. chap. ix. with verſe 8. chap. xiii. The ſame perſons, and by the ſame mark, are keeped from the ſpiritual hurt of both; as alſo, that the ſixth trumpet bringeth the Mahometans upon the back of that, The Turks being raiſed as a ſcourge for the idolatry of the former, which are the firſt two great woes; and the firſt four are leſſer in compariſon of theſe. Now this diſcovery of Antichriſt will be about the ſix hundred year, or a little after: the firſt four then muſt precede that time, and continue the ſtate of the church from the three hundred or thereby (where the ſeal is cloſed) till that time.

4. Conſider that the main drift is to diſcover that defection of the viſible church, in declining by ſteps from purity in doctrine, and ſimplicity in worſhip, which endeth in Antichriſt's height; and alſo conſider it, as it is penal, every ſtep of their ſin and defection being, in God's righteous judgment, penal; including in it ſome ſpiritual plague, and carrying alongſt with it, or on the back of it, ſome temporal judgment on the world, and exerciſe or trial on the godly, eſpecially under Antichriſt.

5. Conſider that it doth not ſo much point at particulars, either of things or perſons, as to ſhew the general ſtate of the church in theſe ſucceſſive times, by whatſomever inſtruments or events of all ſorts, having influence on her declining, and eſpecially as they make way for Antichriſt's growth, by weakening the church, or ſhaking the empire: which being the main ſcope, is more clearly inſiſted on in the xi. chap. and in the viſion, chap. xii, xiii, and xiv. Therefore may they in part be of a mixed nature, as they ſtand in reference to this ſcope.

6. It is obſervable, that as in all the other changes of periods, ſo in this, the overturning of the viſible church is compared to the overturning of the world, and plaguing the earth, ſea, rivers, ſun, moon, &c. There are three worlds mentioned, which ſucceſſively are defaced by the three principal propheſies of this book. 1. The heathen world, it is overturned together, chap. vi. and under the ſixth ſeal. 2. To it ſucceedeth the Chriſtian world, when religion hath liberty, and the countenance of the Roman authority; this is defaced ſucceſſively under the trumpets, by that world's declining to be Antichriſtian, and by his getting authority and power on his ſide, and bringing the church witneſſes and ſaints low. This popiſh, or Antichriſtian world, is deſtroyed under the vials, in the ſame expreſſions of the ſea, earth, &c. All which ſtates of the church, in the empire, are compared to different worlds, and their overturning or defacing, to the changing of the world, while it is only the church or religion in the world, which ſuffereth change.

7. If we look to the trumpets, as the effects follow them, and to the vials and their effects, there is a great ſuitableneſs between them in all. The firſt trumpet is on the earth, and ſo is the firſt vial poured out on it; the ſecond on the ſea; the third on the rivers, in both; ſo the fourth on the ſun. The fifth trumpet bringeth out Antichriſt as on his throne, the fifth vial is poured out on the ſeat or throne of the beaſt; the ſixth trumpet looſeth the four angels at Euphrates, the vial drieth up that river: whereby it appeareth, that God deſtroyeth Antichriſt in that ſame method he grew, and cleareth his church, as ſhe was in ſeveral ſteps darkened, obſcured and troubled; that as Antichriſt brought in a new counterfeit church, or world by degrees, overturning what was before, ſo ſhall he be deſtroyed. And therefore as the deſtruction of Antichriſt and his world is clearly intended by the vials; ſo this world, which is overturned here, muſt be underſtood of the viſible church, on whoſe ruins that Antichriſtian world was erected, ſeeing the riſe of Antichriſt inferreth the defacing of the church, and that by the ſame ſteps, and in the ſame method, as his ruin followeth by the vials. Neither can there be any other reaſon given of the accurate reſemblance which is between the trumpets and vials, which yet cannot be thought to be without reaſon, neither can there be any overturning of the Antichriſtian world, till it be built; nor can it be

thought to be builded, but under the trumpets, viz. after the heatheniſh world is paſt and the Chriſtian built; yea, after the Chriſtian world beginneth to decay: all which fall under the trumpets; for, two of thoſe worlds cannot ſtand together; yet ſtill one of them followeth upon the back of the other, ſo as the overturning of the heatheniſh world ſupponeth Chriſtianity to ſucceed; and as the deſtroying of the Antichriſtian world by the vials, ſupponeth purity to ſucceed, ſo here the decay of the Chriſtian world ſupponeth the Antichriſtian to ſucceed. All which, being put together, 1. It is clear, that the declining of the church from purity, and that the riſe and diſcovery of Antichriſt, is the main ſcope of theſe trumpets. 2. That we muſt expound *earth*, *mountains*, *waters*, *jun*, *&c.* to be ſomething in the church, bearing an analogy to theſe things in the world.

8. Yet we ſay, theſe trumpets are not to be ſo bounded, as if the firſt were cotemporary with Antichriſt's diſcovery and ſenſible riſe, which is in the fifth; for, then there would be a great void in the propheſy, in paſſing over many conſiderable events in the church, during the ſecond three hundred years, wherein truth and Chriſt's kingdom were much concerned, which we conceive could not be omitted in this propheſy; and yet no where elſe can be thought to be ſet down; we are therefore to look on them as they hold out the church's firſt ſtorms after the world became Chriſtian, and whereby ſhe was exerciſed during the time of Antichriſt's ſecret and unſeen working, who took occaſion from all theſe to fix himſelf; and by all which, the world was by degrees diſpoſed to receive him, who after the firſt four trumpets, is found to ſtep out under the fifth; and this we conceive to be the reaſon why the firſt four trumpets are diſtinguiſhed from the laſt three, which contain the hiſtory of Antichriſt after his full manifeſtation.

From which conſiderations, we ſuppoſe it is clear, 1. That theſe trumpets denote the ſtate of the church, with ſome order of time. There is certainly order in the three laſt trumpets, in reſpect of themſelves, and in reſpect of theſe which precede, and therefore it is not the clearing of them, to expound them of kinds of hereſies in a confuſion, as agreeing to any time. 2. That they do not principally intend temporal changes on the Roman empire, as the object of theſe mutations, or as vindictive on them for their former perſecutions, (tho' theſe ſpiritual ills be ſet out in expreſſions ſuiting temporal judgments, even as the church's diſputes with heretics are ſet out by fightings, and ſuch like) for, the ſaints and witneſſes eſpecially, ſuffer temporally here, when all the world otherwiſe rejoiceth, chap. xi. It remaineth then, that the object is the viſible church; the nature of them is ſpiritual principally (as is ſaid before) with temporal exerciſes on the church, and judgments on the empire.

The order and ſum of the trumpets then we conceive to be this. The four firſt trumpets (which comparatively with the other three following, are the leſſer woes) hold forth the church's declining and weakening from under Conſtantine (as was touched before) about the three hundred and twentieth year, when Antichriſt had his working under ground, till his diſcovery, which is in the fifth trumpet, about the year ſix hundred and odd, holden out in theſe ſteps, 1. What was ſet upon in all theſe trumpets, and in what order. 2. By what means. 3. With what ſucceſs and fruit.

1. Enemies publicly ſet upon the very foundation of Chriſtianity, without which a man is no Chriſtian, as if Chriſt be by nature God (if he was φυσει θεος, in oppoſition to Arius) of the ſame eſſence with the Father, though a different perſon, which, who believed not, in the primitive times, was juſtly accounted no Chriſtian. This was done by diſcovered and open heretics, ſuch as Arius, Macedonius, Eutyches, Neſtorius, &c. ſtriking all of them at the perſon and natures of our Lord Jeſus. This was a violent ſtorm, ſtriking at the foundation, and took away many profeſſors of all ſorts, yet the earth itſelf ſtood like a rock, though trees on it were burnt up. All theſe hereſies were rejected by the church, and condemned by the firſt four famous general councils. The firſt whereof was convened at Nice, by Conſtantine, about the year 325. wherein was condemned the hereſy of Arius, who denied the Godhead of Jeſus Chriſt, or that he was by nature God, as the Father was, though he accounted him more than a man, and ſo differeth from Photinus. The ſecond was at Conſtantinople, by Gratian and Theodoſius, anno 380. In this was condemned the hereſy of Macedonius, who denied the perſonality of the Holy Ghoſt, the third perſon of the bleſſed Trinity: his followers therefore were called πνευματομαχοι, that is, fighters againſt

the ſpirit. The third was at Epheſus, under Theodoſus the ſecond, anno 431. It condemned Neſtorius, who made Chriſt to have two perſons as two natures. The fourth was at Chalcedon, under Martianus, anno 451. This rejected the doctrine of Eutyches, who in oppoſition to Neſterius, attributed to Chriſt but one nature, thus confounding his natures, as the former had divided his perſon. In the computation of theſe times, it is not to be expected that we can be ſo peremptory, there being ſome little difference amongſt authors, according to their various timing of events, yet without any material prejudice to the truth of the hiſtory. This is the firſt trumpet.

2. This ſtorm being by, diſcovered enemies, Satan cometh not ſo good ſpeed; he aſſayeth, next, the corrupting of government, by removing of which, he might have fair acceſs to what he pleaſed or intended to bring in afterward. To effectuate this, he inflameth the churchmen with pride, and from it, for precedency, wakeneth contention (as once he did amongſt the apoſtles) whereby the work of God was much retarded, and poor ſouls ſtumbled, and the ordinances of Chriſt (eſpecially government) corrupted. Who would ſee this may read Pleſſæus' myſtery of iniquity, about the four hundred year, and what dealing there was with the eaſt church, and falſifying of votes of ſynods, as that of Nice, proven from authentic copies, for that end ſought and found by the fathers of Afric, may be ſeen Cent. Magdeburgh; yea, alſo in Baronius. This prevaileth, the mountain taketh fire, and becometh low in its grandeur and ſpiritual weight and credit, and all are infected with this, to be more about outward pomp than inward power, about earthly things more than ſpiritual. This is the ſecond trumpet.

3. The devil (having prevailed this much by churchmen) ſetteth on next to poiſon fountains and rivers which men drink of and live upon; doctrines were ſomewhat clear before, and fundamentals were not eaſily overthrown, while government and unity were in force. Now he poiſoneth ſound doctrine in the mouths of miniſters; and free-will, juſtification by good works and external holineſs, merit, diſpenſations, pennances, purgatory, ſacraments, *opus operatum*, eſpecially traditions, are brought in: whereby the wholeſome word was corrupted in many places of the world, and its native purity loſt; and inſtruments were made uſe of in this, who once ſeemed to ſhine in the church, as Pelagius, Origen, &c. This is the third trumpet.

4. In the fourth trumpet, the light is further obſcured, and the beauty of pure doctrine in the church darkened, the ſcripture is vailed and kept up, ignorance foſtered, tradition is brought in place of ſcripture, will-worſhip, and ceremonies for the practice of holy duties, &c. Whereby the glorious light of the goſpel and of the church was darkened, and grew dim, making way for Antichriſt's riſing, though it increaſed much more under him, yet even then men were more taken up with monkiſhneſs, and theſe toys, than with things which were more profitable, out of which darkneſs, Antichriſt, at laſt, ſtart up, and took it on him, in the fifth trumpet: whereupon followeth Mahomet in the ſixth, as his and the world's ſcourge, until the vials make a turn, and this height of Antichriſt be brought down even as he roſe; which ſeries of the vials beginneth with the ſeventh trumpet.

This ſeries agreeth well with the types, and alſo with the truth of the event in the matter of fact, as afterward ſucceeded, and ſo the church is waſted, blaſted, and way made for Antichriſt by theſe firſt four; and therefore there can be no unwarrantableneſs in ſpeaking thus of them. It agreeth alſo well with the ſcope, in ſhewing Antichriſt's riſe by theſe ſteps: only take that advertiſement which we gave on the ſeals, that though there be an order in the riſe of theſe things one after another, yet neither would we be peremptory in timing it, or aſcribing it to particular events, nor yet think that one endeth or goeth away when the other cometh; nay, they continue together, and do compleat the church's darkening, as it was with the diſpenſations under the ſeals; the firſt continued till the laſt, but had order in its riſing, ſo here. And though ſomething of the latter trumpets might be working, even as ſoon as the former, and, no doubt, the fifth began to work ſoon, yet the trumpet looketh at ſuch a thing in a height, or its diſcovery, and ſo the ſecond was working under the firſt, but did not break out till the firſt was ſome length proceeded.

We come now particularly to the angels ſounding. The firſt ſoundeth in the ſeventh verſe, where we are to conſider, beſide the ſounding, theſe three

things, 1. The judgment threatned, or the ſign of it, *Fire and hail mingled with blood;* a very great ſtorm. 2. Its object, the earth. 3. The effect, the *third part of trees and all green graſs was burnt up:* It is like, it alludeth to one of the plagues of Egypt, whereby much deſolation was wrought; here it ſignifieth a ſpiritual ſtorm called hail, partly, becauſe of its cold, blaſting, and terrible nature, eſpecially in theſe countries, it being the great cauſe of barrenneſs and unfruitfulneſs then; partly, becauſe of the hurtfulneſs of it; ſo it ſignifieth that which hereſy, in general, floweth from, and carrieth with it, viz. coldneſs in practice of religion towards God, and affection towards others, making men cold within, and barren and unfruitful without; but this hail is more than an ordinary blaſt and ſtorm, coming impetuouſly, though not laſting long. 2. There is fire, in terrible tempeſts, they were mixed; and this ſignifieth, the rent of unity in practice and affection, by contention and paſſion, as the former the defacing of doctrine by ſome terrible error. So, Luke xii. 44. *I came to ſend fire on the earth*, and James iii. it is ſaid, the tongue is ſet on fire and kindleth others. This fire of diviſion is a companion of hereſy; and hereſies do often more hurt to the church by their contentions and ſchiſms than by their doctrines, it being the kindling of this fire, that, in the judgment of many, denominateth one an heretic, which he would not be by his ſimple adhering to an error, if nothing were of this. As alſo it is obſervable, that hail, which is cold, hath fire with it, like Ephraim, Hoſ. vii. 8. who was like an unturned cake, hot beneath, and cold affections above, theſe go together, much zeal in an erroneous opinion and heat for that, which is ever accompanied with coldneſs in more fundamental things; the colder men be in the one, the hotter are they in the other, as the Phariſees were for their own traditions zealous, but in God's commands indifferent. 3. It is *mingled with blood:* which holdeth out the bloody nature of hereſy, and of this meaned here; which we think rather to be underſtood of their putting faithful oppoſers to ſuffering, for withſtanding their doctrine, than their ſuffering for it: this alſo is a fruit of their fiery ſpirit, that when words prevail not, and their falſhood is diſcovered, they run to open violence; and there is no cruelty like this of heretics.

2. The object of this judgment, is, the earth. And, 3. The effects are, the *burning up a third part of trees and all green graſs.*

1. By earth, we underſtand, 1. Either indefinitely the viſible church, which is ſet upon and defaced in its moſt clear and plain truths, chap. vii. 1. Or, 2. More eſpecially the foundations of it, ſuch truths as are moſt ſolidly to be believed, without which the viſible church cannot ſtand, as that concerning the perſon, natures, and office, of the Son of God, as the earth in the Pagan world, chap. vi. and in the Antichriſtian world, chap. xvi. may and doth ſignify their foundations, and what ſeemed moſt ſtrong in them, and eſſential to them, when their foundation were ſhaken, they muſt fail; ſo here the right confeſſion of Chriſt, and pure doctrine of faith in him, is called the foundation, or rock, on which the church is builded, Matth. xvi. Or, *Thirdly*, it may ſhew the ſpreading of this plague, or ſore, over the very face of the church, in reſpect of its extent, there being no part of the earth free of it.

3. *The burning up of trees, and all green graſs*, holdeth forth, 1. The dreadful effects of this judgment on eminent profeſſors, ſome for gifts and knowledge; ſome may be for grace; and withal ſome eminent for place and authority, called *trees*, as taller and ſtronger than others: and upon *all graſs*, as if an utter barrenneſs followed it, and a pleaſant land were turned to a burnt-up wilderneſs, that nothing almoſt was free from the hurt of that plague. 2. Yet it is limited, and a third part but of trees burnt up; many eminent men are kept free

Now, if we come to particular application of it, it is done. 1. As ſome think, in reſpect of temporal judgments on the empire; which is in this time followed by the Goths, Vandals, &c. 2. As others think, in reſpect of particular hereſies, viz. of the Arians, Macedonians, Neſtorians, Pelagians, &c. Or, 3. As others in reſpect of Antichriſt's, riſe, as ſomething crept in, tending to his bringing forth in the church by ſeveral ſteps. But 4. They may be generally applied to the ſtate of the church in ſuch a time, under them all; yet, (looking more eſpecially to ſome remarkable particular, which we think ſafeſt, becauſe it is moſt comprehenſive, and yet not inconſiſtent with, but agreeth beſt to the ſcope, ſeries, and order, and to the effect) it ſheweth the declining ſtate of the church in reſpect of time, which alſo hath is ten-

dency to Antichriſt's heightening. For, 1. Hereſy maketh way for him who ſtill was fiſhing in troubled waters; and Rome, by its authority and outward greatneſs, had too much influence in theſe debates, as an umpire amongſt diſſentients. 2. The empire's diminiſhing proved a taking him out of the way which withheld, and ſo made ſtill a more open door for his riſing, 2 Theſſ. ii.

Yet we think the Arian hereſy, and what followed, accompanied and depended on it, is eſpecially holden forth by this firſt trumpet: and we account the Macedonian hereſy a branch of the ſame for theſe reaſons, 1. Becauſe this change and danger of the church, by it, was ſo great, that it is not like other ſtorms would be mentioned; and this paſt in ſilence; and no other place can be aſſigned ſo pertinent for it. 2. It agreeth and ſuiteth well with the ſeries and time of this ſtorm, which is the firſt, after that calm, the church had in Conſtantine's time.

3. The nature of it agreeth with it, 1. It was violent, and that againſt the moſt ſubſtantial and fundamental points of religion, viz. the Godhead of Chriſt and of the Holy Ghoſt, without which, there can be no Chriſtianity; this being the rock upon which the Chriſtian church is built, Matth. xvi. and there was never more fire nor blood in a ſtorm; the church was undone with contention, ſo that no general ſynod, even that of Nice, could remove it, but they burſt out more; and Conſtantine's ſad regrets, and ſerious expoſtulations with biſhops, becauſe of this, and the many contrary ſynods, ſome whereof ſided with Arius, confirm it.

4. Much blood and perſecution followed thereupon by Conſtantius, Valens, and other Arian emperors and governors (beſide what was committed by the Vandals in Afric) than which was there never perſecution more cruel and barbarous.

5. There were not only many, but exceeding eminent men, both civil and eccleſiaſtic, led away with that error; ſundry emperors, as Conſtantius, Valens, before-named; many kings of the Goths and Vandals were favourers of it; many biſhops, of great note in the church, did propagate it; yea, ſometimes whole ſynods of many hundreds, did eſtabliſh it, and condemn the truth, and the defenders thereof; as that ſynod at Tyre, anno 336. did condemn Athanaſius, under pretext of turbulency, murder and adultery. A ſynod at Antioch, anno, 337. depoſed Fuſtachius, the biſhop thereof, under the like pretexts. Such was the council of Millan, anno 354. (at which it is written, that Conſtantine being now aged, was preſent) which did condemn many worthy men, becauſe they would not ſubſcribe to the condemnation of Athanaſius, ſuch were Hilarius, Oſius, Paulinus, &c. another was Syrmia, where Oſius was whipped till he did ſubſcribe. The great council, (for number being accounted 1000 biſhops) met at Ariminum and Seleucium, did at laſt eſtabliſh this doctrine, and decree that the word ὁμοῦσιος (whereby Chriſt is ſignified to be God, of the ſame eſſence with the Father) ſhould be laid aſide, and the word ὁμοιούσιος (whereby is ſignified that he is not of the ſame, but of the like ſubſtance or eſſence) was brought in. In which two words, though there be little difference in letters, yet much in ſubſtance; concerning which there was much debate in theſe days, after Macedonius aroſe, a third word was brought in by his followers in the place of both, viz. ὁμοιος, whereby he would neither call Chriſt of the ſame ſubſtance and eſſence with the Father, as the orthodox did; nor of the like ſubſtance or eſſence to the Father, as the Arians did (who did therefore, in that ſynod of Syrmium, condemn Photinus, for aſſerting Chriſt to be a mere man and not God, as they did Oſius for aſſerting him to be God co-eſſential with the Father) but ſimply to be like the Father, without mentioning either the unity or likeneſs of his eſſence.

6. Many eminently godly men were, out of infirmity, at laſt, by the violence of perſecution, brought to ſubſcribe to their way, and to condemn Athanaſius, as did Liberius biſhop of Rome, and the foreſaid Oſius biſhop of Curduba, &c. who long had ſuffered for the truth, and afterward came to the acknowledgment of it.

7. This ſtorm, and the defection under it, became ſo univerſal, that almoſt all the world was become Arian, that it became a proverb, *Totus mundus factus eſt Arianus;* and Jerom ſaith, *in Chronicis, omnes pene toto orbe eccleſiæ, nomine pacis & regis; Arianorum conſortio polluuntur.*

8. Then brake in the barbarous nations, Goths and Vandals; and the religion they had was Arian both in kings of Italy and Afric, though ſome of them were more civil to the church than others.

9. This contributed much to the rising of Rome, 1. Many distressed men, as Athanasius and others, because that church was long pure and in authority (when others were infected and less able to help) made to address to it, to implore their help for vindicating them, and the truth they maintained, by owning it, and interposing for it; also heretics when they were condemned, appealed to Rome, to draw them on their side, as Eutyches, Donatus, and sundry others in Afric, which the bishop of Rome made use of to incroach on others. 2. Some acts of synods were made to prevent unjust oppression of honest men from corrupt bishops, which abounded in the east, during the intervals of synods, whereby too great weight of hearing differences for that time was drawn from the east to the west, as being more free of that corruption which was Hosius' overture in the council of Sardica, anno 347. which was occasioned from the overspreading of Arianism in the east, even after the council of Nice: from all this Rome took much advantage. 3. By the emperor's too much liberty, they grew to pride; and by the diminishing of the emperor's authority in the west, the bishops of Rome grew: so that what pride, covetousness, and usurpation, this age brought forth in them, may be seen at large in Plessæus' mystery, pag. 4. 44. Centur. Magdeburg. Cent. 4. By all which, they did wind themselves someway in to be umpires or arbitrators of differences in other churches, which afterward they drew to a debt and obligation on them. 4. At that time he being desired, did interpose brotherly, by his commissioners, with other bishops and churches: which being for a cause upon the matter, good; and from an eminent bishop, had much weight with it, and was much esteemed, and regarded, though not as authoritative, which his successor abused in after-times. So then the church's estate betwixt the 300 and 400 years, and thereabout, will be found, as it is here foretold to be. Inwardly the church, undone by heretics, heresies, contentions, backed with pretended authority civil and ecclesiastic. The bishops of Rome working their supremacy in all these troubles, and he taking occasion to insinuate himself as moderator among them, though yet under ground, and that but on the earth, and low. Doctrine began even then to be in many things corrupted by special men in the church, especially concerning free-will, ceremonies, &c. By which may be gathered, what great storm this was, and how answerable to this type; so that its easily applied to it. *Observe*,

1. In general, what a terrible thing it is to have error, heresy, division and contention letten loose on a church; it is terrible as fire, hail and blood, and terrible in the effects, a third part of the trees and grass are burnt up: few believe this; yet these plagues are less terrible to bodies than error, and the effects of it, are to souls. 2. See the nature of heresy, 1. It is violent, cooling love, and obstructing practice, whereby the soul is kept in life, but in contentions for itself, and things belonging to itself, fiery, bloody and cruel. The first word looketh at the impurity of the doctrine, striking at the very foundation, *hail*. The second word *fire*, looketh at the breaking of unity. The third word *blood*, looketh at the destroying of lives; such were the false teachers of old, such were they in Christ's time, and after his time. 2. It spreadeth on many for number, on great men and good men sometime for quality, *all green grass and a third part of the trees*, Who would have thought so many famous able men would have been carried away with it, that, as we said before, it became a proverb, *the world is become Arian;* many bishops and synods, many eminent in parts, partly through terror, partly thro' weakness, came to verbal acknowledgment of the error, and to condemn some honest men that spoke for the truth; This should make us be watchful and humble: would any think that the Godhead of Christ or of the Holy Ghost should be denied? and yet this is of late revived: for, the Socinian error is the same in substance, and hath many followers. 3. Many trees are spared, partly as a testimony against others, partly to give themselves time to repent, they are not taken away altogether. Let us arm against such a storm, and become more wary and watchful.

LECTURE III.

Verse 8. *And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire, was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood:*

9. *And the third part of the creatures which were in the ſea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ſhips were deſtroyed.*

YE may remember, when we began to ſpeak of this propheſy of the trumpets, we told you, that in them was contained the hiſtory of the church from the interrupting of the peace that it enjoyed under Conſtantine, till Antichriſt was at its height, and God, by pouring out of the vials, came to demoliſh his kingdom.

The propheſy of theſe trumpets, is divided in ſmaller and greater woes, the laſt three being the greateſt.

The firſt four do continue the hiſtory of the church, from the peace it enjoyed under the ſixth ſeal, unto the diſcovery of Antichriſt upon his ſeat and throne.

Ye heard, in the former trumpet, how hard the condition of the Chriſtian church was, and by what means it was weakened. 1. By outward inbreaking of cruel barbarous nations, mercileſs enemies, to the defacing of it. 2. By enemies from within, ſuch as Arians, Macedonians, Neſtorians, and alſo Schiſmatics, as Luciferians, Novatians, Audæans, &c. that would not keep purity. 3. By corrupting of the doctrine, many unſafe and unſound doctrines, attended with pernicious practices, were creeping in amongſt famous men in the church. 4. It was alſo weakened by contentions and ambition amongſt biſhops and miniſters for their precedency: out of all which, Satan's deſign of raiſing Rome, and bringing in Antichriſt, was working, and took rooting, ſpringing and ſpreading itſelf more and more till it came to the height. We ſhall ſay no more of the firſt trumpet, but proceed to the reſt.

This ſecond trumpet advanceth and carrieth on the ſame ſcope: and if any aſk why theſe trumpets blow not together, and yet one ſucceedeth another? I anſwer, there is ſome interim, to ſee how the former may work; and if any will repent, God taketh that time of trial. 2. When it worketh not, a greater cometh, then he plagueth ſeven times more. There are degrees even of ſpiritual judgments, Rom. i. when alarms work not, there are worſe coming.

For opening the meaning of this judgment, we muſt conſider in it theſe three things, 1. The mean made uſe of, or the riſe of the judgment, it was *as a mountain burning*. 2. Its object, it is *caſt into the ſea*. 3. The effects that follow upon it, *the waters became blood*, and many *ſhips are deſtroyed*. Generally, it ſheweth that this judgment extended further than the former, 1. The former was on the land only; this taketh in the ſea. 2. It altereth quite the nature of theſe ſeas; the former deſtroyed but trees and graſs that were growing, this is more infectious.

It is ſaid *as it were a great mountain*, to ſhew it was ſomething figuratively to be underſtood and not properly, like a hill, ſuch as Ætna in Sicily, or Hecla in Iceland, are, which burneth within itſelf and diſſolveth itſelf.

By *mountains* in ſcripture, are underſtood figuratively, powers or authorities, Zech. iv. 7. *Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou ſhall become a plain.* He meaneth the oppoſition of that monarchy which then oppreſſed them, Jer. li. 25. Babylon is called *a deſtroyed mountain*, and a mountain that ſhall be made *a burnt mountain:* So by *mountain* here we underſtand eminent men in the church, and her authority, or theſe placed in authority in her, who, by their place, are eminent above others; it being the church here that eſpecially is ſpoken of, this *mountain* muſt be their judicatories and theſe in power. Therefore the diſciples, and in them miniſters, are ſaid to be as *a city ſet on a mountain* or *hill*, Matth. v. Theſe being mountains for eminency in the church, as civil governors, or governments, are in the ſtate. 2. This mountain is ſaid to be *burning;* which we conceive to be kindled with pride and contention flowing therefrom, as Chriſt ſaith, he came to ſend fire on the earth, and it was already kindled, which is to be expounded variances amongſt theſe in neareſt relations: ſo alſo *fire*, it is taken for contention in Jotham's parable, Judges ix. compare verſe 20. with verſe 23. which is the more clear here, that it followeth upon the former trumpet, as taking fire from it, and it ſeemeth to be the church governors that were kindled by it. This fire having kindled within their bowels, breaketh out and infecteth others, and ſpreadeth this diviſion under this trumpet, at the back of the former hereſy and ſad ſtate which the church was in, having to do not only with openly heretics, but with pride and contention a-

mongſt churchmen themſelves, whereby exceedingly the church was wronged, and way was made for the in-bringing of corruption and Antichriſt's riſing.

The object, it is *caſt into the ſea*, 1. By the ſea, in ſcripture amongſt the prophets, is underſtood a numerous people, as, *to ſit on many waters*, Rev. xvii. 15. By this then we are to underſtand, that though this infection began among the churchmen, yet was it caſt in the ſea, that is, ſpread far off amongſt the people. So it was in this time, and ſo it uſeth to be. 2. By ſea, is underſtood in ſcripture, nations beyond ſeas; often the weſt part of the world, becauſe they were by the ſea divided from Judea, as by the earth or land is underſtood the eaſt part, Iſaiah lx. 5. &c. And thus it may well here look to Rome, Afric, and the weſt, upon which this ſtorm mainly did fall, as the firſt did fall on the church in the eaſt chiefly, which was called the earth. 3. By ſea, in this propheſy, is underſtood the ordinances, in diſcipline, worſhip, and government of the church, and exerciſes of religion, becauſe in theſe, and by theſe, Chriſtians in this world of the church do converſe together, traffic one with another, communicate one with another, as men do by ſeas and ſhips, who otherwiſe are at a diſtance. So, chap. xviii. in the Antichriſtian world, their churchmen are compared to men in ſhips, or merchants, who, amongſt other things, trade for men's ſouls, which can be meaned of no other but their church-men, verſe 15. and their going about their ſuperſtitions, is compared to trading in ſhips and ſeas: whereby it would appear, that here eſpecially a ſtorm upon ordinances, worſhip and diſcipline, is ſignified, as in the former, the doctrine was ſet upon; yet diſcipline and councils were in ſome vigour, both having ſome authority from without by Conſtantine, unity and reſpect from within, as at Nice, ſoundneſs and ſolidity in proceeding; but in the ſucceeding ages, all was changed. *Firſt*, Emperors became Arians, councils became heterodox, unity was broken, partly by ſchiſms amongſt themſelves, partly by the Pelagians and Donatiſts, which at this time came to a height; ſeparation from churches, flowing from pride, under the pretext of the unholineſs of the church's members, began and continued long, troubling eſpecially the weſt part of the world, which formerly was free, and the preaching of the word was foiſted with human inventions by men who were not heretics, the government of the church ſpoiled, broken, diſſolved and burnt; pride conſumeth all, and maketh it contemptible. So it is ſaid of Babylon, Jer. xxi. 25. *I will make thee a burnt mountain*, when the diſſolution of her authority is propheſied of.

3. The effects of this mountain's caſting in the ſea, recorded here, are two, the one the effect of the other, 1. The *waters are turned into blood*, ſhewing they were corrupted; that being the great evidence of corruption in them, alluding to the plague of Egypt, Exod. vii. 19. which ſheweth, that by that foregoing rent, diſcipline was weakened, ordinances corrupted, and the nature of them altered; they were before uſeful, now they are hurtful, as being abuſed by this fiery mountain's falling into them. So the ſynods, councils, and miniſtry, in many places, became ſuch as were rather for deſtruction than edification, and churches were rent and divided, and ſtumblings laid before poor people, whereby the ſecond effect followed, that is, as in waters turned to blood, fiſhes cannot live, ſo by theſe errors in doctrine and worſhip (which both now continue together) poor ſouls are deſtroyed, ſimplicity of worſhip corrupted, with ceremonies and traditions, and all churchmen, almoſt, who trade in theſe ſhips, are undone and deſtroyed with this ambition; for blood ſignifieth any death, even ſpiritual death, Ezek. iii. 18. *his blood will I require of thee*, &c. which is his ſpiritual killing of them; and here we are to underſtand their being killed with ſelf-ſeeking and pride, *and ſo to be dead while they were alive*, 1 Tim. v. 6. and deadly to others alſo. In ſum then, by the ſecond trumpet we are to underſtand the corruption of the government and governors, who heightning their places beyond Chriſt's order, and exerciſing that power, not for edification, but for deſtruction (contrary to its nature) in fiery contentions, flowing from their pride and ambition, by which the eminency of the church, in that reſpect, was diſſolved in its authority, and became low (as a mountain doth which is conſumed by fire from within) whereby many dreadful effects, tending both to the wronging of the ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt, and exceeding hurtful to all the members of the church who lived under them, were brought to paſs; and ſo the church's life, as it were, brought into greater hazard, than under open heretics.

For application of this, we will find it ſuit well with the contentions that followed on the council of Nice, and then burſt out amongſt churchmen, exceeding hurtfully unto the church: for clearing whereof, we may obſerve theſe things from the hiſtory of that time, 1. Diviſions and contentions abounded, as is clear from the many complaints of emperors and fathers, eſpecially Gregorius Naz. Who therefore took a prejudice at councils, becauſe ſo much contention followed that of Nice.

As alſo by the many contrary ſynods and conteſts for precedency in them among churchmen, who continued till the biſhop of Rome carried away the title of *univerſal biſhop*, as will appear more under the fifth trumpet. 2. The time of theſe contentions will agree to this; for this fire of pride was kindled and the foundation laid for carrying on theſe conteſts to that height from the former hereſy; ſome acts were made, whereby ſome biſhops, eſpecially they of Rome, were preferred to others, becauſe they were more free of that infection, and were more able to help the truth, and theſe who were perſecuted for it in the eaſt, as particularly that ſeventh canon at Sardica, overturned by Oſius for that end, from which Rome took advantage afterward. 3. In theſe councils, upon this occaſion, the precedency of ſome ſees were eſtabliſhed, and a foundation of the eccleſiaſtic hierarchy was laid. *Firſt*, The council of Nice appointed four patriarchs at Alexandria in Egypt, at Antioch in Aſia, at Jeruſalem in Syria, at Rome in the weſt, over all metropolitans, who yet were independently of equal authority within their own bounds, as is clear, Can. vi. *Secondly*, After that Rome was preferred in order to the reſt, and Conſtantinople made ſecond, not by any dignity of theſe ſees, but becauſe they were the ſeats of the imperial authority, as appeareth from Can. 3. of the ſecond council at Conſtantinople, confirmed, Can. 28. of the council at Chalcedon, and the 36 Can. of the council at Trulos, where Conſtantinople is made ſecond to Rome, becauſe it was new Rome, and had the ſame civil privileges with old Rome, which ſheweth the reaſon why both theſe ſees were preferred, was built merely upon civil privileges, which alſo Balſamon upon the foreſaid canons confirmeth from Juſtinian's Laws Novel 130. 4. Rome took much occaſion to plead its ſupremacy, partly from theſe conſtitutions, partly from the practice of men, who ſtill endeavoured to have that biſhop on their ſide, as a great help to their party, and therefore fled to it for ſuccour, whether they maintained truth or error; partly from this, that their interpoſing had great weight with others upon the former conſiderations, which they endeavoured afterward to impoſe upon other churches as of due belonging to them, and therefore firſt oppoſed that act whereby Conſtantinople was equal to them, and afterward pleaded for appeal unto themſelves from the churches of the eaſt, and in Afric, as appeareth by their letters to the council of Antioch, and their propoſitions made in the council of Chalcedon, but more eſpecially by their ambaſſages and letters to the council of Carthage, where theſe things are obſervable.

1. That one Apiarius, biſhop of Sica, juſtly cenſured by a former council at Carthage, did appeal to the biſhop of Rome. 2. Three biſhops of Rome, Zoſimus, Boniface, Caeleſtinus, one after another, did ſo far own that appeal, as to admit the ſentenced perſon to their communion, and to ſend Fauſtinus and others, their ambaſſadors, to the ſixth council of Carthage (where were convened 217 biſhops, among which was Auguſtine, and Aurelius, biſhop of Carthage, who preceded, and is called Pope by Balſamon) deſiring the former ſentence to be repealed. 3. They grounded their interpoſing in theſe matters upon the council of Nice; ſome pretended acts whereof their commiſſioner Fauſtinus produced, wherein it was alledged to be decreed, that a biſhop, in any place, might appeal to the biſhop of Rome. 4. It is obſervable that theſe fathers acknowledged no ſuch act, neither was there any ſuch found amongſt the canons of the council at Nice which any of them had ſeen, and therefore did ſuſpect the deſign of the Roman biſhop, as aiming to ſtretch his power too far; whereupon they directed meſſengers to the biſhops of Antioch, Conſtantinople, and Alexandria, for obtaining authentic and unſuſpected copies of the canons of the ſaid council, which afterward they received from Cyrillus, biſhop of Alexandria, and Atticus, biſhop of Conſtantinople, without any ſuch acts in them for Rome's authority, as was alledged.

It is true, this ſupremacy was not pleaded from any divine inſtitution (which at that time they did pretend unto) but only upon the eccleſiaſtic conſtitution; it is true alſo, that whatever privi-

leges Rome claimed by Conſtantine's donation, or any canons of the council of Nice and Sardica, are alſo attributed unto Conſtantinople, by the councils of Conſtantinople and Chalcedon, whereby its authority and privileges are every way equal to Rome in things eccleſiaſtic, as it was equal to it in civil things by the emperor's laws; ſo that appeals were as warrantable to Conſtantinople as to Rome (as Balſamon alſo upon the former councils alledgeth: and therefore ſheweth the privileges of Conſtantinople and its biſhop out of the gift of Conſtantine, as it is called, to the biſhops of Rome.) 3. It is alſo clear, that there was no juſt ground, even from eccleſiaſtic conſtitutions, for that which was pretended, and that theſe foreſaid did neither credit the biſhop of Rome in aſſerting his own authority, nor yet cede to him in the leaſt meaſure, when they had evidenced his allegiance to be falſe; but, on the contrary, maintained their own authority to be independent of him, and therefore do enact, that from thenceforth none of their number ſhould appeal beyond ſea, viz. to Rome, Can. 31. and that none ſhould cite another of their number thither, Can. 126. under pain of excommunication; and did write back to Boniface, and after to Caeleſtin (Zoſimus being dead ere the anſwer from Egypt returned) expoſtulating with them for the marring them in the exerciſe of their due authority, and pleading that none, cenſured by them, ſhould be heard by him, or received into communion with him; and did alſo refuſe to looſe the ſentence of the foreſaid Apiarius (whereupon he afterwards left his dependency on the biſhop of Rome, and ſubmitted to his own ſynod) I ſay, tho' theſe things be true, and it might be thought that the ſupremacy of Rome had no great advantage from them, yet from this we may ſee, that church-authority was abuſed by the pride of churchmen, even at that time; and that upon the occaſion of the former hereſy, grounds were laid, from which the biſhops of Rome drew encouragements to proſecute their ſupremacy, and upon which they continued to build it up, till it came to its height; for, ſtill there were debates about it, eſpecially between them and the biſhop of Conſtantinople, (who, in the emperor Mauritius's time, aſſumed firſt to himſelf the title of univerſal biſhop and precedency beyond Rome, becauſe then the emperor lived at Conſtantinople) until the time that Antichriſt was diſcovered.

By which we may ſee how hurtful that contention was to the church, and how far it contributed in the event of it, for the advancing of Antichriſt, which is the main plague intended in theſe trumpets, and therefore not unſuitably taken in under this ſecond trumpet, as being agreeable with the ſcope, type, time, and other reaſons alledged in the application of the former trumpet.

Obſerve, 1. What an evil thing pride is, eſpecially when it entereth among churchmen: O how evil a thing is it! it is the inlet of all confuſion, it openeth a door to it, and every evil work, and hath a ſpecial hand in overturning of whatſoever is beautiful in a church, James iii. 14, 16. Therefore it is no wonder Satan ſeeks to deſtroy government and unity, when he would deſtroy a church; and no wonder Chriſt ſo much commends humility and unity to his followers. 2. The more eminent folks be in place or power, they are the ſooner kindled with the fire of pride; the higher mens places be, they are the readier to grow proud; mountains ſooner than valleys, men of gifts ſooner than others, they have fuel to this fire that others do want, and are more obnoxious to blaſts; partly, the things being excellent they have in their hand; and partly, they being eminently and highly planted, pride hath the more matter to work upon, and Satan hath the readier acceſs and occaſion to blow them up; it is a rare thing to be eminent and humble; to be great and in proſperity, and yet to be lowly: proſperity and gifts are a ſnare to many; it had been advantage to many they had never had them, conſidering how they have been abuſed by their pride and other corruptions. 3. Pride is eſpecially incident to churchmen: which might be cleared both in the Old and New Teſtament. They are as cities ſet on an hill, Matt. v. The church is a mountain that is eminent, and church-governors are eminent above others, and therefore liable to manifeſt temptations, being about the moſt eminent things the devil ſetteth on them moſt, knowing what advantage he hath when he hath gained ground among them, and Chriſt had to do even with his diſciples in this, Matt. xviii. verſe 20. 4. It is a great plague and judgment, and bringeth great hurt to the church: when this fire of pride and contention entereth and kindleth among the officers of the church, it ſpreadeth, marreth, and corrupteth all; it is the riſe of much ill, and abuſing of the power that God hath given: Dio-

trephes, loving the pre-eminency, put all in confusion; it began soon in John's days, third epistle of John; and it is opposed to the receiving of the gospel, and accounting of the apostles. This is no matter of laughing to you, however ye look upon it as if ye were not concerned; no, it is your plague, as if a fiery mountain were tumbled over on you. This should make us all respect unity and peace in the church, and watch against pride and contention that marreth it. 5. There are four ills in this text that follow on pride and contention among churchmen, 1. It weakeneth and bringeth down church authority; when this mountain taketh fire, it falleth. 2. It spreadeth, infecteth, and kindleth others, it goeth among the people, *I am of* Paul, *and I am of* Apollos, and they become carnal and factious, 1 Cor. i. 12. and iii. 1, 2. and the life of religion is eaten out amongst them, seeing, from the priests profaneness, it spreadeth through the whole land, Jer. xxiii. and so do pride and contention; kindle the officers, and the whole church will be in fire. If we looked on it rightly, we would think the rise of contention a terrible plague, and people would beware of adding fuel to this fire, and labour by all means to quench it; because it is hard to know where it may end. 3. It corrupteth all, *First*, The doctrine; *Secondly*, The practice; *Thirdly*, Discipline and order; and then cometh confusion, and every evil work. 4. Many are stumbled and spiritually slain when these waters became blood; so that corrupting of government and governors is no small judgment, whereby we may know why Satan aimeth so much at this, and why we ought to be the more watchful against it.

6. This plague, or stroke, on the church, doth often accompany a spirit of error and defection, partly succeeding it, partly going before it, either casually inferred, or at least occasioned, or in God's righteous judgment trysted with it, that the trial may have the greater extent and efficacy to discover many hypocrites and rotten professors. Tremble to think on it, and adore God's holy justice in the measure it is mete out to us in our time; when the outward mean of discipline and government is so weakened, there had need to be the more watchfulness and dependency on God, to be helped and sustained by him, when outward means are not so frequent, nor in such vigour as they wont to be.

LECTURE III.

Verse 10. *And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven burning, as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters.*

11. *And the name of the star is called Wormwood, and the third part of the waters became wormwood, and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.*

THE church being before defaced by gross heretics and errors, and kindled within by pride and contention: for, the government amongst its governors, is now set upon by another mean, the rivers and fountains that were a little clear before, and these streams whereby the waters of life were conveyed, are made bitter, and instead of life, they convey death, by being now corrupted.

In this trumpet, we are to consider these three, 1. The judgment, or ill that followed the angel's sounding. 2. The cause, I mean the instrumental cause, or rise of it, whence it flowed. 3. The effects of it.

1. The judgment, or ill, is the corrupting of *a third part of the waters, fountains and rivers*, By *fountains* and *rivers*, which are the object, are understood the doctrines of the gospel, or the covenant of grace and Christ's offices, and the way of conveying and communicating the same to sinners by the ordinances of the visible church, called the *wells of salvation*, Isa. xii. 3. and called *springs*, or *well-springs*, which God hath placed in his church, and which are no where else, Psal. lxxxvii. ult. because there, and by it, *the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith*, Rom. i. 17. And in Ezekiel's vision, these waters are said to stream and flow from under the altar, and out of the sanctuary, Ezek. xlvii. 1, &c. and may well be compared to fountains, as the church is called, Cant. iv. *A spring shut up, a fountain sealed, and a fountain of gardens*, because of these waters springing in it, and because of the nature of them, which is clear, single, sweet and refreshing, as useful and necessary to spiritual life, as waters are to the bodily; and as hav-

ing that uſe in the religious world, which this is, which waters have in the natural; and alſo in reſpect of the manner of diſpenſing grace in the goſpel ſo largely and ſo freely: wherefore it is compared to an open fountain to all nations, Zech. xiii. 1. and ſo, frequently folks are invited to drink freely, Iſa. lv. 1. and Rev. xxii. 17. and to waſh. By *rivers*, we underſtand the preaching and diſpenſing of this goſpel, whereby it is holden forth, and, as it were, floweth to others: which two, are often put together, when the ſpreading of the goſpel is propheſied of, *I will open rivers in the wilderneſs, and fountains in the deſert*, Iſa. xli. 17, 18. Probably referring to the ſpreading of the goſpel amongſt the Gentiles: ſo corrupting of this word is compared to mixing of liquor with ſomething that is not of its kind, nor ſo good, as vintners do adulterate wine, 2 Cor. ii. 17. oppoſite to the ſingle and pure preaching of Chriſt, which Paul uſed.

2. The inſtrumental cauſe of this which maketh the waters bitter, is ſet out three ways, 1. It is more generally called a *ſtar*, and a *great ſtar, burning like a lamp*, 2. It is ſhown from whence this ſtar fell. 3. And more particularly, the name of the ſtar is called wormwood.

By ſtars, (as we heard, chap. i. verſe 20.) are underſtood miniſters in the viſible church, who, by receiving light from Chriſt, ſhould hold it forth to others: *A great ſtar burning like a lamp*, is one eminent for parts, gifts, place, or in eſtimation for holineſs, making a great ſhew, yet not having much reality, but, as it were, a glancing counterfeit light, not proceeding from a right principle, as that of the ſtars doth from the ſun, but kindled from ſome external thing as that of a lamp is, nor ſo ſolid as the former, though having more glorious and pompous appearance. 2. This ſtar *fell from heaven*, that is, made defection from the viſible church, and the ſtraight and pure preaching of the goſpel, and corrupted theſe fountains and waters; error bringeth folks low, even from heaven to earth, as profanity doth; when this wildfire of ſelf-ſeeking is by pride kindled, and by parts and gifts without grace entertained, ſoon bringeth down the greateſt ſtar that taketh not its light from Chriſt. The word is, it was falling, not altogether fallen, as is ſpoken, chap. ix. 1. to ſignify a begun decay, or fall, which afterward John diſcovered more clearly, when it was fallen and come to its height, or rather lowneſs of a full decay: by it is ſhewed, that this plague is premoved by ſuch as by their parts or former eſtimation have been eminent in the church.

3. The name of the ſtar is *wormwood*, given him from the effect which it produceth, it having influence to corrupt the ſweeteſt things and to make them partake of its nature, Deut. xxix. 18. It is ſpoken of a man that hath a root that beareth gall or wormwood, one that walked not ſtraight by God's rule: and Acts viii. 23. Simon Magus is ſaid to be in the gall of bitterneſs for his corrupt thoughts of the grace of God; and it may well get this name, which hath ſo much influence upon fountains and rivers, that it may make them bitter like wormwood, that is, altereth their ſweet nature, bringing in free-will, the defection of the ſaints, the inefficacy of grace, the doctrine of merit and predeſtination upon foreſeen works, or faith, &c. whereby the nature of the goſpel is quite overturned, and that doctrine which was healthful to be druken in, is now like the prophet's pottage, having death in the pot, that none who would be unpoiſoned dare drink of it, more than the Egyptians might drink of their rivers when they were turned into blood.

It is ſaid to fall on *a third part of the waters*; either, 1. Becauſe it was not a full defection from all truth, ſome were by God's goodneſs keeped clear. Or, 2. That this groſs error, or this hereſy, though it ſpread far, yet it did not infect all men; ſome prime men and churches were keeped free of it. Or, 3. Defection in theſe truths was not then at its height, but growing. The effect is, *many men died*, &c. which is to be underſtood of ſpiritual and eternal death, following on the former corruptions, by which many were deſtroyed, like that which is mentioned in the former trumpet.

To come to the application of this, we, 1. take it for granted, that ſome church defection is ſignified by this, rather than the overturning of the civil ſtate of the Roman empire; for, the falling of the Roman ſtate is not actively the cauſe of its own bitterneſs, that ſtate being paſſive in its being overturned; and the bitterneſs floweth not from it as an agent, yet it is clear here, that this falling ſtar is the active agent, or inſtrument of imbittering theſe waters, as the hail and the burning mountain was in the two trumpets before: alſo the title *ſtar*, and the effects (as

they are uſed in this propheſy) will agree beſt to churchmen and affairs, beſide the ſcope whereof we have ſpoken.

2. This judgment differeth from the former two, 1. In its object; more immediately it ſtriketh at the way of the goſpel's manifeſting grace. 2. In its riſe; it is from ſome eminent preacher carrying it on with more rational eloquence, ſeeming reaſon, and pretext of holineſs, or by more preachers together. 3. In the manner of it; not by blood, nor mixing in perſecution, as the former two had waiting on them, but by making the waters bitter, turning them into wormwood, which was by the infecting of them with the error itſelf. 4. That it falleth not on the earth, as chap. ix. 1. Becauſe yet it was but working, and that ſtar not fully diſcovered as yet by this fall: and ſo here its a great ſtar; but chap. ix. 1. a ſtar, only becauſe he loſt much of his ſplendor by the firſt fall, though we think it is the ſame fall begun here, and perfected there.

We take it for granted alſo, that this trumpet, in its riſe, belongeth to that time that ſucceedeth the former contentions in the church, when the biſhops and clergy of Rome eſpecially, were kindling both the churches of the eaſt, and in Afric, for their ſupremacy. This will be in the fifth century, a little after the 400 year: we may apply it generally to the ſtate of the church during that fifth century, or particularly to ſome heretics in it: generally, doctrine then was corrupted, not only by Pelagius, anno 413. Neſtorious, 429. Eutyches, about 448. and other groſs heretics, and theſe errors exceedingly fomented by the powers of the world, eſpecially that of the Eutycheans; by Anaſtaſius the emperor, and a ſecond council at Epheſus, called Praedatorium, becauſe of its infamous proceeding againſt Flavianus, and in favours of Eutyches, by Dioſcorus's means, biſhop of Alexandria; for which it was proteſted againſt as no ſynod by Anatolius, and Severus, biſhop of Antioch. But, which is more, though there were many eminent men who ſtood againſt theſe errors, yet a great decay of true doctrine crept in amongſt good men, that never did wear out again, but grew ſtill more in the church, viz. about ſanctification, penance, free-will, merit of good works, poſſibility of fulfilling the law, holy days, &c. This application in this laſt reſpect, we ſuppoſe ſafeſt as foreſhewing the church, or churchmen, generally to fall out from true light, and to be kindled with zeal for ſuperſtitions; and though it did not in this age univerſally corrupt the church in that height that followed, but a third part, *i. e.* many were keeped free; yet, way was made to it, and the church's declining and fall was begun, which ſtayed not till afterward it came to its height. This agreeth to the hiſtory, conſidering the doctrine of the church at that time; and to the ſcope which ſheweth the church's decay by degrees, and Antichriſt's gradual riſe, his doctrine, tho' not his ſupremacy, got much footing in this age; and alſo with the type here, 1. Of a ſtar falling, which we will find as fallen, chap. ix. 1. 2. It corrupteth fountains and ſtreams, inſenſibly, not ſtriking ſo directly at the foundation as the former particular hereſies did, but keeping the doctrine of the Trinity and perſon of Chriſt, pure, as *Gregorius Roma.* did, but miſcarrying in the nature of his offices, and his executing of them: it corrupteth mainly by adding unto, and mixing ſomewhat with truth, yet ſuch addition as altereth the nature of them; ſuch are the Popiſh additions of merits, penances, indulgences, mediators, and interceſſions of ſaints, and angels, &c. whereby that which was, is not removed, but by this addition corrupted. 3. It cometh from ſtars in heaven, and riſeth more from within than the former: thus being applied, it relateth to no particular hereſy, but to the general decay of the church. If it be neceſſary to be applied to one, I incline to apply it to Pelagius and his hereſy more than any other, for theſe reaſons. It agreeth, 1. In the time; he began under Arcadius and Honorius, about the year 415. or according to ſome, 405. 2. He was of great parts, and was once thought a good zealous man, and was advanced to eccleſiaſtical orders. 3. The nature of that hereſy was not againſt Chriſt's perſon, but his offices, teaching corruptly of nature, ſin, grace, faith, juſtification, election, &c. ſubtilly undermining grace. 4. It ſpread exceedingly through Italy, Britain, France, Afric, and the eaſtern empire, &c. yet ſome were keeped free of it, and great and ſhining lights ſet themſelves againſt it, as Auguſtine, Hieronymus, Proſper, Optatus, &c. 5. It entered and continued in a great meaſure in the church of Rome, and the dregs of it ſticketh to the Popiſh writers in their free-will, perfection of righteouſneſs, &c. to this day: for, though the natures and perſon of our bleſſed Lord

be kept free by them; yet in their doctrine enervateth his offices, and maketh them bitter to all that would drink thereof, which are the ſpecial ſprings of grace in the goſpel; they put in other ſatisfactions, other mediators, others with authority to add and diminiſh from what he hath commanded, other officers to teach, and other matter to be taught, than he hath inſtituted, as traditions, &c. which being the riſe of much Antichriſtian doctrine ſtill retained by them, it agreeth beſt with the ſcope to be thus applied. Hence,

1. See here the nature and uſefulneſs of pure doctrine, and what men ought to think of it, and how to uſe it; to drink it in as fountain water, and to waſh and make clean at it, it is as profitable to ſouls, and they cannot live without it; and when they want it, they want that which both purgeth and maketh them grow.

Obſerve, 2. The ill of error; it corrupteth the truths of the goſpel, and maketh the ſweeteſt, and beſt things bitter; it removeth them not profeſſedly, but poiſoneth them ſo, that it is better to forbear than drink in ſuch waters.

3. See what the nature and native office and place of miniſters is, and what advantage they are, while they keep their ſtation; they are like ſtars and great ſtars, exceedingly uſeful and profitable in their place. And upon the other hand, what a ſore judgment and plague is it, when miniſters fall from receiving light from Chriſt, and are infected, they are moſt hurtful. 4. The more parts, and the better men's life be that are infected, they are the bitterer, and do the more wrong: as the corruption of the beſt things is worſt, ſo is the corruption of eminent men, 2 Cor. ii. ult. 5. Error venteth not ſtill after one way; now it corrupteth more ſubtilly than it did in the former trumpets; there is no blood nor fire here, though it be as dangerous: often contentions for dominion in government have more fire and heat, than diſputes about more fundamental truths. 6. There may be much glancing, falſe and counterfeit light, both among miniſters and profeſſors; where there is little ſolidity: it is not all gold that gliſters in them; It is good light that cometh from a right principle within; it is good when a man's works ſhine, as his gifts ſhine; this would teach us not to admire gifts: many make a fair ſhew in the fleſh, and if their light and parts were well tried by the effects, they might be called wormwood that imbittereth the waters; torches that do glance, but not ſtars. *Obſerve*, 7. That men of great gifts, fair profeſſors and blameleſs lives, may fall very foully, while they are not ſolid and ſincere; they may fall as it were from heaven, ſo may particular churches: there is no ſtate, nor degree of any ſtate, exempted when error breaketh in. Therefore the more gifts and parts men have, they have the more need to be humble, and to fear and tremble, conſidering many experiences both of former ages and of this, which ſhould make us take heed, leſt we fall and infect, or be infected: ſuch were once Pelagius, yea, Socinus, Swenkfeldius, and Arminius thought to be. 8. Error when it infecteth miniſters, or profeſſors, bringeth death with it, as well as profanity; when this ſtar falleth from heaven, and poiſoneth the waters, many die: he that teacheth men to break the leaſt command, ſhall be leaſt in the kingdom of heaven, Matth. v. O that men this time thought on this, that error bringeth into hell, as well as adultery, that it is like rebellion and witchcraft; it is like the groſſeſt evil, and worſe: it inciteth, teacheth, and encourageth to break the commands of God, and there is much cruelty done to ſouls in toleration of theſe. 9. The church ſuſtaineth no greater prejudice often, in corrupting of her doctrine, than by the falls and ſlips of eminent men; theſe ſpots are hardly removed, becauſe they ſink deeper. 10. Every corruption and plague hath its degrees and ſteps. 11. It is a ſign of a decaying church when eminent men fall, and it is a great judgment to others.

LECTURE V.

Ver. 12. *And the fourth angel ſounded, and the third part of the ſun was ſmitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the ſtars, ſo as the third part of them was darkned: and the day ſhone not for a third part of it, and the night likewiſe.*

13. *And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midſt of heaven, ſaying with a loud voice, Wo, wo, wo, to the inhabiters of the earth, by reaſon of the other voices of the trumpets of the three angels, which are yet to ſound.*

THE fourth angel with his trumpet, bringeth the laſt of the four leſſer woes (it is a greater than the former, yet leſſer than theſe that immediately enſue) which clearly doth relate to that age immediately going before Antichriſt is diſcovered, and ſo falleth betwixt this time and the ſixth century. This is ſet down, ver. 12. And ver. 13 is a preface and introduction to the three great woes, which the laſt three angels bring.

There are but two things mentioned in this fourth trumpet. 1. The judgment or type, it is *a ſmitting of the third part of the ſun, moon, and ſtars.* 2. The effect of this judgment, is a following darkneſs ſuitable to it, *and the day ſhone not for a third part of it, and the night likewiſe:* becauſe the ſun that giveth light by day, and the moon and ſtars that giveth light by night, they were all darkened and ſmitten. There is no word of any particular cauſe, or mean, whereby the ſun was ſmitten, as under the former trumpets was mentioned. By *ſun, moon, and ſtars*, we underſtand and comprehend under them, light of all ſorts, ſuch as is the purity of doctrine in the word, *compared to light*, Pſal. cxix. 105. And, 2 Pet. i. 29. the word of propheſy is called a *light that ſhineth in a dark place;* and ſo it may be, ſeeing Chriſt, who is the Sun of righteouſneſs, ſhineth therein, Mal. iv. And by the ſpreading of the goſpel, is ſaid to ariſe, for the direction and comfort of his people. See alſo, Matth. iv. 16. Or alſo, the light of order, comelineſs, and a good converſation in the power of godlineſs, as Philip. ii. 15. and Matth. v. 17. So the church, Cant. vi. 10. is called *fair as the moon*, and the miniſters compared to ſtars, and the general beauty of the church is propheſied of in theſe terms, Iſa. xxx. 26. *The light of the moon ſhall be as the light of the ſun, and the light of the ſun as the light of ſeven days;* and conſequently, the diminiſhing and contracting of theſe lights, muſt be the declining and decaying of light in the church, both in reſpect of purity of doctrine, when it is darkened, and ſimplicity of worſhip and power in practice; theſe, by human traditions, and ceremonies, and ſuperſtitions, are quite dimmed, eclipſed and darkened. *A third part* is but ſmitten and darkened, and ſhineth not, which is in compariſon of the total eclipſe following under the fifth trumpet, when the ſun is *wholly* darkened, chap. ix. ver. 1. This is higher, and of larger extent, than the former, yet leſs than theſe that follow in degree, but little odds in kind from the fifth. It differeth from the former, as being of larger extent, affecting the ſun and light in a greater degree; alſo in reſpect there is no particular inſtrument named: the reaſon is, becauſe it relateth to no particular hereſy, or defection different from the former, or that which followeth; nor to no particular heretic, but is a further and higher degree and ſtep of that ſame declining, flowing not from without, but from within, inſenſibly growing by a general declining, till it come to the top in the following trumpets.

The reaſons why we apply it to the ſixth century, are from conſidering of the hiſtory, where it is clear, that, in that age, light was exceedingly, though not fully, darkened: and many things remarkable ſuit this type: as, 1. That there was no particular hereſy, nor prime heretic in all that century, though former hereſies, as that of Arius, Eutyches, &c. ſpread more, yet there was no particular heretic that aroſe to be inſtrumental in this darkening, as in the former there was, viz. Pelagius, Neſtorius, biſhop of Conſtantinople, and Eutyches. See Cent. 6. preface, and cap. 1. 2. Though there was no heretic, yet there was a great and general decay of ſimple purity, both in doctrine, worſhip, government and practice (as in that century may be ſeen, and in the decretals of Gregorius, his life, by Platina) monaſteries, ſuperſtitious days, doctrine of works, and traditions increaſed, &c. See Cent. 5. cap. 1. and 7. where the building of abbaſies, deſerting of marriages, even by kings and queens, for devotion, is mentioned. 3. That light and knowledge was very low now in the church; few able men are marked to have lived in this century; which certainly ſheweth great decay of light, they being lights to the world: there are but two eminently marked, Fulgentius and Gregorius Magnus, who tho' in ſome things againſt the Arians and Eutycheans, &c. they do well; yet in many things their infirmity and declining from purity, eſpecially of the laſt appeareth, and yet never was there in Rome ſuch a biſhop after him in any reſpect; he is called the worſt of theſe, who went before him, and the beſt of theſe who followed. 4. That old hereſies, by that occaſion, did thrive well, the Eutycheans eſpecially. 4. Anaſtagus countenanced this hereſy, and tho' before his coronation he ſubſcribed to the Nicean and Chalcedon faith, whereby this hereſy was condemned; yet after

he retracted, and became a great perſecutor, baniſhing and cutting off many able honeſt miniſters, eſpecially Euphemius who crowned him, (becauſe he refuſed to give back his ſubſcription, and would not admit him to communicate, as infected with hereſy) and alſo Macedonius his ſucceſſor, and ſundry others, for not admitting the *amneſtia* he had appointed; ſome *acriter impugnantes, alii imprudentius defendentes Concilium Nicaenum*, ſaith the hiſtory. He would not have had that council mentioned, becauſe it condemned his tenant. 6. This age is remarkable from the pride and practice of John, biſhop of Conſtantinople, who, by the conſent (as it ſeemeth) of Mauritius the emperor, and the biſhops of the eaſt, took on him the name of *univerſal biſhop* and *patriarch:* and what followed upon that may be ſeen at large in the writings of Gregory, biſhop of Rome, where theſe things are clear, 1. That there was a decay of zeal and humility amongſt biſhops, by their buſying themſelves in things of the world. 2. That the title of univerſal biſhop, was accounted a ſure mark of Antichriſt, derogating from all other biſhops, as if one only were a biſhop, and a ſtile that no apoſtle, even Peter, did ever aſſume. 3. He concluded, that Antichriſt was near, ſeeing a prieſt ſo exalted himſelf, and, which is hard to be ſaid, he ſhould have an army of prieſts ready to advance him: for, ſaith he, what is Antichriſt's exalting himſelf above all that is called god in this world, and ſitting in his temple as God, but a prieſt lifting up himſelf above all his fellow-prieſts, which is to take Chriſt's chair? as by conſidering theſe places is manifeſt, 4 Epiſt. 32, 34, 36, 38. *ad Johannem Conſtant.* where theſe words are, *Rex ſuperbiæ prope eſt, et quod dici neſa; eſt Sacerdotum præparatus eſt exercitus quia cervici militant ſuperbiæ, &c.* And again, *lib. 7. epiſt.* 30. *ad Mauritium Aug. Ego. autem fidenter dico, quia quiſque ſe univerſalem Epiſcopum aut Sacerdotem vocat, vel vocari deſiderat in elatione ſua, Antichriſtum præcurrit, qui ſuperbiendo ſe cæteris præponit.* And (as he ſaid, *Epiſt.* 34. *lib.* 4. *ad Conſtantiam Auguſtam*) he imitateth the devil in ſeeking to be above his colleagues. Theſe things belonging to the ſame time that the ſeries of the propheſy falleth into, and agreeing ſo well to the type in the text, and to the ſucceeding trumpet, it ſeemeth clearly applicable to it, eſpecially conſidering that theſe debates made way exceedingly for the biſhop of Rome, and his ſtepping up where the biſhop of Conſtantinople would have been, and endeavoured to be.

In the 13th verſe, before the fifth angel ſound, there is a little interruption made to John, to prepare him for it, *an angel flying through the midſt of heaven*, that is, ſo as he might be beſt heard, having a ſad proclamation, *Wo, wo, wo*, repeated thrice, according to the number of the angels that were yet to ſound, that every one of them were to bring an harder and greater woe to the men of the earth than any thing that had befallen them under the former four: and whether we take theſe woes, as denouncing judgment, or as lamenting over the earth for what was coming, as if he did ſay, Alas, alas, alas, it turneth to one thing, there were great woes coming. It is clear here. 1. That interruptions for John's clearing, are not inconſiſtent with this propheſy. 2. That there is an order of time in the woes of the trumpets; theſe three have order, and follow the former four. 3. That the next trumpet is not the Saracens; neither do the former look mainly to the Goths, &c. becauſe it will appear in hiſtory, that the empire ſuffered more from the Goths, and theſe other barbarous nations, than it did from the Saracens, as they are diſtinguiſhed from the Turks: ſo in that way of interpretation, there is not that remarkable and palpable gradation to be found, which is implied amongſt theſe woes. Some apply this to Gregorius, becauſe of his prediction foreſaid, and the words agree well to his time: but this angel foretelleth three woes, and he did but foretel one at moſt. It is like therefore that no perſon is ſignified by this angel in particular; but, the Lord by it giveth John, and by him others, warning that there were ſadder things coming after the firſt four had come. Hence,

Obſerve, 1. The nature of truth and error; the one is like light; the other like darkneſs; the one comfortable and profitable, the other comfortleſs and hurtful. *Obſerve*, 2. The nature of declining amongſt miniſters and profeſſors in a church is ſuch, that, when once begun, it groweth. *Obſerve*, 3. The nature of judgments, when once inflicted they ordinarily purſue a perſon or people, and the greateſt come laſt: when people abuſe the light, it draweth on the darkening of it by degrees, and it reſteth not till it come to a height. Unthankfulneſs for the goſpel, and not receiving the truth in the love of it, provoke God *to give up to ſtrong deluſion, to believe lies*, 2 Theſſ. ii. 11, 12.

Obſ. 4. God's way of dealing with his people, in giving warning before the judgment come, that theſe three great plagues come not on them unawares; he warneth, that folks may repent, and his own may be armed ere judgment come. 5. The angel pronounceth a woe thrice: *Obſ.* That ſpiritual judgments or offences have many woes in them; and warnings againſt them would be doubled and more, and cried with a loud voice: for when once ſuch judgments ſeize upon people, they get not eaſily out from under them, and are not eaſily affected with them; therefore is the woe proclaimed thrice, and ſo loud.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. IX.

Verſe 1. *And the fifth angel ſounded, and I ſaw a ſtar fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomleſs pit.*

2. *And he opened the bottomleſs pit, and there aroſe a ſmoke out of the pit, as the ſmoke of a great furnace; and the ſun and the air were darkned, by reaſon of the ſmoke of the pit.*

3. *And there came out of the ſmoke locuſts upon the earth; and unto them was given power, as the ſcorpions of the earth have power.*

4. *And it was commanded them that they ſhould not hurt the graſs of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only thoſe men which have not the ſeal of God in their foreheads.*

5. *And to them it was given that they ſhould not kill them, but that they ſhould be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a ſcorpion, when he ſtriketh a man.*

6. *And in thoſe days ſhall men ſeek death, and ſhall not find it; and ſhall deſire to die, and death ſhall flee from them.*

7. *And the ſhapes of the locuſts were like unto horſes prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.*

8. *And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.*

9. *And they had breaſt-plates, as it were breaſt-plates of iron; and the ſound of their wings was as the ſound of chariots of many horſes running to battle.*

10. *And they had tails like unto ſcorpions, and there were ſtings in their tails, and their power was to hurt men five months.*

11. *And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomleſs pit, whoſe name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.*

THE fifth angel ſoundeth here, where the firſt of the greateſt woes is brought in; of what dreadful nature it is, the woes that are prefaced to the ſounding of it may declare. It will concern the opening of all, to conſider of what woe this judgment ſpeaketh particularly, and to what it relateth. It is more largely deſcribed than any of the former, becauſe the temptation of it was moſt dangerous, and the effects thereof of more concernment to the church.

1. The object of this judgment is, the ſame church, or Chriſtian world, whereupon the effects of the former trumpets did fall: for theſe laſt three do ſignify greater degrees of wrath, upon thoſe who had deſpiſed and abuſed the former leſſer woes.

2. The Chriſtian world is obſcured by the trumpets, and the Antichriſtian brought in its place, as was ſaid to the entry of the trumpets: for, the Antichriſtian world is in being after the ſixth trumpet, when the vials begin; it muſt therefore have attained that being under the trumpets, and eſpecially under the immediate foregoing trumpets; ſeeing the ſeventh findeth at its height: and ſo conſequently the Chriſtian world (i. e. the pure church) muſt be decaying under theſe trumpets, where the Antichriſtian cometh to its being, (ſeeing two of theſe worlds cannot conſiſt together) yea, the church muſt be loweſt, and decline moſt under theſe trumpets, wherein Antichriſt groweth moſt, and cometh to the greateſt height, as under theſe firſt two great woes it muſt be. Whence we may gather, 1. That the church is here the object of this

this plague. 2. That Antichriſt muſt grow under theſe trumpets, and particularly under this, it being a further ſtep of the ſame kind of plague, and the ſixth finding idolatry under Antichriſt at a height, which it plagueth, it muſt then grow here. 3. This firſt great *woe*, bringeth ſpiritual plagues and tyranny upon this world, by this king and his armies, who advance that idolatry. The ſixth bringeth temporal judgments on the ſame perſons, for whoring from God, and receiving this idolatrous worſhip.

For further clearing of this, we ſay, 1. It is not any temporal judgment by armies, (ſuch as the ſixth trumpet holdeth forth, viz. one of a mixed nature) ſuch as came by the Saracens; for, that would not be ſo far greater than the former woes of that kind, as is ſaid. 2. Theſe locuſts are but called *as horſes*, or, like horſes, ver. 7. not horſes themſelves, as is expreſsly ſaid of theſe under the ſixth trumpet, thereby giving us to know, that there is ſomething of their nature ſignified, rather than what is literally expreſſed. 3. Their power is not *to kill*, as in the ſixth trumpet, but *to hurt* men and torment them ſpiritually, and not to kill them bodily, as ver. 3, 4. Theſe are ſecluded and exempted from this plague, that were ſealed and marked, viz. the elect, God's ſervants; but theſe were not excluded from temporal plagues, as appeareth, chap. xi. nor from that of the Saracens: often they ſhare moſt under theſe, and theſe marked ones are all ſuch as were written in the Lamb's book, chap. xiii. 8. who did yet partake deeply of outward afflictions. 5. Theſe troubles, chap. xi. belong expreſsly to this trumpet, tho' continuing under the ſixth, and cotemporary with it; yet they belong not to it, but to this: for, theſe troubles are upon the ſaints by way of perſecution: the ſixth hath judgment on ungodly profeſſors by way of juſtice. 6. All the circumſtances will clear this further, as the mean by whom, *a ſtar*, his *opening the bottomleſs pit*, *the darkening of the ſun*, &c. as after will appear: for theſe locuſts do darken light, and obſcure truth; which ſheweth it is a ſpiritual evil on religious things, ſpringing up from within the church, which alſo anſwereth the ſcope of theſe trumpets beſt, as is ſaid.

2. We ſay further, the riſing and diſcovering of Antichriſt, and fall of the Roman biſhops, from heaven to earth, tho' not at firſt at their height, is the very thing foretold here, and muſt be ſo, 1. Becauſe it is clear, that the beaſts, mentioned chap. xiii. are to be underſtood of him, and ſpeak of the riſe of Antichriſt particularly, as may then be made out; but this agreeth to that, and is the very ſame war, and event, tho' in different expreſſions: for, 1. The very ſame perſons are overcome by both, viz. theſe that are not ſealed. 2. The ſame perſons are exempted from both, viz. theſe ſealed ones, chap. ix. 4. chap. xiii. 8. and xiv. 1, &c. 3. The ſame mark keepeth both free, the ſame ſeal of God. And, 4. The number is the ſame, comparing chap. vii. in that number, and ch. xiv. 2. 2. That the xi. ch. and theſe troubles, do belong to Antichriſt, it is clear, ver. 7. the witneſſes are to be killed by the beaſt, and what beaſt but that, chap. xiii. (which aſcendeth out of the bottomleſs pit, as the locuſts do here) and that, chap. xi. belongeth to this trumpet, appeareth from ver. 14. where it is ſaid, *The ſecond woe is paſt, and the third woe cometh quickly*. Then all preceding that, belongeth to the firſt, or the ſecond woe; but not to the ſecond, as hath been ſaid; therefore to the firſt, which indeed, in this event is cotemporary with the ſecond, viz. the ſixth trumpet. It may be alſo further cleared from the circumſtances, conſidering the time, riſe and progreſs, and by comparing it with the fifth vial which is poured out, chap. xvi. on the beaſt's ſeat: and this order is obſerved in all, what is builded of Antichriſt's kingdom by the trumpets, is overturned by the vials, and in that ſame order. It would then appear, that ſeeing the fifth vial overturneth his throne, that it was ſettled by the fifth trumpet.

A third reaſon, is, if that ſtorm againſt which the one hundred forty and four thouſand, chap. vii. are ſealed, be the ſpiritual defection of the church under Antichriſt, then that which is holden forth by this trumpet is ſo alſo; for both relate to the ſame ſtorm; but that, chap. vii. is to be underſtood of Antichriſt's reign, as the greateſt evil the church was to meet with after heatheniſh perſecution; therefore this muſt be alſo. What was ſaid upon chap. vii. for clearing the ſcope of that place, will confirm both theſe propoſitions.

4. This ſpiritual kingdom, deſcribed here, muſt either be applied to the kingdom of Antichriſt and that hierarchy, or it muſt be applicable to ſome other; (ſeeing it is ſome ſpiritual plague ariſing within the church,) but there can be no other thought of, to whom this deſcription can agree, and in whom this ſpiritual woe, (exceedingly beyond any mentioned by the former trumpets) can be fulfilled, but the kingdom of Antichriſt; therefore that muſt be underſtood here.

Again, it being clear, that it is one and the ſame world or church which is overturned by the firſt ſix trumpets; and it being clear, that the ſixth trumpet following findeth idolatry in the viſible church, which is the world plagued by it; it muſt therefore follow, that this defection to idolatry, which is a character of the Antichriſt's defection, muſt have increaſed under this fifth trumpet immediately preceding, ſeeing it was not during the former four.

Laſtly, It may be confirmed further, by comparing this ch. with 2 Theſſ. ii. by which we will find, that this plague, mentioned here, is the ſame ſpiritual Antichriſtian deluſion propheſied of there: for in every material thing they agree: as, 1. The inſtrument there, is *one ſitting in the temple of God*, as having place in the church of Chriſt; here is *a ſtar falling from heaven*, intimating the ſame thing. 2. There, he is called ὁ αντικειμενος, as oppoſite to Chriſt, and ὁ υος της απωλειας, or the ſon of perdition; here he is called απολλυων, or the deſtroyer, as oppoſed to Chriſt, who is called a Saviour; as alſo (chap. xvii. of this prophecy) he is ſaid to go εις απωλειαν, or to deſtruction, himſelf; for, Antichriſt, as Chryſoſtom obſerveth in that, 2 Theſſ. is called the ſon of perdition, becauſe he ſhall occaſion the deſtruction of many, and ſhall be deſtroyed. 3. They agree in reſpect of theſe whom they plague, 2 Theſſ. ii. 10. it is alſo theſe that ſhall be damned, whom that deluſion carrieth away; here, ver. 4. it is only theſe who are not marked, that is to ſay, chap. xiii. 8. who *are not written in the Lamb's book of life*; and ſo alſo it ſealeth only finally upon the reprobate. 4. There, they are given up to ſtrong deluſion to believe lies; here they are carried away with fornications, idolatries, and other errors, and are ſo hardened therein, that altho' they be plagued for theſe by the ſixth trumpet, yet they repent not. 5. That deluſion, 2 Theſſ. iii. hath its riſe from the devil, ver. 9. and is carried on with mighty ſigns and wonders; here it cometh from the bottomleſs pit, and is carried on by the devil's ſpecial miniſter, who therefore is ſaid to have the key thereof, and is not without mighty ſigns and lying wonders, as is clear from chap. xiii. following, where the ſame kingdom is under another conſideration deſcribed. From all which conſiderations we may gather.

1. That each of theſe trumpets doth not contain the hiſtory of an equal time, or number of years; for the matter contained in any of the laſt three trumpets, will be found to be of longer continuance than all the firſt four, which (added to the greatneſs of the matter contained in them) may be the reaſon why they are differenced from the former four, as the greater woes.

2. It appeareth alſo, that by the fifth and ſixth trumpets, we are to underſtand different evils and enemies; and ſo they cannot both be applicable either to Antichriſt only, or Mahometans only.

3. We may gather alſo, that this kingdom and army, with the furniture wherewith they are provided, and the effects which follow upon their tyranny, are not, properly, to be underſtood of external battles and bodily evils, but, figuratively, as repreſenting ſome great ſpiritual hurt on the church and her ordinances. Theſe expreſſions, *They are like horſes, and had breaſt-plates, as it were, breaſt-plates*, &c. whereby they are expreſsly differenced from the trumpet following, wherein expreſſions that are properly to be underſtood, are uſed, do intimate this.

4. Suppoſing (which afterward from chap. xi. 13, and 17. will be more clear) that the Roman hierarchy, complexly taken, is the kingdom of Antichriſt; and that the deluding of the world by them, is the very deluſion propheſied of, 2 Theſſ. ii. It will neceſſarily follow, that this Romiſh Antichriſtian kingdom (whereby the viſible church hath been long brought in bondage) is the very ſame ſet forth by this trumpet.

To come more particularly to the deſcription of this kingdom; for, a kingdom it is, as it is ſet down in the words, in its riſe and growth, we will find it many ways inſiſted upon, 1. *A ſtar falleth from heaven*, and becometh earthly; upon that again followeth corruption of doctrine, whereupon doth ariſe a rabble of ſuperſtitious churchmen, whoſe work is to propagate and ſupport the dominion of their king, as his care is to ſtrengthen and increaſe them, there being ſuch mutual concernment in the ſtanding or falling of each to other.

Ver. 1. The firſt particular deſcribed, is, the fountain and great inſtrument of all this ſpiritual plague, that is, *I ſaw a ſtar fall from heaven unto the earth*. That by *ſtar* is meant ſome perſon, the words after do clear; *to him*, that is, to the ſtar *was given*, &c. That it muſt be ſome church-officer, is alſo clear from chap. i. 20. from our Lord Jeſus his own expoſition: and conſidering what power this ſtar hath

in the world, it muſt hold forth ſome eminent church-officer. By *heaven*, is underſtood here (as frequently in this book) the viſible church, which is the heaven wherein Chriſt hath placed apoſtles, paſtors and teachers, as ſtars to give light, becauſe the church is furniſhed with heavenly privileges, heavenly light of doctrine, and ought to be of heavenly converſation in reſpect of the reſt of the world. By *earth*, is underſtood earthlineſs, or the reſt of the world, as contradiſtinguiſhed from the church, which the oppoſition cleareth; and thus, *earth* ſignifieth worldly deſigns, worldly grandeur, corrupt doctrine, liker to that of heathens than that of Chriſt, carnalneſs in converſation, and ſuch like: for, this *earth* is ſomething contradiſtinguiſhed from, and oppoſed to, the heaven formerly mentioned. *To fall* here *from heaven unto earth*, ſignifieth a declining from the one to the other. And ſo in ſum, the meaning of this part of the verſe will be, I foreſaw the defection of ſome eminent church-officer (who once had place in the viſible church) from Chriſtian ſimplicity, purity and holineſs in doctrine and converſation, to a religion, and way of living, by ſuperſtitious idolatries and external pomp, becoming rather the men of the world, and liker their way than a miniſter of Chriſt.

By this phraſe alſo, (*I ſaw a ſtar fall, &c.*) is implied, 1. Not only a declining and defection, but ſuch a declining, as maketh him, that was a ſtar before in heaven, to ceaſe from being conſidered in that relation, and afterward to be accounted as but eminent amongſt the men of the world, becauſe of their worldly, earthly-like, religion and worſhip. Upon which ground, the followers of this Antichriſtian kingdom are called Gentiles, chap. xi. 2. 2. This phraſe importeth a viſible and palpable ſtep of this defection: the ſtar is not now falling, as was in the former chapter; but it is fallen. And *I ſaw it fallen* ſaith John, implying an obſervableneſs in it. 3. It importeth, that after the fall of this ſtar, and defection of this eminent church-officer, he continued ſtill in the account of a ſtar among the men of the world: he is called a *ſtar* even after his fall, though indeed, and in John's account, he be but a fallen ſtar and earthly, as having indeed forfeited his former church-relation.

The ſecond thing deſcribed, is the power given unto this fallen ſtar, *And to him was given the keys of the bottomleſs pit. Keys* ſignify in ſcripture, authority and power. By the *bottomleſs pit*, is meaned hell, as is unqueſtionable, chap. i. 18. Chriſt is ſaid to have the keys of hell and death, that doth ſignify his ſupreme authority: chap. xiii. 2. 4. The devil is ſaid to have power, and to give it to the beaſt; becauſe, in God's ſecret wiſdom and juſtice, the execution of his judgments in part is committed to the devil, and he is employed as ſupreme head of the wicked therein, and for that cauſe is ſaid to have a throne, and is permitted to rule over the children of diſobedience: here this ſtar partaketh of this authority, not as Chriſt hath it (for now, being fallen from heaven, he hath loſt relation to him) nor in that ſame degree as the devil doth; but as deputy and lieutenant to him, who in God's ſecret juſtice furniſheth him with this power, as from chap. xiii. 2. 4. is clear. In a word, while he was in heaven he exerciſed Chriſt's authority, and in that reſpect had the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Now, being fallen, he continueth to exerciſe authority, and to retain a key, but of a quite contrary nature, viz. of the bottomleſs pit, and to ſerve another maſter, viz. the devil, as the exerciſe of his authority tending now to the advancement of ignorance, darkneſs, ſuperſtition, and idolatry in the church, and being aſſiſted with the power of hell for that end; for, as Chriſt's miniſters are ſaid to have keys from him, and when they warrantably exerciſe them, it is the opening of heaven; ſo promovers of hereſy, being miniſters of Satan, 2 Cor. xi. tho' they think it not, of whom Antichriſt is the chief, he hath the key of the pit, that is an authority not allowed by Chriſt, nor from above: and the opening of the pit with the key, is the putting of that aſſumed power in execution; ſuch is ſpreading of corrupt doctrine, called therefore *doctrines of devils*, 1 Tim. iv. 1. and authorizing men to propagate theſe without Chriſt's call, who are therefore called miniſters of Satan. This key is ſaid to *be given him:* which doth not imply a warrantable call; but, 1. The great change which followed upon his fall, and the exerciſe of his power in reſpect of what it was, he getteth now another key in his hand. 2. An uſurpation of the perſon acting, and promoting the deſigns of hell, in a way of authority, as if that key had been intruſted to him. It implieth a prime

miniſterial office (to ſay ſo) which he hath from the devil, who doth account of, and acknowledge him, as primely ſubſervient to his deſigns, and a ſubordination of this key-bearer unto him, who hath given him this truſt, chap. xiii. 2, 4. *Laſtly*, It implieth a wiſe and juſt, though a ſecret, overruling providence of God, ordering this ſubordinate authority of Antichriſt for his wiſe ends, as he doth the dominion of the devil, whom he permitteth ſovereignly (as it were) in reſpect of the other to bear a kind of rule.

Verſe 2. The exerciſe of this power is ſet down with three effects following thereupon, ver. 2, 3. *And he opened the bottomleſs pit*, that is, as he was employed by the devil, and permitted by God to aſſume an authority for the advantage of hell, ſo did he inſtantly exerciſe his power for that end, and left nothing unaſſayed for bringing ſuperſtition and idolatry out of the bottomleſs pit: where it was formerly reſtrained, now it is letten looſe, as appeareth by the effects, the firſt whereof is, *There aroſe a ſmoke out of the pit, as the ſmoke of a great furnace*. What is to be underſtood by this *ſmoke*, the ſecond effect following upon this, viz. *darkening of the ſun and the air*, will make it appear: for, by *ſun* and *air*, are underſtood here, the light and purity of the doctrine of Chriſt, which ſhined clearly and comfortably in the primitive church. The third part of this light was ſmitten in the fourth trumpet, chap. viii. 12. Now, by this fifth trumpet this darkneſs ſpreadeth, and the whole ſun, and alſo the air is darkened, which holdeth forth a greater degree of corruption in doctrine than was under the former: it began then, but now is at a height. This being then the meaning of darkening the ſun and air, this ſmoke, which bringeth forth this effect, muſt be theſe corrupt and ſuperſtitious doctrines, and increaſing of human traditions and ceremonies, whereby the light of the truth of God was obſcured. This is compared to *a great ſmoke*. 1. Becauſe error and ſuperſtition, though it ſeemeth to be ſomething ſib to devotion, (as ſmoke is to fire) yet is really not only without light and heat, but alſo is onerous and hurtful, as ſmoke is. 2. Becauſe the darkneſs which error and ſuperſtition inferreth upon the truth of God, doth not corrupt it in itſelf, more than ſmoke can darken the ſun; but doth by ceremonies and traditions darken it to us, as great ſmoke doth the ſun to onlookers. Again, this ſmoke is ſaid to be as of a *great furnace* from the bottomleſs pit, to ſhew, that the defection of Antichriſt conſiſteth not in one particular error, but, as it were, an inundation of errors aſcending together. 2. To ſhew, that whatever the authors pretended, yet the riſe of theſe ſuperſtitions were from hell, as in the forecited place, 1 Tim. iv. 2, 3. ſuperſtitious traditions, and errors concerning *meats and marriages*, (doctrines much eſteemed of among the Papiſts) are particularly by the apoſtle attributed unto devils.

Verſe 3. The third effect following upon theſe two, ver. 3. *And there came out of the ſmoke locuſts upon the earth*, a vermin (as it were) engendered by the former corruptions; theſe, as being of ſpecial concernment in the Antichriſtian kingdom are largely and particularly deſcribed. That theſe locuſts were men; yea, that they were pretended churchmen, promovers of error and ſuperſtition, appeareth from this, that they ſtand in ſubordination to Antichriſt, and in a monarchic way are governed by Abaddon, ver. 11. And muſt therefore be ſervants ſuitable to ſuch a maſter, and members conform to ſuch a head. They are ſaid *to come out of the ſmoke*, becauſe oftentimes corruption of doctrine begetteth corrupt teachers to promove the ſame, as we ſee in Jeroboam, 2 Chron. xi. 14, 15. and 2 Tim. iv. 3. the rejecting of ſound doctrine and heaping up teachers after men's own luſts, are put together; for a ſpirit of error loveth to innovate in reſpect of officers, as well as doctrine, and by it people are ſomeway diſpoſed to ſtrange teachers; and alſo for promoving new tenants, they are neceſſitated to make uſe of them. However the ſcope and ſum of the propheſy is thus, that the beginning of Antichriſt's kingdom ſhall be by an eminent church-officer, who, falling from the right exerciſe of miniſteral authority in ſubordination to Chriſt, to be a promover of the devil's deſigns, and ſubſervient to him, he ſhall bring in ſuch abundance of ceremonies, ſuperſtitions and errors upon the church, which ſhall obſcure the clear doctrine and ſimplicity of the goſpel, whereby numbers of falſe teachers and orders ſhall be eſtabliſhed, which our Lord Jeſus hath never warranted. They are compared to locuſts, 1. Becauſe of their number, as Antichriſt ſhall bring in many errors, ſo ſhall he multiply teachers,

who ſhall live and converſe together in the world like ſwarms of locuſts. 2. To ſet forth their nature, and that both in reſpect of their worthleſsneſs, and alſo of their hurtfulneſs unto the church, this being the nature of locuſts to conſume and deſtroy where they come, ſo that a land pleaſant like Eden before them, is brought by them to a deſolate wilderneſs, Joel ii. 3, &c. compared with chap. i. 4. Theſe orders and teachers ſhall even do ſo with the church: yea, the increaſing of them is marked here, as a part of Antichriſt's ſuperſtition, as a fruit of former corrupting of doctrine, and as a mids to carry on that corruption to a height; by which we may ſee, that the altering or inventing of new officers in the church, is of no little concernment. By theſe locuſts, we conceive clearly to be holden forth the many invented orders and ſuperſtitious rabble of theſe called the clergy of the church of Rome, who not being plants of our heavenly Father's planting, but purpoſely brought in to promove and ſupport the worldy grandeur of that hierarchy, and did flow from ſuperſtitious principles brought in upon the church; and ſo are to be accounted as locuſts, having their riſe from the bottomleſs pit, which their deſcription will more fully clear.

The firſt part of their deſcription (beſide their riſe already ſpoken of) is the power that was given them, which is theſe four ways ſet forth, 1. Generally, verſe 3. *Unto them was given power, as the ſcorpions of the earth have power, &c. ſcorpions* are a dangerous and ſubtile ſort of ſerpents; theſe look like locuſts, but ſting like ſcorpions, that is, dangerouſly and ſubtilly, their hurt being beyond their appearance, by their cunning inſtilling poiſonus doctrine: *Their having of power given them*, doth not import lawful authorizing of them, but as was ſaid of their head, verſe 1. They want not commiſſion, but that is given them by the angel of the bottomleſs pit, who doth formerly authorize and create theſe orders, and preſcribeth rules unto them, ſo that even his officers and miniſters have order among them, and aſſume not commiſſion and calling (although to ſuperſtitious orders) of themſelves. This is fully made out in the Pope's way of founding, creating, commiſſionating, &c. by his bulls, patents and other writs (as they give them names) of all orders, whereof many hundreds are in that kingdom; all which have their dependence on him, owe their being to his authority, and are regulated by the laws and commiſſions given them from him.

Verſe 4. The ſecond way how their power is deſcribed, is, verſe 4. where their commiſſion is bounded and ordered in theſe two reſpects, 1. In reſpect of theſe they ſhall not hurt; *it was commanded them that they ſhould not hurt the graſs of the earth, &c.* Whereby is underſtood (as is clear by the oppoſition following) the elect or ſealed ones. This command cometh not from their immediate ſuperior, viz. the angel of the bottomleſs pit, but proceedeth from the Lord's ſovereignty, in order to the fulfilling of what was foretold, chap. vii. Again, the proper objects unto whom their power reacheth, are ſet down, viz. *but only theſe men which have not the ſeal of God in their foreheads*, that is, theſe who are not elected: here the end of Chriſt's ſealing, and the advantage of it doth appear, and alſo who they are upon whom the deluſion of Antichriſt hath full victory.

Verſe 5. Their power or commiſſion is deſcribed further in a twofold limitation. verſe 5. 1. *And it was given to them that they ſhould not kill them*, that is, that their plaguing of men ſhould not be directly by taking away the bodily life (as the horſemen under the ſixth trumpet have, verſe 18.) but muſt be underſtood of another ſort of plague as afterward. If any ſay that Antichriſt is ſaid to kill, chap. xi. 13. 17. and ſo how can this be ſaid of him? *Anſ.* We may conſider Antichriſt in a twofold reſpect, 1. In reſpect of the elect: 2. In reſpect of hypocritical profeſſors in the church. In reſpect of the firſt, Antichriſt is here limited from killing them ſpiritually, but in theſe places he is permitted to kill them bodily. On the contrary again, in reſpect of the ſecond, Antichriſt doth not take away the life bodily of theſe that ſubmitteth to him, but he proveth a ſpiritual plague unto them. Now, if we conſider him in the firſt ſenſe, as he corrupteth the elect, Antichriſt is not the plague of the world; but in the ſecond ſenſe, as ſouls are endangered by him. And therefore this being a threatning of ſending him as a plague to the hypocrites of the church, his proper commiſſion in reference to them is only ſet down. 2. This limitation may be put in, to ſhew the proper work of theſe locuſts, which ſhould not be profeſſedly to take away bodily lives themſelves (from which, as to its act, the

Romiſh clergy doth ſuperſtitiouſly pretend to abſtain, although they be deep in bloody contrivances) but that their native work ſhould be the deſtroying of ſouls. The ſecond limitation in this verſe, is in reſpect of the time; it is not for ever, but for five months. We underſtand it indefinitely for a conſiderable long time, yet a time that is bounded by the Lord, and will have an end, as Ez. xxxix. 12. ſeven months are to be taken alſo. It is probable that particularly five months are mentioned, becauſe ordinarily locuſts continued to deſtroy during five months, as is written of them; for beginning in April, they died in September. If we ſhould aim to be more definite in applying this time, it would but prove more troubleſome and uncertain, than ſatisfying or edifying.

The laſt thing wherein their power or commiſſion is deſcribed, is in the nature of the plague itſelf, that is, it was not that they ſhould kill men, but that *men ſhould be tormented*, &c. This torment in the greatneſs of it, is aggreged by a ſimilitude in the end of the fifth verſe, *their torment was as the torment of a ſcorpion*, which is a grievous, and vexing torment.

Verſe 6. The ſecond aggravation is verſe 6. From the effect of this, *Men ſhall ſeek death, and ſhall not find it, and ſhall deſire to die, and death ſhall flee from them.* In ſum it is this, their anxiety ſhall be ſo great, as ſhall make them weary of their life (as we ſee often good men wiſh for death under great anxiety of ſpirit, not as death is conſidered in itſelf, but as uſually it is accounted an end to prevent vexations, as Job and Jonah) and yet death ſhall not prove comfortable to them: but death (that is a quieting death which they deſire) ſhall flee from them, and thoughts of death ſhall breed a new terror to them. For underſtanding this, two things are to be obſerved, 1. That it is not bodily torment which the text ſpeaketh of, but ſpiritual anxiety and inward vexation of ſpirit, and that ſuch as natively floweth from the practices and doctrine of theſe locuſts: for, 1. This torment is on the friends and native ſubjects of this kingdom, whom theſe under-officers do not pretend willingly to torment. 2. Their power is not to kill bodily, and therefore not to torment bodily.

The ſecond thing to be obſerved is, that nothing doth more natively breed anxiety and ſpiritual torment, than the principles contained in the Popiſh doctrine, and propagated by theſe who are ſignified by theſe locuſts. And therefore ſeeing the ſpreaders of ſuch doctrine as breed anxiety and vexation of ſpirit, and can never ſatisfy nor quiet a conſcience, muſt be underſtood here, we can more warrantably apply it to none, than underlings of the Popiſh clergy, and other propagaters of that kingdom; where theſe things are clear, 1. That their doctrine is apt of itſelf to breed this vexation of ſpirit, ſuch as the innumerableneſs of their ceremonies, holy days, doctrine of merit of works, and uncertainty of grace and ſalvation, perfection of holineſs, and fulfilling of the law of God, with the great yoke of will-worſhip and ſuperſtition, which cannot but bring the zealots of theſe traditions under much bondage. 2. This is clear, that by their principles there is no quieting of a conſcience once wakened: what can their penances, pilgrimages, ſatisfactions, indulgences, invocation of ſaints and images, and ſuch like, do to the ſprinkling of an heart from an evil conſcience? There needeth no more proof of this, than to read the writings of ſome of their caſuiſts, and to conſider the many donations given for ſoul-maſſes after death, becauſe the conſcience could never be quieted here. 3. We will find alſo both theſe made good in experience; hiſtories are full of inſtances of the heartleſs and comfortleſs life, and anxious death of many members of that body, which God hath bleſſed to ſome, for conſtraining them to flee over theſe things, the alone grace of God in Chriſt Jeſus. Yea, 4. Doth not their doctrine purſue men till death, and after death to torment? Their peremptory exacting of auricular confeſſion of all ſins, and that under the pain of damnation; their founding of the man's confidence upon the Pope's pardon, the prieſt's abſolution, his own penance and holineſs, or the virtue of ſome ſacrament (yea ſometimes of ſome idolatrous invention, as the maſs, &c.) according to their principles, conferring grace by the working of the work, as they call it, and ſuch like, cannot furniſh the ſoul with ſolid confidence. Beſide, the fear of purgatory doth weaken that hope, or expectation of eaſe, which otherwiſe men might have from death: in this ſenſe, though they ſeek death, yet it fleeth from them, and they obtain not their deſire by it, and their vexation dieth not.

Verſe 7. Again, in the ſeventh verſe, he returneth the particular deſcription of theſe locuſts. 1. In their appearance or ſhape; *like horſes*, that is ſtrong, and ſwift, and ſtout, as *prepared unto battle*, ſo Gregory, had before ſpoken of prieſts, calling them *ſacerdotum exercitus* to uſher in Antichriſt. They are compared to *horſes prepared unto battle*, becauſe of their courage and expediteneſs in undertaking and proſecuting their deſigns, and becauſe of the ſucceſs which followed them, who, as a conquering army do prevail over the world, which is not armed againſt them. For which cauſes, theſe locuſts, Joel ii. are compared to horſes and armies. They are ſaid to be *crowned with crowns like gold*, to ſet forth their outward grandeur and ſeeming ſtatelineſs and authority, which is not ſo indeed, though it appeared to be ſo; and therefore ſaid not to be gold, but *like gold*. In a word, they are like kings in pomp, and armies in ſtrength: this agreeth well to their cardinals, biſhops, and others of the clergy of the church of Rome. 3. *They have faces as the faces of men*, that is a pretended affableneſs and ſociableneſs in the converſations: thereby to inſinuate themſelves by rational pretexts upon the affections of men, yet being indeed nothing leſs than they pretended.

3. (Verſe 8.) They are ſaid *to have women's hair*: which holdeth forth an effeminateneſs, and vain delicateneſs in their diſpoſition and carriage, and a whoriſh way of decking themſelves, and alluring others to their fornication; for which, this kingdom, chap. xvii. is called *the great whore*. 5. *Their teeth were as the teeth of lions*, that is cruel and ravenous, notwithſtanding of the former appearances, devouring the ſouls of theſe that are ſubject to them, the bodies of theſe that oppoſe them, and the goods and eſtates of both, like theſe, Matth. xxiii. 15. who *devour widows houſes, and that under pretext of long prayers*. The *horſes* mentioned, ver. 17. have *lions heads;* here they have only *lions teeth* with the faces of men, and hair of women. The reaſon of the difference is, although both agree in cruelty and deſtroying; yet the Popiſh clergy, ſignified here, do more ſubtilly and covertly deſtroy ſouls. Therefore are they deſcribed by *lions teeth* only, which are not ſo obvious to ſight. The Turks again, of whom the ſixth trumpet ſpeaketh, do more manifeſtly appear what they are; therefore are deſcribed with lions heads.

Verſe 9. He proceedeth to deſcribe theſe locuſts in their defenſive and offenſive arms; they are ſaid *to have breaſtplates, as it were breaſtplates of iron, and the ſound of their wings was as the ſound of chariots of many horſes running to battle*. The firſt part ſheweth their ſecurity from all danger, and the advantage they had in their war; there was no hurting of them more than there is of hurting horſemen well armed with armour of iron. The ſecond part of the verſe ſheweth the horrible noiſe and terror wherewith they proſecute their deſigns when they find oppoſition; ſo that armies, with horſemen and chariots, are not more horrible and violent in their encounters than they are. In the application to the clergy of the church of Rome, both theſe may be made good by the many privileges and immunities which they poſſeſs, whereby they are exempted from dependence on all monarchs but their own; by the dread of excommunications and thunderings of church-cenſure, while they keep the keys of heaven and purgatory, they were not only free of fear or hurt from others, but alſo when they met with oppoſition from emperors and kings, did, with ſuch clamour and violence, ſo perſecute them, that no enemy or army hath been for a long time ſo terrible as they, making the world aſtoniſhed with the ſtupendiouſneſs of their pretended power. The effects of this have been often found, as hiſtory do witneſs.

The 10. verſe doth continue the deſcription of theſe locuſts in three particulars more. The firſt is, *they had tails like unto ſcorpions tails*, Iſa. v. 19. doth hold forth the flattering and fauning humour of falſe teachers, who inſinuate themſelves by flatteries and lies, as dogs, (to whom they are compared) do with their tails. 2. It is ſaid *there were ſtings in their tails*, that is, not only their mouth and head were hurtful, but their tails: that which ſeemeth moſt pleaſant to others, and is moſt delighted in, doth often prove moſt noiſome and hurtful to them. Such fair words and pleaſant ſpeeches of corrupt men have ever a ſting in them, tending to the ſeduction of the ſimple, Rom. xvi. 18. 3. Their continuance is deſcribed, *their power was to hurt men five months:* This was formerly ſpoken of, ver. 5. and is again repeated here, either becauſe it was mentioned formerly by way of limitation, that they ſhould torment no longer than the time appointed; here

it is to ſhew their continuance, which ſhall be till the appointed time come; or, it is double, to confirm the faith of God's over-ruling providence in timing both the riſe, continuance, and cloſe of this dreadful plague. This verſe alſo being particularly compared with verſe 19. following, will alſo clear the plagues threatned by theſe two trumpets, to be of diſtinct and different natures.

Laſtly, verſe 11. Their government is deſcribed in three, 1. (contrary to that of locuſts, Prov. xxx. 27.) it is monarchic, *they have a king over them*, that is, although they be many and various, and different among themſelves, yet are they all ſubordinate to one ſupreme head, who exerciſeth abſolute and independent authority over all the reſt, and who liveth in royal ſtate and majeſty in the world, having uncontroverted and limited power within that kingdom, and hath all others in ſubordination to him; it is impoſſible to indigitate any other by this than the Pope. 2. This monarch is deſcribed by his office, which is to be *the angel of the bottomleſs pit:* which holdeth forth two things, 1. That he is a ſervant to that kingdom of darkneſs, one commiſſionated and ſent an embaſſage from it, for its behove; and ſo is not to be underſtood of the devil himſelf, who is not properly ſent, but ſendeth from the pit. 2. It holdeth forth an eminent, truſty, and ſingular meſſenger of that kingdom, therefore called, by way of eminency, *the angel of the bottomleſs pit*, and therefore cannot be applied to ordinary falſe teachers. In a word, he is the ſame ſtar that fell from heaven, verſe 1. and got *the key of the bottomleſs pit*, and the ſame *beaſt*, mentioned, chap. xiii. to whom the *dragon* doth eſpecially give his power and commiſſion, as his great deputy and vicar in the backſlidden church; and therefore he is ſaid, 2 Theſſ. ii. *to come after the working of Satan*, &c. 3. This king is deſcribed from his name, which is ſet down both in Hebrew and Greek, *Abaddon*, and *Apollyon*, a name ſuitable to ſuch a king and kingdom. His name, in both, ſignifieth a deſtroyer, or to deſtroy; partly, becauſe actively he deſtroyeth; and partly, becauſe he is to be deſtroyed. It is ſet down both in Hebrew and Greek; becauſe, 1. He uſurpeth over all the church, and proveth a deſtroyer both to Jews and Greeks. 2. Becauſe in due time he is to be deſtroyed by both, as we will ſee on chap. xvi. and 19. and alſo becauſe the Lord would have him known to be ſo, both by Jews and Greeks, as Pilate cauſed write the title above Chriſt in divers languages. Our bleſſed Lord Jeſus had two names, one, Jeſus in Hebrew, and Chriſt in Greek; both which hold him forth to be a Saviour, this king will be ſatisfied with no leſs honour and extent of government, yet it is deſcribed by theſe titles to be of quite contrary nature. It is not to be thought, that this king ſhould aſſume ſuch an odious title, or that any ſuch ſhould be attributed to him by his followers, but that indeed he ſhall be ſuch, as this title deſcribeth, that is, a moſt horrible waſte and deſtroyer of the church of Chriſt.

This, all along, is applicable to the papal kingdom, whereof the Pope is head, unto which ſhortly we have hinted the application of it, which ſtandeth ſure upon the preceding grounds and ſuppoſitions. For further confirming whereof, we ſhall, 1. In few words reſume ſome general properties of, and conſiderations concerning, this plague here deſcribed. 2. We ſhall lay down a little view of the public riſe, progreſs, nature, &c. of the papal kingdom: from which two, we ſhall leave the application, by way of concluſion, to be gathered.

The object of this plague, is the viſible church, and the hypocritical profeſſors in it, who are not appointed and marked for eternal life. It is the ſame Chriſtian world, and light of ordinances, which is darkened and deſtroyed by it, which was weakened by the former trumpets. 2. The nature of it is ſpiritual, corrupting the ordinances of ſpiritual life, and bringing with it deſtruction to immortal ſouls. 3. The extent of it is univerſal, over the face of the whole viſible church, the actors in it are churchmen, once by their places having power and authority in the church of Chriſt. In time it breaketh out in a ſpiritual kingdom and hierarchy; and upon a pretended eccleſiaſtic account, aſſuming great power and authority, it doth breed, and is ſupported by ſwarms of church officers: the time of its public appearing to be a kingdom in an eſtabliſhed form, will be found to be about the year 600, for, it followeth immediately the fourth trumpet; which continued the hiſtory of that time, and doth immediately precede the riſe of the Maho-

metans, which from the 7000 year forward is at an height, and growth, as the expoſition of the following trumpet will clear. This plague carrieth alongſt with it much corrupt doctrine; yea, bringeth again idolatry into the Chriſtian church, as we will ſee in the cloſe of this chapter, and eſpecially ſuch corrupt doctrine as overturneth the comfortable and quieting grounds of the goſpel; it bringeth alſo to the world great ſtore of new-created orders for the promoving of theſe doctrines, and ſupporting that kingdom, who, both by covered ſubtilty and violence, carry on their deſigns, and many ſuch other particulars.

Now, for the ſecond thing propounded, if we will take a view of the papal kingdom, what will we miſs? That is a kingdom under one abſolute monarch with moſt illimited power, having dominion over the church, being begun and carried on by churchmen, having corrupted the doctrine of the goſpel, and brought idolatry again into the church, are all evident. I ſhall inſtance but theſe three particulars. 1. The nature of the doctrine, and errors brought in by them, which, though exceeding agreeable to nature, yet exceeding oppoſite to the way of grace, and therefore cannot but neceſſarily and natively be deſtructive to the ſolid conſolation of ſouls, and beget fearful horror in the hearts and conſciences of poor ſinners, ſo that ſometimes the greateſt promoters of them have been forced to abandon theſe principles under challenges: and their greateſt diſputants are conſtrained to acknowledge this: we have an inſtance in *Bellarmin de juſtif. lib.* 3. *cap.* 7. who after his long diſpute of indulgences, merit of works, &c. ſeeketh to ſum up all in three aſſertions. The firſt whereof, attributeth merit unto works; the ſecond alloweth men to confide in their own merits; yet as diſtruſting this foundation ſo largely contended for, he addeth a third propoſition, *Propter incertitudinem propriæ juſtitiæ & periculum inanis gloriæ, tutiſſimum eſt fiducian totam in ſola dei miſericordia & benignitate reponere.* So that, in end, for uncertainty of man's proper righteouſneſs and hazard of vain glory, he accounteth it moſt ſafe to place our whole confidence in the mercy and goodneſs of God allenarly, and giveth this reaſon; if man have no merit, ſaith he, he ſhould not confide; if he hath, (which yet is uncertain) it is no hurt or loſs to flee only to God's mercy. In which, one aſſertion, we may ſee 1. The uncomfortableneſs of that doctrine of merit that can never comfort ſolidly, becauſe, at the beſt, it is uncertain. 3. We may ſee the hazard of it to foſter pride and vain-glory. 3. We may ſee the diſquietneſs of it, by which ſinners can never be ſecure, till they have fully renounced it. Suarez alſo doth homologate Bellarmine in this. And yet this doctrine of merit is a prime fundamental tenet of that church, but hath often diſappointed the defenders of it, when they had moſt need of comfort, and hath made them prize the doctrine of faith in Chriſt Jeſus in their death, who often thought it abſurd in their life: as particularly is written of Charles the V. after his laying by of public things in the world, and his retiring of himſelf to a monaſtery.

The ſecond inſtance is in the abundance and variety of their religious orders, as they are called, (which take up a main part of the deſcription of this kingdom;) there is at leaſt thirty five orders reckoned, each whereof, for the moſt part, will comprehend many thouſands, beſide their biſhops and other members of their hierarchy. The number of the monaſteries belonging to theſe orders, are reckoned by ſome to be 225044, as is obſerved by Alſtedius in his chronology: All which have their original by the Pope's authority, hold their dependency on him alone, and are vigorous inſtruments, ſpecially devoted to the upholding and promoving of his deſigns.

Laſtly, A more particular conſidering of its riſe and public appearance; which was about the ſame time, viz. anno 600, and its growth and manner of proceeding afterward will make out this, which was ſhortly thus,

After the three hundred year, when the church poſſeſſed peace, pride ſoon infected her officers, whereby there was ambitious deſires after pre-eminence amongſt theſe who ſhould have been moſt free of that vice: Rome had many advantages for this end, and her biſhops improved them well, as hath been hinted in the expoſition of the former trumpets; yet did never one of them uſurp a ſettled ſuperiority, or the title of univerſal biſhop or headſhip over the church, till Boniface the third aſſumed it, about the year 606. Which was upon this occaſion: after the ſeat of the empire was tranſlated from Rome to Conſtantinople, by Conſtantine, that biſhop was privileged with all the privileges which Rome enjoyed, by her being for-

merly the ſeat of the emperor's court, even as that city was named New Rome, and made fellow in all privileges unto Old Rome: from this, many contentions followed, as is before hinted. While the emperor's court conſtantly continued there, the biſhops of Conſtantinople would not be content with equality, but aſſumed a ſuperiority, and a title ſuitable to it, of Univerſal Biſhop. This John, biſhop of Conſtantinople, did, a little before the year 600, while Mauritius poſſeſſed the empire, who did countenance him, it is like, out of reſpect to the place where his court reſided. This uſurpation was generally ill taken, and written againſt, eſpecially by Gregory, biſhop of Rome, who did preſage the revealing of Antichriſt not to be far off, when men durſt be ſo impudent to take that ſtyle, which no apoſtle ever uſurped. Upon ſome occaſion, the emperor's army mutinying, did chuſe one Phocas, a baſe, vile wretch, emperor, who having killed all Mauritius' children before him, did afterward kill himſelf: unto this Phocas did Gregory of Rome make addreſſes, by commiſſioners and epiſtles, groſsly flattering him, and abuſing that place of Daniel iv. of God's changing and transferring of empires, as he had done that for the good of his church, in removing a tyrant, and ſetting up ſuch a religious prince as Phocas was, as may be ſeen in his epiſtles, lib. 11. epiſt. 36, 44, and 45. By this means, Phocas came to favour the biſhops of Rome, and what out of envy towards Mauritius' name, and what to ingratiate himſelf in the Weſt by the biſhop of Rome's means. Some few years after (while Boniface, who was at firſt Gregory's commiſſioner to Phocas, poſſeſſed the ſee) he paſſed an edict, willing and declaring Rome to be acknowledged for the ſupreme ſee; and the biſhop thereof, for ſupreme and univerſal biſhop from that time forth. This decree, Boniface the III. within ſhort time, cauſed ratify and pronounce in a Lateran council of 62 or 72 biſhops; and, although it wanted not much contradiction then, and was never fully acknowledged by all the Eaſtern churches, yet from that time did this great Roman hierarchy receive its public riſe, and that myſtery which long had been working, was obſtetricated and brought forth by ſuch a a midwife, as this infamous Phocas, anno 606, as is ſaid. At this time, and after (as *Platina in vita Bonifacii tertii* ſaith) this Pope, and others, did put in their decrees, *Sic volumus et jubemus;* and ſaith, that the reaſon of preferring Rome was, becauſe the emperor was ſtill ſtyled Romanorum Imperator, whereſover he reſided.

Immediately after this, the light of the word wonderfully decayed, traditions were obtruded, all public worſhip was to be performed in Latin, the ſcriptures were kept up from laic people, as they called them, litanies, liturgies, and maſſes were brought in inſtead of the word and preaching. And, in effect, all reformations conſiſted in building churches and monaſteries, and enriching them with great donations; plurality of mediators, and worſhipping of ſaints and angels were brought in, eſpecially this was in Vitellianus his time, about the year 666. Heatheniſh ſuperſtitions and ceremonies were brought again into the church, the temple called Pantheon, formerly dedicated to all the heathen gods, was now opened, and dedicated to All-ſaints, (this was in Phocas and Innocentius their time) images were ſet up in the church, and appointed to be worſhipped: which occaſioned great confuſion in the church; and, although it was long reſiſted by the emperors of the Eaſt, and by ſeveral councils, both in the Eaſt and Weſt, yet was it afterward eſtabliſhed by the ſecond council of Nice: this ſecond council of Nice was held, anno 781, or 788. This worſhipping of images was mightily oppoſed by Leo, Iſaurus, Conſtant. Compron, and other emperors of the Eaſt, who, for that, were excommunicated by the Popes. At laſt, Irene, a ſuperſtitious cruel woman, obtaining the government after her huſband's death, the foreſaid council of Nice did conclude this image-worſhip. It ſat firſt down at Conſtantinople; but the people being enraged at this their deſign, they were forced to remove it to Nice. It is marked, Cent. Magd. out of the old writers, that theſe emperors urged the removing of images, that that ſcandal might not ly before the Saracens, that Chriſtians worſhipped idols; this council of Nice was alſo withſtood by Charles the Great, and Ludovicus Pius.

At this time alſo the Pope grew exceedingly to an height, not only of cenſuring biſhops, and diſpoſing of biſhoprics, but alſo depoſing kings, and diſpoſing of their kingdoms at his pleaſure, ſupremely, and ſovereignly, to decide all queſtions whatſoever, and that without all poſſibility of erring.

In a word, in every thing ſo abſolute, as he might lead millions of ſouls to hell, and none might ſay to him, what doſt thou? And all this with wonderful violence and terror to any who ſhould in the leaſt contrary the ſame: which things are not only practiſed by the head of this Antichriſtian kingdom, but alſo are owned and maintained by theſe his forementioned armies to be due to him, (as from many particular inſtances, and their general principles might be made out) all which being put together, (eſpecially by the intelligent, who are acquainted with their practices and writings) it may be confidently concluded, (which was aſſerted in the introduction to this chapter) that the Popiſh kingdom, is the very kingdom; the Pope, the very king; and the angel of the bottomleſs pit, the Popiſh clergy, the very locuſts and armies, and their doctrine, the very noiſome ſmoke of the pit, which are here ſomewhat darkly, but exceeding fully and appoſitely deſcribed.

We ſhall ſay no more for uſe of all, but, 1. That we would bleſs God, who hath clearly diſcovered to us this abomination that maketh deſolate. And 2. We would bleſs him further, that he hath freed us from this tyranny, under which a great part of the Chriſtian world doth ly, and by which our own predeceſſors were ſometimes keeped in bondage. 3. It ſhould provoke us to improve the light and liberty of truth, which he hath conceded to us, and to welcome the ſoul-comforting doctrines of the goſpel. O what great odds is there betwixt the diſpenſations of the goſpel which we enjoy, and that which our fathers lived under! And therefore how much more is required of us? And how much greater will the condemnation of theſe be, who ungratefully periſh under this light?

Laſtly, Let it ſtir us up with holy indignation againſt this contagion of Popery: ought we to think this a light and indifferent matter, which the Lord hath threatned as ſo great a woe to the viſible church, and which he doth ſo ſignificantly delineate in the helliſh nature and hurtful effects of it? And let us commiſerate the deplorable condition of many thouſands of poor ſouls, captivated under this tyranny, and ſtung with the poiſon of theſe ſcorpions, who yet cry not when they are bound. And let us cry mightily to God, to break this covenant with death, and to bring this agreement with hell to an end, that the oppreſſed captives may be let go free, and the temple may be opened in heaven, and that he may take to him his great power, and reign, that the kingdoms of the earth may become the kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Chriſt, even ſo, Amen.

Concerning the comfortleſs grounds that Popery layeth down for the comforting of poor afflicted Conſciences.

IF we might take a view of ſuch grounds as Popery layeth down for the quieting of an exerciſed conſcience, what a laybrinth would it be found, for,

1. They deny all not imputation of ſin, or imputation of righteouſneſs, and place remiſſion of ſins only in the infuſing of a gracious quality in the ſoul, which they call *gratia gratiam faciens;* ſo that if the ſin be mortal, this is loſt, (although the perſon were formerly juſt) and muſt again be recovered. If it be venial, he muſt ſatisfy for it. 2. To this kind of remiſſion, they require attrition and contrition. The firſt is a legal ſorrow for fear of wrath, the ſecond is an intenſe ſorrow for the ſin committed; the firſt proceedeth from ſervile fear, this from filial: both theſe they lay down as neceſſary for attaining of the former remiſſion, or infuſion of grace. 3. To this contrition they give a fourfold influence in the attaining thereof, 1. Diſpoſitively, or a diſpoſing influence, as the material cauſe, as they call it, of this grace, that is, by this contrition as it is a virtue, the ſoul is diſpoſed for receiving of that grace; or, that that grace may be wrought in the ſoul, out of that contrition, as the pre-exiſtent matter thereof. 2. It concurreth inſtrumentally, as it is a part of the ſacrament of penance, by which the prieſt's abſolution doth *ex opere operato*, beget ſuch grace in the heart of one that is contrite. Theſe two are laid down by Thom. ſupplement, queſt. 5. Art. 1. corp. 3. It concurreth by way of ſatisfaction for the ſin committed, and ſo this inward contrition, in the ſenſitive part, is man's recompenſing for his fault inwardly, as he doth outwardly inflict puniſhment on the body, *ad*

recompenſandam offenſam quæ in deum committitur, as Aquinas ſpeaketh, *Queſt.* 1. *Art.* 2. 4. It concurreth meritoriouſly as an act of virtue, even as other works do for procuring meritoriouſly ſomething from God. *Supp. Queſt.* 1. *Art.* 2. even the firſt entrance into glory.

All which ways will be unſatisfying to a conſcience; for neither of them looketh on repentance as that which the Lord of his grace hath promiſed and knit pardon freely unto: therefore, that it may be more meritorius, there ariſeth a new diſpute; wherein this contrition conſiſteth. 1. Some old ſchoolmen ſay it muſt be *in ſummo gradu*, otherwiſe pardon is not to be expected. 2. Others, of whom Scotus is the head, ſay, that it is ſuch a ſorrow as is only known to God, and ſo by it the conſcience can have no quiet. 3. The latter Jeſuits, as *Bellar. de paeniten. lib.* 2. *cap.* 11. and *Greg. de Valent. tom.* 4. *diſp.* 7. *Queſt.* 8. *de contritione*, do reject both theſe as falſe and dangerous: and becauſe that contrition in ſuch a degree is moſt rare, therefore they have a twofold cure, leſt there be no ground to quiet one at all. 1. Bellarmine diſtinguiſheth contrition in that which is *intenſive ſumma* and *appretiative ſumma*, and ſaith, that though the firſt be not, the ſecond will be ſufficient, providing the ſinner be ſtill purſuing after the firſt to the uttermoſt, ſo that if any thing be left undone which might be done for attaining thereof, this ground will fail; and the conſcience can have no peace in this, becauſe in it there is a new ſin, and what ſhall ſatisfy for that? This is alſo rare, and conſidering that a wakened conſcience will not eaſily acquieſce in its own appretiative contrition; as being equivalent for ſatisfaction, that being only ſuch as deſireth to be intenſively in the higheſt degree, as they expound it. Therefore,

2. The weight is laid on the power of the keys, and the prieſt's abſolution in the ſacrament of penance (which *Greg. de Valentia*, ſaith, is *communis ſcholaſticorum ſententia*) that is, that though contrition of itſelf be not ſufficient, yet by virtue of the foreſaid abſolution, one that is *attritus*, doth become *contritus*, and ſo have the forementioned remiſſion of ſins beſtowed on him. Therefore they make baptiſm ſimply neceſſary to the pardon of orginal ſin, and penance to actual, except when it is impoſſible; and in this caſe the vow thereof doth ſupply. To this ſacramental abſolution they require particular confeſſion of moral ſins, *de neceſſitate ſalutis*, to be made neceſſarily to the prieſt, before he abſolve them, which can be no little torture; and ſo ſtill this leaveth the ſoul to diſpute the prieſt's commiſſion, and the nature of that ſacrament, which will not eaſily quiet it, and alſo leaveth it under Aquinas his unanſwerable argument, *Suppl. Queſt.* 1. *Art.* 3. Where (ſaith he) the principles are diverſe, the one can never paſs unto, or become the other; but the principles of attrition, viz. ſervile fear, and of contrition, viz. filial fear, are diverſe. *Ergo*, *&c.* When this is done, there is ſtill a ſtick (even by their principles) in the uncertainty of this, whether their contrition be true or not; or whether that remiſſion hath followed freely or not: for this, they ſay, cannot be known, (but by particular revelation) therefore do they conclude, that to ſupply all, it is neceſſary to enjoin ſatisfaction in work, by penances, peregrinations, dotations, or ſuch like, whereby they make up equivolently the effects of their contrition, and make all ſure: and if the perſon cannot ſatisfy himſelf becauſe his ſins are great, here they have their indulgences, and the application of the ſatisfactions of others for quieting the mind, whereby the Pope, out of his treaſury and plentitude of authority, doth apply the ſatisfaction of ſome others, who did ſatisfy and pay more than their own guilt did amount unto, as Bellarmine ſpeaketh, *de indul. lib.* 1. *cap.* 4. The conſcience is recommended to this for quietneſs; whence it is, that ſo much money is given for theſe indulgences.

Theſe ways indeed oppreſs the perſons, and empty the purſes of their patients, but can produce no ſolid cure. This great difficulty followeth ever that way, when external bodily penances do not the turn, then ſo many years have they to endure in purgatory, notwithſtanding of ordinary indulgences, and this, (as Bellarmine ſaith, *lib.* 1. *de indul. cap.* 9. *pag.* 1174.) may amount to about twenty thouſand years, which is the great courteſy allowed by this way unto a tortured conſcience.

The queſtion is, what may become of that perſon at the day of judgment when his years will not be expired? By intenſeneſs, ſaith he, of the degree that is to be made up in three or four hundred years. This is the path-way of their caſual divinity: and after all, they leave the patient at an uncertainty, when they have beſtowed all on them, and endured that twenty thouſand years in purgatory, if for all

that they may be afterward relieved and brought through; ſo it is ſtill at a venture, and what peace can be here in this way, where neceſſarily theſe four are controvertible? 1. Whether theſe means, being applied, can work the effect, when no ſuch way is holden forth in ſcripture, and is but grounded in many ſteps on traditions and canons, and diſputable principles, at the beſt. 2. Whether a proportionableneſs can be between its ſatisfactions or ſorrow, and the ſin committed, ſo as they may quiet the conſcience, as having appeaſed God by them, ſeeing his juſtice is infinite, and the deſerving of ſin is great. 3. Whether ſorrow can be without ſin in itſelf, and ſo being defective cannot be ſatisfactory, but muſt need a ſatisfaction. 4. Whether its own act of ſorrow be ſincere or gracious, that is ſtill uncertain, and ſo cannot but mar peace ſtill, as they acknowledge. And to cloſe, it muſt be a poor peace which is ſought for in purgatory, by ſo many years continuance there, and yet not to be ſure of it when theſe ſhall end. There is nothing liker the anxiety mentioned here than this, which is but an hint of that which is followed in many inextricable diſputes, concerning theſe three parts of repentance, viz. *contritio cordis*, *confeſſio oris*, and *ſatisfactio operis*, which ſhould ſooner diſtract a wearied ſinner, than give quietneſs unto him.

LECTURE II.

Verſe 12. *One woe is paſt; and behold there come two woes more hereafter.*

13. *And the ſixth angel ſounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before God,*

14. *Saying to the ſixth angel which had the trumpet, looſe the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.*

15. *And the four angels were looſed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to ſlay the third part of men.*

16. *And the number of the army of the horſemen were two hundred thouſand thouſand: and I heard the number of them.*

17. *And thus I ſaw the horſes in the viſion, and them that ſat on them, having breaſt-plates of fire, and of jacinct, and brimſtone, and the heads of the horſes were as the heads of lions, and out of their mouths iſſued fire, and ſmoke, and brimſtone.*

18. *By theſe three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the ſmoke, and by the brimſtone, which iſſued out of their mouths.*

19 *For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto ſerpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.*

20. *And the reſt of the men which were not killed by theſe plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they ſhould not worſhip devils, and idols of gold and ſilver, and braſs, and ſtone, and of wood: which neither can ſee, nor hear, nor walk.*

21. *Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their ſorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.*

IN the laſt trumpet were deſcribed the nature and ſucceſs of the kingdom of Antichriſt, who was there called the angel of the bottomleſs pit, in oppoſition to Jeſus Chriſt, who is called the angel of the covenant. The viſible church was peſtered with corruptions, ſuperſtitions, and idolatry by him, for which the Lord threatneth to plague them with a more ſenſible plague by this ſixth trumpet.

The 12. verſe, *one woe is paſt*, &c. Is ſet down to rid marches betwixt the two trumpets, and to make the tranſition clear from the one to the other. It is not to be underſtood, as if the event of the fifth trumpet were fully to precede the ſixth, and no ways to cotemporate with it, the contrary of this is clear from the cloſe of this chapter, where the idolatry brought into the world by the fifth

unrepented of during the ſixth; but this is to be underſtood, either as holding forth the priority of their beginning, the fifth precedeth the ſixth, as being the procuring cauſe of it; or it relateth only to the former deſcription, and ſignifieth this much, the deſcription of the firſt woe is paſt, and now cometh the typical deſcription of the ſecond. Therefore what we prefaced in general concerning the order both of ſeals and trumpets, is to be applied here.

The judgment propheſied of here, at the firſt reading, is exceeding terrible, and ſo deſcribed as muſt be neceſſarily underſtood of ſome more than an ordinary woe. In this deſcription we have,

1. The riſe of this plague, in the ſupreme and ſubordinate over-rulers thereof, ver. 13, 14.

2. The actors and executioners thereof are generally hinted at, ver. 14.

3. Their commiſſion is expreſſed, ver. 15.

4. The executioners, and their execution following thereupon, are deſcribed, ver. 16, 17, 18, 19.

5. The procuring cauſe of this plague is implied, ver. 20.

As alſo, 6. The end which the judgment aimed at in itſelf, with the ſucceſs, or rather unſucceſsfulneſs, which it had, are ſet down, verſes 20, 21.

For the more clear opening of the words, we would premit theſe generals, 1. The object of this plague is generally the ſame with the former, viz. the viſible church, now drawn to ſuperſtition and idolatry by Antichriſt, are plagued by this: for judgments are ſpoken of in this book, not as they are indifferently upon the world, but as particularly they concern the church. And one of theſe trumpets after another doth contain a further ſtep of judgment upon the ſelf ſame object; and the church being the object of the former trumpet, ſo muſt ſhe be of this, otherwiſe the pronouncing of this woe would have with it no further addition to her plagued condition, which is contrary to the ſcope.

2. The church here is to be conſidered as declined, and as being guilty of idolatry, and many other groſs ſins, as is clear by ver. 20, 21.

3. It is clear alſo, that this judgment is of a different nature from the former (as was hinted in the expoſition of it) and doth particularly denounce temporal judgment upon the church, already drunken with ſpiritual plagues: this the particular deſcription will demonſtrate; yet it is ſuch a judgment in temporal things, as carrieth groſs abominations, and ſpiritual venom, for poiſoning ſouls, along with it; ſo their having of tails like unto ſerpents, &c. doth import.

Laſtly, It muſt alſo be ſuch a plague as is executed by ſome great power in the world, who have mighty armies in executing this in a warlike, violent, and ſucceſsful, though in a barbarous and cruel manner.

And therefore, in ſhort, we conceive no other to be intended here, but the dominion of the Turks, who, by their mighty ſtrength, great cruelty, and poiſonous doctrine of Mahomet, have proven exceeding deſtructive both to the bodies and ſouls of innumerable poor Chriſtians; which we may clear a little more in the application, and as we go through the words.

Verſe 13. The firſt thing John mentioneth, is a voice, *I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar*, &c. Which ſetteth forth the voice of God, or of Jeſus Chriſt, as ſupreme over-ruler of this plague, with alluſion to God's giving anſwers in his temple under the Old Teſtament. This voice giveth orders to the ſixth angel, the ſubordinate overſeer of this plague, *to looſe*, &c. By which is holden forth God's ſovereignty over, and his making uſe of angels in the ordering of the moſt fearful plagues that come upon the church.

Secondly, The actors are touched at in this order which the angel getteth, ver. 14. *Looſe the four angels, which are bound in the great river Euphrates.* Where we have theſe particulars.

1. Their nature, they are *angels*, not properly to be underſtood; for the thing which followeth is armies of horſemen: but they are here called angels, to ſignify their being ſubſervient to God in his deſign, and their being fitted with agility, promptitude, &c. for this work, which he was to employ them in, (it being ordinary in all this propheſy to compare inſtruments, good or bad, to angels and ſpirits, as chap. ix. 11. chap. xii. 7. and xvi. 13, &c.

2. They are called four, not preciſely to determine a number: but either,

Firſt, To ſignify the ſpreading of this plague to all the corners of the earth, that as (chap. vii. 1.) there were four angels holding the four winds, that they ſhould not blow; ſo there are

here as many inſtruments to hurt the church, as were there to prevent it. Or,

Secondly, It may be to point out a fourfold difference either in reſpect of government, place, nature or ceremonies, which ſhould be amongſt theſe who ſhould be actors in this plague, which we will find agreeable to the Turks in this ſenſe alſo.

Thirdly, Theſe four angels are ſaid to be at the great river Euphrates. This river in Syria is famous in many reſpects, 1. Upon it the great city Babylon ſtood. 2. It was the march of David and Solomon's kingdom that was from the ſea to the river. 3. It was the great fatal bound of the Roman empire, beyond which they could never extend their dominion. 4. Becauſe of the footing that the Turkiſh dominion took firſt beſide it: for the firſt Turkiſh government being by four Sultans, all of them for a conſiderable time had their reſidence near and about this river, viz. in Aſia, Aleppo, Damaſcus, and Antioch, which were the places whereby theſe governors were deſigned. We conceive this river to be here mentioned, to ſhew, that ſuch ſhould be inſtrumental in this plague, as were neither within the church, nor the Roman empire, but ſhould have their reſidence beſide this river Euphrates, as the Turks are obſerved to have had before their dominion ſpread.

Fourthly, They are ſaid to *be bound in that river*, that is, reſtrained from breaking in upon the empire, or the church in it, for a long time by God's providence, ſo as if they had been indeed bound for many years, what from inteſtine diviſions among themſelves, what by Tamerland's invaſion of them, and what by our Lord's providing ſome inſtrument to defend his church for a time: theſe Turks were reſtrained from invading and over-runing the empire, although they vehemently gaped after it. They are ſaid to be looſed from that place, when the impediments and reſtraints, formerly keeping them in, are removed, and they, as it were, hounded like dogs formerly tied up, to deſtroy the Weſt part of the Chriſtian world, which accordingly came to paſs very ſpeedily, when the Turks having prevailed over the Saracens, did with them combine in one dominion under the Ottomanean family; which was about 1000 years and ſome more, from which time their power grew till a great part of Europe was over-run by them.

Thirdly, We have their commiſſion, verſe 15. which ſheweth the end wherefore they were looſed, 1. Their work is to ſlay. 2. The number is *a third part of men*. 3. The time or continuance of their execution is *for an hour and a day*, &c. *To ſlay*, is to be here underſtood properly to take away men's bodily lives: and therefore the expreſſions in this trumpet differ from what is in the former. The event alſo here marked, (*the third part was killed*, verſe 18.) doth confirm it. Again, by the *third part of men* is not to be underſtood any number definitely, nor any indefinite number of the world abſolutely conſidered; but a third part, or, a conſiderable number of the men living on this ſide the river Euphrates, from which formerly theſe executioners were reſtrained, now being looſed, they are commiſſionated, eſpecially in reſpect of them; viz. the ancient Roman empire, now become Antichriſtian. 3. The time, or continuance, is ſet down in four ſeveral words, *an hour*, *a day*, *a month*, *and a year*. We conceive it not ſafe to apply it to a day, or an hour of any definite time: (which we would rather reverence than follow in the practice of others.) But we underſtand here a definite time bounded and limited of God, for the prevailing of this plague, as there was ſet down a time to the locuſts under the former trumpet. We conceive the words are multiplyed, *hour*, *day*, and *month*, and *year*, to ſet out, 1. God's particular determining and bounding of that plague in its continuance, to a year, month, day and hour, according to the phraſe, Num. ix. 22. whether it was two days, or a month, or a year, &c. which is there uſed to ſhew the abſolute dependence the Iſraelites had upon God in their marching and ſojournings, whether for time long or ſhort: ſo ſhall it be here, the time for which they are prepared, is particularly appointed. 2. They are ſaid to be prepared for ſuch a time, differently expreſſed, to ſhew, that in diverſe reſpects their continuance ſhould be for a ſhort time, as of an hour or day; and alſo of a long time, as of a month and year. 3. To ſhew their alacrity to uſe the opportunity and liberty given them carefully; ſo that after the removing of reſtraints, they ſhould not miſs one hour or day in executing their commiſſion, and ſhould proſecute it vigorouſly, till the year, or longeſt period of their continuance, ſhould be finiſhed. Thus may they be ſaid to be *prepared*, &c.

Fourthly, We come to the executioners themſelves, and the execution which followed. They are deſcribed more particularly, 1. From their number and nature, verſe 16. The army is, of *horſemen;* and the number is, *two hundred thouſand thouſand.* That which is added, *and I heard the number of them*, is to ſhew, that John invented not this number, but that he had it plainly revealed to him. They are called *horſemen*, partly, to ſhew the ſwiftneſs and celerity of their ſucceſs; partly, to ſhew they were ſuch a people as abounded with ſuch warriors. The number we conceive, more than the time, is not definitely to be ſtuck to; but ſignifieth an exceeding great number. Both theſe agree well to the Turks, who have led the greateſt armies in Europe, eſpecially of horſemen, and made the ſwifteſt progreſs after their invaſion, which hath been of a long time heard of, much more numerous than even the Chriſtians were able to oppoſe unto them.

The riders, with their defenſive armour, and the nature of the horſes (and it is like, their offenſive arms) are deſcribed, verſe 17. *They had breaſt-plates of fire and of jacinct and brimſtone. Breaſt-plates* uſe not to be made of ſuch matter. We conceive the meaning is, they ſhall be terrible, dreadful, and deſtructive, as *fire*, *brimſtone*, *&c.* which, working terror on theſe whom they invade, ſhall occaſion ſuch ſecurity to themſelves from the hurt of any, as if they were fully armed, and alſo richly, which we conceive to be underſtood by *jacinct*. Their offenſive arms, or their offending power, are ſet out by two expreſſions. 1. *The heads of the horſes were as the heads of lions*, that is, bold, fierce and deſtroying, and that profeſſedly without any colour or pretext, ſuch as the locuſts had. 2. *Out of their mouths* is ſaid to iſſue *fire* and *brimſtone:* whereby it would ſeem, their waſting and cruel way of proceeding is ſet forth. Some alſo think it doth relate to the uſe of cannon, muſket, and piſtol: for theſe two are certain. 1. That the uſe of theſe weapons was found out, much about this time. 2. There was never ſuch abundance of them, and of ſuch huge greatneſs, as was uſed by them in their European expeditions.

In the 18. verſe, the event of the execution is marked to be anſwerable to their commiſſion; *by theſe three was the third part of men killed:* this is to be underſtood properly, as verſe 15. It is marked, to ſhew, that there is no threatning or prediction of God's but it is exactly fulfilled, and no commiſſion of his, but it is fully executed. In the application of this, the ſpeedy, terrible and great overthrow of Aſia the leſs, the coaſt of Afric, and a great part of Europe, being deſtroyed and overrun by the Turks, are ſufficient evidences of the truth of this. Beſide the cruel murder committed by the Saracens in Italy, France, Spain, where yet it pleaſed the Lord to keep them from ſettling.

Verſe 19. Their manner of hurting is more particularly explained, 1. By a double mean whereby they hurt; *their power is in their mouth and in their tails.* By *mouth*, is underſtood their open violence againſt the body. The *tails* ſignifieth the abominableneſs of doctrine ſpread by them, which is deſtructive to ſouls. 2. Theſe *tails* are further deſcribed, (becauſe their doctrine was not ſpoken of before, though their violence had been deſcribed) they are ſaid to be *like ſerpents* for poiſonableneſs and ſubtilty; *and they have heads*, an unnatural-like thing that tails ſhould have heads on them. This ſetteth out the groſs abominableneſs and abſurdity of that doctrine. The locuſts had tails, but they had not heads on them; theſe have heads, to ſhew, that it ſhall be more diſcernible in its groſſneſs than the former. It is added, *and with them they do hurt*, that is, with their *tails* and *heads*. The firſt part of the verſe ſheweth, that this army hurteth both by cruelty to the body, and peſtiferous doctrine to the ſoul: therefore it is ſaid, *their power is in their mouth and their tails.* This laſt part ſheweth the ſucceſs that followed upon their doctrine: there were many ſouls hurt and deſtroyed with this, as there were bodies with the former. This fully agreeth to the Turks alſo, who are not more terrible in their armies to the bodies of men, than that peſtiferous deluſion of Mahomet is, of itſelf, hurtful and deſtructive to ſouls, and actually hath deſtroyed many; a great part of the world in God's righteous judgment being carried away with it.

We come now to the 20, and 21. verſes, *And the reſt of the men which were not killed by theſe plagues, yet repented not*, *&c.* The ſcope whereof, is, 1. To ſhew what ſins procured ſo great a plague, and ſo fierce an enemy to be letten looſe upon the Chriſtian world: and indeed, the conſideration of theſe ſins will vindicate the juſtice of God in inflicting all theſe evils. There is one ſin mentioned in this verſe, viz. *Idolatry*, ſeveral ways aggreged; and there are four more in the laſt

verſe, added: and though God will ſuffer cruel abominations in Pagans, that never had the knowledge of his will; yet theſe who are guilty here, being, by profeſſion, of his church, there is the greater acceſs in juſtice to take courſe with them. 2. It is ſet down, to ſhew the end which the Lord drove by ſuch ſtrong phyſic: it was at the health, and not the ſubverſion of that part of the world; and ſo, by the application of this mean, either to bring them to repentance, as the right fruit of all, or to diſcover their deſperate impenitency. 3. It ſheweth the fruitleſſneſs of this mean, that notwithſtanding it was ſharp, yet did it not prevail with them; which is not to be underſtood, as if God failed of his intended purpoſe, but to ſhew how mad the Antichriſtian world was upon their idols, when ſuch a judgment, having deſtroyed ſo many, did not yet effectuate the recovery of the reſt.

By *the reſt of the men which were killed*, &c. is to be underſtood, not theſe who remained all the world over, but within the Chriſtian world, or empire now declined to be Antichriſtian. *The reſt that remained*, after the third part were killed of the ſum total, viz. theſe on this ſide Euphrates; for the Lord obſerveth not what the reſt of the world did, but what his church by profeſſion did, whom he correcteth, when he forbeareth all the world beſide.

What we ſaid, in preface to the trumpets in general, and to this, doth alſo confirm it. They are ſaid *not to repent*, that is, that theſe idolatrous Chriſtians, notwithſtanding of theſe plagues, neither were inwardly brought to loath theſe ſins, or to be humbled for them before God; nor outwardly to abſtain from them in their practice, but rather grew worſe, and doted more upon theſe ſuperſtitions, even after this plague, which fully came to paſs alſo, Papiſts being never more drunk with their ſuperſtitions, and profane in their carriages, than ſince the Turks deſtroyed a great part of that Antichriſtian kingdom.

The firſt ſin mentioned, is, *Idolatry*, four ways aggreged, 1. *The works of their hands:* ſo called, becauſe the images and ſtatutes uſed in that worſhip, are made with men's hands, and ſo cannot be a fit object of worſhip. It is like hereby to relate the ſecond command, where the making of all ſuch, upon ſuch an account, is forbidden. 2. It is called *a worſhipping of devils*, not that it is ſo directly in the intention of the worſhippers, but that it is ſo indeed, and accounted ſo by the Lord. Therefore it is uſual in the ſcripture to give it that name, Lev. xvii. 7. 1 Cor. x. 20. Yea, not only that ſort of idolatry, which is againſt the firſt command, is ſo called; but even that which acknowledging the true God, doth yet corrupt the rule of worſhip preſcribed by him, by putting an idolatrous manner in the room thereof. So that idolatry of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat is ſtyled, 2 Chron. xi. 15. *He ordained him prieſts for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made:* and yet the particular conſidering of that ſin, will make it appear, that he did not directly intend the worſhipping of theſe calves, and much leſs of devils, in the room of God. 3. This idolatry is aggreged from the variety and multiplicity of it, in reſpect of the matter whereof theſe idols were compounded, *Gold, ſilver, braſs, ſtone, and wood*, (of which metals of all ſorts, images, crucifixes, relicts, &c. are abundant in the Popiſh church) and yet, whatever be the ſhape of the metals, it is ſtill, at the beſt, gold, ſilver, braſs, &c. and ſo no fit object of worſhip. *Laſtly*, It is aggreged from the lifeleſſneſs of theſe idols, which being unable to hear, or move themſelves, muſt be exceeding unfit to be invocated by others, as helpers of them; and ſo muſt imply exceeding great ſtupidity in theſe who fell into that ſin. Upon which ground, the ſcripture uſually aggregeth that ſin, Pſal. cxv. ver. 4, 5, &c. and cxxxv. 15, 16. both which places do pronounce the worſhippers of them to be, for ſtupidity, like unto them.

There are four more particular ſins charged upon them, ver. 21. and impenitency under the ſame alſo. All which may be figuratively underſtood, according to the ſtrain of this book, or, properly, as the words ſound. The firſt ſin is, *their murders;* figuratively underſtood, it holdeth forth the great blood-guiltineſs of ſouls, which we formerly hinted at in the expoſition of the fifth trumpet. Properly, it holdeth forth the many maſſacres, perſecutions, and butcheries of Antichriſt, whereby that kingdom is guilty of the blood of many thouſands of the ſaints, as from chap. xi. 7. and xiii. 7. and xviii. 24. will appear. The ſecond thing is, their *ſorceries*, which figuratively holdeth forth bewitching and intoxicating doctrine, and deluſion therein, at a height: literally taken, it holdeth forth a guiltineſs of deviliſh and magical arts. According to the firſt

ſenſe, the whore is ſaid to have a *cup*, chap. xvii. 4. according to the laſt, Antichriſt is ſaid *to come*, 2 Theſſ. ii. 9. *after the working of Satan, with ſigns and lying wonders.* The thing ſignified by both will be found in Popery, their doctrine having bewitched and blinded ſo many, and magic vented in lying ſigns and wonders, and other abominable pranks, hath been abounding and frequent, not only amongſt the inferior clergy, but even in the Popes themſelves. And this, under the pretext of working miracles and exorciſms, hath been in ſome caſes avouched. The third ſin is *fornication:* by which we may underſtand their whoriſh doctrine, which draweth ſouls away from God; in which reſpect that kingdom is called the great whore; or bodily filthineſs, which we will often find in ſcripture to go alongſt with idolatry, as from the counſel of Balaam, Numb. xxxii. 16. and elſewhere, may appear. This ſin is not wanting in the Popiſh church, eſpecially in the clergy, their pretended vows are ſnares to bring it on, as experience hath proven: yea, *Bellarm. de Monachis, lib. 2. cap. 24.* ſaith, *That it is more tolerable to commit fornication, than for one under a vow to marry, although he have not the gift of continence*, becauſe, ſaith he, marriage, *reddit eum inhabilem ad votum ſervandum*, which the other doth not. By their principles they maintain bordels. It is ſaid in Rome alone, the permiſſion of them have yielded nearly 40000 crowns to the Pope. This ſin is eſpecially eminent among their clergy, and often in their head, the Pope himſelf: yea, one Pope Jean, or Joan, according to others, is recorded to have brought forth a child in her Popedom.

Theſe things are not forged, but partly from experience have been found, and by their own hiſtoriographers have been ſet down; partly, by ſome godly men in theſe times, and others more civil have been often complained on and regretted; partly, are manifeſt from the Pope's donations, and offices frequently beſtowed upon their children, which continue to this day as avowed teſtimonies of their public acceſſion to this ſin. The laſt is, their *thefts*, that is, the breach of the eighth commandment, taking and wronging the eſtates of men, and by indirect means, drawing them to themſelves, without any warrantable right. This is eſpecially applicable to the Romiſh clergy, by the pretext of donations, mortifications, indulgences, annates, Peter's patrimony, and Peter's pence, and ſuch like means, have ingroſſed to themſelves the whole ſubſtance almoſt of Chriſtendom. This ſort of theft in the phariſees was long ſince condemned by our Lord, as a breach of the commandment of God, Matth. xv. 5. and xxiii. 14. with xxv. Of all which ſins, it is not only implied that the Antichriſtian world is guilty, but alſo that they, that is, the two parts not deſtroyed by the Turks, continue ſo to practice without repenting of the ſame.

The charging of the Popes with theſe foul faults will not ſeem ſtrange, if we conſider what Platina, Martinus, Onuphrius, their own writers, and Bellarmine himſelf writeth concerning them, from the 670 forward: where abounded, 1. Irregularity in elections by bribes, magic arts, ambition, faction and violence, by poiſoning and incarcerating their predeceſſors: ſo that *Platina, in vita Stephani 6.* ſaith, *Eo deventum erat eccleſiaſticis, ut largitionibus ſedem obtinerent:* The churchmen came to this condition, that they got the papacy by brides. And *Damaſ. 2. vi ſedem occupavit inoleverat enim hic mos, ut cui ſeditioſo liceret Petri ſedem invadere;* he took the papacy by force, for this was the cuſtom, that any ſeditious perſon might, by violence, take up Peter's ſeat. And, in the life of Sylveſter the third, *Eo enim pontificatus devenerat, ut qui plus largitione et ambitione, non dico ſanctitate vitæ et doctrinæ valeret, is tantummodo bonis oppreſſis et rejectis obtineret: quem morem utinam aliquando non retinuiſſent noſtra tempora; ſed hoc parum eſt, &c.* The papacy was come into this condition, that not he who was holieſt, and moſt learned, but he who gave manifeſt brides, and was moſt ambitious, obtained it, and that only by bearing down and caſting at good men: which cuſtom, I wiſh our times had not retained; but this is little of it, &c. 2. There is groſſneſs in their perſons for adultery, cruelty, devilry. John the 13. *Omnibus probris ac turpitudinibus a pueritia contaminatus, venationibus, ſi quid temporis a libidinibus ſupererat, magis quam orationibus deditus. Hic ſteleratiſſimus in adulterio comprehenſus confeſſus fuit*, an infamous and vile man, even from his infancy, what ſpare time he had from his luſts, was ſpent rather in hunting than prayer, at length he was ſtabbed in the very act of adultery. *Sylveſter 2. Malis artibus ſedem adeptus,*

Diabolum ſecutus, cui ſe totum tradiderat, ea lege Diaboli opem obtinuit, ut poſt mortem ejus totus eſſet; Sylveſter. 2. Having got the Papacy by unlawful ways, gave over himſelf to the devil, and got his help upon that condition that he ſhould be his wholly after death. 3. Great cruelty in their poiſoning, exhumating, and beheading, after death, their predeceſſors, reſcinding all their acts: ſo that in Steph. 5. *Hæc conſuetudo invaluit, &c.* See more in Chryſtoph. 1. Boniface. 7. Hildebrand, and many others. 4. Innumerable ſchiſms, ſome of them reckon 26. decided ordinarily by violence, and ſome of them with two or three Popes continuing many years, to ſay nothing of John the VIII. whom Martin. and Plat. call a woman who of childbirth, died in proceſſion.

From what is ſaid alſo, we may gather, 1. That the kingdom of Antichriſt is not fully to be overturned by the Turks, but that there remaineth the greateſt part underſtood by that plague, upon which afterward the vials are poured forth, chap. xvi. God reſtraining and bounding that deſtruction for the church's and elect's ſake, which he had reſerved, lurking amongſt them.

2. We may ſee the tenaciouſneſs of theſe men in not quitting their idolatry, and repenting of their ſins, which maketh way for the coming vials, under which alſo it is marked, chap. xvi. 9. that *they repented not*, but went on in their blaſphemies againſt God.

3. It appeareth, the idolatry and ſins mentioned here, and the men who continue impenitently in them, are not to be underſtood of the idolatry and ſins which the Pagan world is guilty of, (whom God by this judgment aimeth not to reclaim) but ſuch ſins as the backſliden church of Antichriſt is guilty of, that being the world, a third part whereof is deſtroyed, and two parts whereof, for a time, are ſpared, as is ſaid, it being not the reſt of men ſimply, but the reſt of the men which relate to the viſible church (the object of theſe plagues) as contradiſtinguiſhed from the reſt of the world. Beſide, the idolatries, murders, &c. mentioned here, and the men who continue impenitent in them, are the ſame who are plagued by the laſt woe, and laſt plagues or vials of the wrath of God; for, it is one continued controverſy upon the ſame account, but the men plagued for idolatry, murder, fornication, &c. by the vials, are the men who have the mark of the beaſt, chap. xvi. 2. charged with the blood of ſaints, ibid, ver. 6. Yea, the ſeat of the beaſt, (untouched by this plague) ibid. ver. 10. found guilty alſo of idolatry, ſorcery and fornication, chap. xiii. 1, 2, 4, 5. and chap. xvii. 4, 5, 6, &c. Therefore they muſt be of one and the ſame Antichriſtian church. For, ſeeing ſuch men, under ſuch guilt, are found tenacious of the ſame impiety under the vials, although plagued by them, whom can we eſteem them to be, but the men ſpoken of here under the ſame guilt, who being ſpared, and yet continuing therein, are of new brought unto a reckoning by the Lord? Neither were it ſo wonderful to ſee heathens continue in their idolatries after croſſes, but it is wonderful to ſee Chriſtians do ſo; more might have been expected from them.

4. Hence we may gather, that ſuppoſing the former trumpet, and chap. xiii. 17. to relate to the Romiſh church, (for which the expoſition of theſe places may be conſidered) and finding it true in the event, that the Romiſh church, for a great part thereof, is over-run by the Turks; yet the ſeat, and, as it were, a two part of that kingdom was to be ſpared, according to this propheſy: I ſay, we may gather, that the idolatry, ſorcery, murder, &c. mentioned here, is to be enquired for among them; and that it is their worſhip, ſervice and practices which are here ſo denominated by the Lord.

From what is ſaid, we ſuppoſe it not needful to add many reaſons why we have applied this plague to the Turks or Mahometans, the conſideration of what hath been laid down touching the object, nature, properties and effects of this ſad woe, being compared in the event with the riſe, progreſs, ſucceſs, and nature of the Turkiſh empire; it will be found ſo evidently to be fulfilled in them, as will leave no ground to queſtion it. Only let it be obſerved, that we enjoin the Saracens and Turks together as one; for, they poſſeſs the ſame parts of the world, did actually continue in one dominion, do follow the ſame religion, laws and cuſtoms, and do obſerve the ſame manner of proceeding in their wars, with the ſame hatred of, and quarrel againſt Chriſtians, &c. and ſeeing in the event what is propheſied here, is found exactly to be fulfilled in them, the conſidering of this propheſy, and the

reading of their hiſtory, doth of itſelf make the application. And conſidering the great change and deſtruction that by Mahomet's means hath been made, eſpecially in the Chriſtian world, it is not like it would be omitted in this propheſy; and there will be found no type ſo ſuitable, nor time ſo agreeable to it, as that of this trumpet.

This Mahomet lived a little before, and about the 650 year, (a little after Boniface the III. had aſſumed the title of Univerſal Biſhop) he was an Arabian, a ſubtile fellow, and no Chriſtian, about the 630. With the help of one Sergius a Neſtarian monk, and Joannes Antiochenus an Arian, and ſome Jews, he began to coin his blaſphemous Alcoran, wherein he endeavoureth a mixture of Paganiſm, Judaiſm, and Chriſtianity, but of the groſſeſt kind, viz. Arianiſm, and Neſtorianiſm. It were long to rehearſe all his tenets. He called himſelf the great prophet, and blaſphemouſly applied ſome ſcriptures to that purpoſe; he alledgeth that his writings, viz. what he calleth his Alfurca and Alcoran, were given him from heaven, and are without error, and therefore joineth the Old Teſtament, the goſpel, and the Alcoran together; he denieth the neceſſity of ſigns and wonders, but that the refuſers of the Alcoran are to be perſecuted with the ſword, and yet that no man is to be perſecuted for his religion. To the receivers of the Alcoran he promiſeth many great things, and aſſerteth it to be confirmed by many victories from the Lord; he aſſerteth one only true God, and denieth the Trinity of perſons, and abſurdly aſſerteth a twofold perſonality of the Godhead; he is againſt all idols and images, and alledgeth himſelf to be ſpecially commiſſionated againſt idol-worſhip: and it may be that God having purpoſed him indeed to ſcourge that ſin, hath alſo wiſely ordered that, partly to make him the more inſtrumental in purſuing that ſin, partly the more to convince and ſhame Chriſtians that ſhould be addicted to it. Theſe things, and ſuch like, may be more fully gathered from the Alcoran itſelf; and theſe who write of it. This is certain, that his monſtrous abſurdities became taking to many, and he himſelf to have great temporal power, eſpecially on this occaſion. Heraclius the emperor, in his wars againſt the Perſians, had a conſiderable army of Arabians in his ſervice, who being demitted after the war with reproachful ſpeeches from their officers, inſtead of pay did fall to mutiny. Upon theſe this Mahomet ſo inſinuated himſelf, that he was received to be their head (from this came the name of Saracens; for, theſe Arabians being indeed Iſhmaelites and Hagarens, but accounting it a reproach to be deſcended of the bond-woman Hagar, to hide that, they claimed title to Sarah, and ſo aſſumed her name) after this Mahomet and they having prevailed in Arabia, and ſettled in Mecca for a time, he left it and invaded Syria, ſettled the head of their dominion in Damaſcus. From this forward they ſpeedily prevailed, and did over-run many kingdoms under the name of Saracens, yet were reſtrained from having footing in Europe, till after the Turk's victory over them, they became of one religion, under one head, for the further ſtrengthening of their union. Since that time their dominion hath mightily encreaſed under the name of Turks, ſo that now they are not reſtrained in the Eaſt as formerly, but do poſſeſs almoſt all the Grecian empire, and parts of the weſtern empire alſo, yet have been kept from over-running Italy, it being like, that theſe are not to be made uſe of by the Lord for that piece of ſervice of darkening the throne of the beaſt, which is reſerved for another time.

If it ſhould be objected here againſt this application, that theſe Eaſtern parts of the empire, over which the Turks hath prevailed, are ſuch as have been leaſt ſubmiſſive to the Pope, and therefore this plague of the Turks may rather be looked on as a judgment on them for breaking unity with him, than as a plague upon him. *Anſw.* This is indeed harped upon by ſome of the Papiſts, particularly by Bellarmine in his preface, *ad libros de pontifice;* but will be clear by conſidering, 1. That once theſe churches were profeſſedly for the generality of them under him, the whole Chriſtian world being admirers and worſhippers of the beaſt, chap. xiii. 8. and ſubject to the Pope, as they themſelves uſed to boaſt. Now there being ſo many Chriſtians deſtroyed by the Turks, it muſt either infer a great deſtruction to be upon the Popiſh kingdom, or it muſt be ſaid, that a third part of the Chriſtian world did not belong to him, which they will not willingly grant. 2. Suppoſe there was a withdrawing from his uſurpation in part, yet theſe ſame churches, being once infected with idolatry, error, and ſuperſtition, by the biſhops of Rome, did ſtill retain that leaven; till this judgment came upon them, and ſo in plaguing them for theſe evils, God gave warning to others

lying in that ſame guilt. And that it pleaſed the Lord to begin with theſe Eaſtern churches rather than others, theſe reaſons may be given, 1. Becauſe he was not by theſe hands to overturn the beaſt's throne, but was to reſerve a two part of that kingdom for other wiſe ends afterward. Therefore this Weſt part of the world is not firſt begun at. 2. In theſe Eaſtern churches, Antichriſt's kingdom, and his corruptions, had been moſt freely teſtified againſt and oppoſed, which made their gultineſs of after-yielding to be the more inexcuſable and ripe for judgment. 3. By ſcourging them firſt who ſeemed leaſt acceſſory to the guilt, the Lord would evidence how diſpleaſing any part of it is to him, and the more to convince others who were deeper therein; and it is agreeable to this, that theſe plagued here, are only charged with ſuch corruptions and ſins of the church of Rome, as theſe churches were guilty of; and the two part now reſerved, and after plagued by the vials, are beſides theſe, charged with worſhipping the beaſt, and having his mark, chap. xvi. 2. As if theſe did go a further length in the acknowledging of the abſoluteneſs of the Pope than this third part, who are at the firſt reckoned with, did in that particular, though in the ſame guilt in reſpect of other corruptions. But, *Laſtly*, It is clear, that by this Turkiſh dominion, a great part of the Romiſh power is eclipſed, and many of all orders, who had their dependence upon the Pope alone, were deſtroyed, whereof the war, called the *Holy War*, is an evidence, beſides the overthrow of many kingdoms, armies, and towns, who did directly own the Pope, and did not want his Holineſs' encouragement and benediction, with many conſecrated croſſes, ſwords, banners, and the like, as pledges thereof: yea, not long before the ruin of that Eaſtern empire, divers of the emperors thereof came purpoſely to be crowned at Rome, as acknowledging their dignity of the Pope; and, anno 1274, Michael, emperor of Conſtantinople, promiſed to Pope Gregory the X. the obedience of all the Grecian churches: upon which grounds it is evident, that we may warrantably ſay that the tyranny of the Turks hath been a great plague to the Romiſh eccleſiaſtic kingdom; and that theſe who were deſtroyed by them, were, generally, acceſſory to the guilt of their corruptions.

Concerning the Idolatry of the Church of Rome.

IT may be of great concernment, and poſſibly of more difficulty, to clear this, that the church of Rome, by their worſhipping of images, relicts, and ſuch like, even though they intended the worſhipping of the true God, are yet, notwithſtanding, really guilty of idolatry: and though it be not pertinent for this place, to inſiſt in it by a long digreſſion; yet, (conſidering of what concernment it is for the clearing of this propheſy, and for warranting the application thereof to the church of Rome, both in this chapter, and in many chapters following) we think it neceſſary to lay down ſome things which may bear this application.

For the making out this charge of idolatry, and worſhipping of devils upon the church of Rome, we ſhall firſt lay down what is ſuch in the ſcripture-account. 2. What the church of Rome doth practiſe concerning their images and worſhip given to them. 3. Make out, that theſe practices are condemned in the ſcripture, as worſhipping of idols, the work of men's hands, &c. It is not our purpoſe to enlarge the firſt two, in ſpeaking either of all the idolatry which the ſcripture condemneth, or yet of all the practices of the church of Rome, which come in under this guilt, but ſo much as relateth to images eſpecially.

For the firſt, the ſcriptures reckon and condemn a twofold idolatry in reference to images. 1. When the image itſelf is accounted God, and worſhipped as ſuch. This idolatry is, properly, againſt the firſt command, and is generally condemned in the practice of the heathen.

The ſecond ſort of idolatry, is, when the images themſelves are not worſhipped, as having any Godhead properly in themſelves; but as they relate to, repreſent, and are made uſe of in the worſhip of him who is accounted God, ſo that the motive moving to worſhip, is pretended reſpect to the God repreſented by them, which we will find both amongſt heathens, and amongſt the people of God, the one worſhipping the images of their idols, not as gods themſelves, but as intending to worſhip their gods in theſe, and by theſe; yet are they commonly condemned in the ſcripture, not only for worſhipping their ſuppoſed gods, but for worſhipping the images whereby they did repreſent

them; the other, viz. the people of God, profeſſing to worſhip the true God, and yet for doing it by images, and to images, are condemned for worſhipping of images themſelves, as the after inſtances will clear.

This ſort of idolatrous worſhip may be two ways tried: 1. When we worſhip him with ſuch worſhip as idolaters uſed to their idols. Thus the repreſenting of the true God by images, making high places and groves to him, are condemned, Deut. iv. 15, 16, 25. and Deut. xii. ver. 31, 32. and 2 Chron. xxxiii. ver. 17. where ſacrificing in the high places, though to the Lord their God, is marked as a relict of their idolatry.

2. It may be tried by this, when religious worſhip, alone due to God, is given to any thing which is not the true God, though it were to inſtruments and means appointed by himſelf: ſuch idolatry is condemned in Cornelius, Acts x. and in John, Rev. xix. and the people's going a whoring after the braſen ſerpent (much more when that worſhip is given to any thing which is not made uſe of in the worſhip of God, by his appointment, as images of angels, ſaints, or of the Lord himſelf.) Thus it had been idolatry under the Old Teſtament, to have worſhipped the tables of ſtone, pot of manna, Moſes' rod, paſchal lamb, or ſuch things ordinarily, or extraordinarily, made uſe of by God. Theſe properly come under the ſecond command, whereby we are diſcharged, not only to worſhip falſe gods, or images as gods; but alſo are inhibited to worſhip the true God any way not preſcribed by him, but eſpecially by images.

If it be queſtioned what this religious worſhip is, we take it up thus: 1. That worſhip which the ſcripture only appropriateth to the true God, as praying and vowing to him, ſwearing by his name, building temples, altars, &c. ſeeking the reſtoring of health, and ſuch like.

2. We call that religious worſhip, which idolaters uſe to give their ſuppoſed gods; ſuch as, to kiſs an image, Hoſ. xiii. 2. To ſacrifice and burn incenſe to them, ſet lights before them, and appoint prieſts for them, Judges xvii. and of ſuch ſort was this idolatry, Acts xiv. of offering ſacrifices to Paul and Barnabas; for, theſe things have ever been counted religious by men, and given to idols upon that account, neither ever hath it been, or can it be, given to images upon another account.

3. When the worſhip is not civil, it muſt be accounted religious, as may be gathered from the circumſtances thereof, as if the act, end, and other circumſtances be religious, the action or worſhip itſelf muſt be ſo alſo; as it is one thing to bow the knee in a ſalutation to a man, it is another thing to bow in prayer, and that before an image, to do it occaſionally, and in ſuch a place, and purpoſely, as a piece of religion and worſhip; to bow the knee at a table, or before an image, is one thing, but to do it before an image ſet up for a religious end at a table, upon which Chriſt is eſteemed to be really preſent, is another.

That we may be diſtinct in the ſecond, we ſhall, 1. Conſider what is the practice of Papiſts. 2. What is their doctrine concerning this ſort of worſhip, and that in ſo far as is uncontroverted by them.

1. We will find infinite numbers of images framed for the worſhip of God, and of the perſons of the Godhead, diſtinctly of the virgin Mary, the croſs, angels, ſaints, &c. 2. We will find them in their practice giving great worſhip to all theſe kneeling to them, diſcovering themſelves before them, offering oblations, and putting up prayers to them, building temples, and ſanctifying of them by theſe, carrying them in proceſſions. &c. 3. We will find a worſhip given to angels, and ſaints, in a high degree; as praying, dedicating of temples, ſwearing by them, ſeeking their interceſſion: of ſuch kind are to the virgin Mary, as followeth, *Ora pro nobis, ſancta Dei genitrix, ut digni efficiamur promiſſionibus Chriſti. Dulcis amica Dei, roſa vernans, ſtella decora, tu memor eſto mei dum mortis venerit hora. Ave, ſanctiſſima mater Dei, regina Coeli porta Paradiſi, Domina mundi libera me ab omni malo, ora pro peccato meo;* that is, "O holy mother of God, pray for us, that we may be made worthy of the promiſes of Chriſt. Sweet friend of God, the pleaſant roſe, and glorious ſtar, be mindful of me when the hour of death ſhall come." Hail, moſt holy mother of God, the queen of heaven, the port of paradiſe, the lady of the world, deliver me from all evil, pray for my ſin. And infinite numbers of this kind to be gathered from the Roman breviary, that is called Pſalterium Marianum; a compend whereof, is ſet down by Chemnitius, in his Examen of the council of Trent, part

3. *de veneratione ſanctorum et eorum invocatione.* So are alſo their prayers to other ſaints, as to Elizabeth; *Eia, mater, nos agnoſce, &c.* O mother, acknowledge us, &c. To Nicolas; *Credo, ſancte Nicolae; tuis me precibus eſſe ſalvandum, ideo te clamo, &c. Serva me ſupplicem famulum tuum, amice Dei Nicolae de præſentibus anguſtiis et tribulationibus: quia in te confidit anima mea, ut per te me ſalvet qui te ſibi elegit.* I believe, holy Nicolas, to be ſaved by thy prayers, therefore I cry upon thee, &c. O Nicolas, the friend of God, ſave me thy humble ſervant from my preſent ſtraits and tribulations, becauſe my ſoul truſteth in thee, that he who hath choſen thee to himſelf may ſave me through thee. *Sancta Dorothea, cor mundum in me crea;* holy Dorothie, create in me a clean heart; and hundreds of that kind. Yea, it is that length, that the Jeſuits do monthly (as Lorinus in 1. Act aſſerteth) caſt lots what ſaint to chooſe for their patron, for the month enſuing. Luther pronounced this ſort of idolatry to be the cauſe of the Turks war againſt Chriſtendom, as in *vita ejus apud Melch. Adam.*

4. Beſide what worſhip is given to ſaints and their images, there is alſo a worſhipping of the material croſs, nails, and other things made uſe of in our Lord's ſufferings, and of the images of that croſs, of the relicks of ſaints, and cloaths of the ſacrament of the altar or maſs, or the hoſt, as they call it; theſe they adore, to theſe (eſpecially the croſs) they direct their prayers, as *O crux, ave ſpes unica, hoc paſſionis tempore, Auge piis juſtitiam reiſque dona viniam.* Hail O croſs, my only hope, in this time of Chriſt's ſufferings, encreaſe in the godly righteouſneſs, and grant pardon to ſinners. This is brought in by Aquinas, 3 part. 4. art. queſt. 25. As the ground whereby he pleadeth the higheſt degree of divine worſhip to the croſs; becauſe that ſong is uſed in the church, inſiſted on alſo by Bonaventura, lib. 3. in ſententias, ad diſtinct. 9.

Theſe practices, and innumerable more, are the practices not of a few particular perſons, but are contained in the public liturgy of their churches, we ſhall now enquire in their doctrine concerning theſe practices, wherein we will not find them ſo unanimous: our enquiry is eſpecially concerning the worſhipping of images.

1. They do generally agree, that images of all theſe ſorts may be made, and being made, ought to be worſhipped with more than civil worſhip, and with reſpect to theſe repreſented by them. And though this be determined by the ſecond council of Nice, formerly mentioned, and again ratified in their late council of Trent, as may be ſeen in the acts thereof; yet are they not one among themſelves in defining the nature of this worſhip. Their prime ſchoolmen, Aquinas, part 3. queſt. 25. Bonaven. lib. 3. diſt. 9. And others their followers, give to the image that ſame worſhip which they give to that which is repreſented by it, viz. to the images of God and to the croſs, they give that which they call *latreia;* to the image of the virgin Mary, *uperdouleia*, a worſhip above what is given to other ſaints; to the images of ſaints *douleia* itſelf. Upon this ground (cited out of Ariſtotle) that honour done to the type, honoureth him that is typified. And they labour to vindicate themſelves from idolatry by this diſtinction, that theſe images be conſidered, either 1. *Reſpectu materiae*, as they are of gold, ſilver, &c. Or, 2. *Reſpectu formae et ſignificationis*, as they ſignify and repreſent; the firſt way they honour them not, but the ſecond, ſay they. *Ergo, &c. In which* diſtinction we conceive the heathen themſelves would acquieſce; for no gold or ſilver was worſhipped by them, but as in ſuch a form, and as under ſuch a ſignification.

Again, Durand, who hath not many followers in this, and is marked to be a ſpecial oppoſer of Thomas his doctrine) though he aſſerteth that worſhip is to be given to the images; yet ſaith, that it is not properly given to them, but to what is repreſented by them, ſo as our adoring of the image, is the adoring of him brought to our memory by the image, as if he were preſent. Thus he, lib. 3. diſtinct. 9. queſt. 2.

3. The later writers who would ſeem more ſubtil, as Bellar. Gregor. de Valent, &c. look upon theſe former two opinions as extreams, the one giving too much, and the other too little to images. Therefore Gregor. de Valent. in 3. diſd. 6. queſt. 11. punct. 6. doth condemn Durand for this alſwell, though not in the ſame degree as he doth the heritics. Their judgment is, (although even they differ, Gregor. de Valent. being nearer Thomas than the other, yet both account it proper worſhip) that the images ſhould be truly and properly worſhipped with religious worſhip (relatively, as they call it) that is, with reſpect to

the thing repreſented. Thus in one act of worſhip, they worſhip both the image and the thing ſignified, with a worſhip ſuitable, but not equal, and the ſame with that which is given to what is ſignified; as for inſtance, in worſhipping the image of God, they worſhip God, repreſented by the image, with the higheſt degree of honour: they worſhip the image alſo properly, but not with the ſame honour, becauſe they worſhip God for himſelf, his image for him, and not for itſelf. Again, the image of the virgin Mary is worſhipped with true worſhip, but inferior to what is given to herſelf, for the reaſon foreſaid; and alſo inferior to what is given to the image of God, but beyond what worſhip is given to the image of any other ſaint, becauſe ſhe herſelf is inferior to God, though ſuperior to other ſaints. This manner of worſhip they illuſtrate by an example; as ſuppoſe, a great courtier be made commiſſioner and ambaſſador for his prince, he is received and honoured with all kingly reverence due to him, whoſe perſon he ſuſtains; in this, ſay they, that honour is principally given to the king, who is honoured in his ambaſſadors, as if he himſelf were preſent; yet truly, and properly, the ambaſſador may be ſaid to be ſo reverenced, and to have all that honour done to him, as he filleth that room by repreſenting his king, and, as ſuch, he is really and truly honoured alſo; even ſo, ſay they, is it here. The honour of the thing repreſented is principally aimed at, yet ſo, as for that end the image repreſenting is really and truly honoured with that ſame worſhip which ſhould be given to him that is repreſented, if he were preſent, only it is not for its ſelf, and ſo, in that reſpect, inferior. Neither do they eſteem this to be idolatry; becauſe they eſteem idolatry to conſiſt in this, the giving of divine worſhip to the creature after that ſame manner, and upon the ſame account, that it is given to God. And therefore, although they give the ſame divine worſhip to the image, which they give to God in itſelf, yet ſeeing they give it not upon that account, as if the image were God, and for itſelf, but relatively, therefore can it not be idolatry, becauſe they never enjoin theſe two together (as *Gregor. de Valent. ibid. ut ſupra*, expreſſeth it, *ut et cultum divinum uſurpent, et illum qua ratione Deo exhiberi debeat, tribuant creaturæ*, hoc eſt, *ipſis imaginibus ſecundum ſe* (and, as a little after, *ſicut Deo*) and therefore, *illi ejuſmodi adoratione nunquam committum idolatriam.*

It is generally granted further, by the forecited authors, that the making of images to God was ſimply prohibited under the Old Teſtament, and that there is nothing under the New Teſtament to eſtabliſh this worſhip, but that it is grounded upon tradition, and the church's determination confirmed by a famous tradition of the Lord's ſending his own portraictour to Abagarus; and of Luke's painting the Lord and his mother, which are amongſt their unanſwerable arguments for eſtabliſhing this worſhip. Therefore, when that horned argument is propounded, either images are warranted by the word, or not; if they be warranted by the word, that warrant is to be produced: if not, then are they not to be valued. Eccius anſwering to this in his Enchiridion, doth no way offer to inſtruct their warrant from the word, but aſſerteth many things in practice to be warranted by tradition, ſuch as is for this. If then we make out this, that ſuch worſhipping of images, notwithſtanding of ſuch exceptions, be condemned in ſcripture, as idolatry, we have what we propoſed, and if this can be gathered from the foreſaid grounds, laid down by their moſt cautelous doctors, what might be collected from the principles of their ſuperſtitious monks, and practices of ignorant people; eſpecially if they were conſidered as in the time of darkneſs, before the light of reformation made them alter many expreſſions? Caſſander ſpeaking of their worſhipping of images, ſaith, *Conſult. de imag.* that theſe images were more or leſs reverently worſhipped, as they were more or leſs gorgeouſly apparelled, and that theſe which ſhould have drawn others from theſe ſuperſtitions, proved to be the authors thereof themſelves, that *(quæſtus cauſa)* they did nouriſh them among the people.

Argument 1. If the heathens who believed an inviſible Godhead, be yet found guilty of this idolatry of worſhipping ſtocks and ſtones, &c. becauſe they worſhipped images of ſuch matter, even tho' they profeſſed the worſhipping of the God repreſented by theſe, and did diſclaim the acknowledging of theſe images to be their gods, or of worſhipping them as ſuch, but with relation to the God repreſented by them: then this worſhipping of images, amongſt the Papiſts, muſt be ſo alſo, notwithſtanding of their exceptions: but the former is true. Therefore the latter muſt be true alſo.

The connection of the major cannot but hold; for if they be found guilty, not only of worſhipping the idols repreſented by their images, but alſo the images themſelves, becauſe they worſhipped their Gods as repreſented in and by theſe images, ſo muſt the Papiſts be accounted worſhippers of images upon that ſame account, for *a quatenus ad omne, valet conſequentia.*

It cannot be ſaid that the worſhippers of images among the heathen, is only condemned as idolatry, becauſe they made images to repreſent falſe gods; or, becauſe they repreſented the true God by unſuitable images, as of an ox that eateth graſs, Pſal. cvi.

For, 1. Idolatry, and making of images at the beginning, was not with reſpect to falſe gods, but was a degenerating from, and corrupting of the worſhip of the true God, as may be gathered from Rom. i. 23. where it is ſaid of the Gentiles, that knowing God, they worſhipped him not as God, but changed his glory, not the glory of an idol, into the ſimilitude, &c. And it is like, this corrupting of the worſhip of the true God, made way for the altering of the very object of their worſhip, as an effect of the reprobate mind which followed. Something of this alſo may be gathered from Acts xvii. in Paul's diſpute at Athens. This exception then would not ſerve to convince theſe, whom yet the ſcripture condemneth. 2. We anſwer, that the connection will hold even in reference to theſe who repreſented falſe gods, ſuppoſe Jupiter, Diana, Apollo, and ſuch, becauſe they were not only charged with worſhipping theſe idols, Jupiter, Apollo, Baal, &c. which were not the work of mens hand, but they are alſo charged with worſhipping the works of their own hands, and images of theſe idols, whom they pretended to worſhip by theſe repreſentations, and adorations before them; and therefore the *ratio a pari*, will hold in this, that if theſe exceptions did not liberate them from the charge of worſhipping their images, the work of their hands, ſo neither will it be effectual to exempt the Papiſts, becauſe the argument runneth not to prove them to repreſent falſe gods by their images, but that the worſhip done to the image (though pretended to be done to another) is alſo counted a worſhipping of the images themſelves before God.

The other exception is of that ſame nature: for, the ſcripture condemneth not worſhipping of God in images, becauſe they were images of unreaſonable creatures only, but ſimply, becauſe they were images: Rom. i. They are charged, that they changed the glory of the incorruptible God to the image of corruptible man; and Auguſtine, *de civitate Dei*, cleareth out of Varo, lib. 7. cap. 5. that the Gentiles portraited their gods in man's picture chiefly, though they were inviſible, becauſe man's ſoul is likeſt to them, and man's body being the veſſel of the ſoul, is therefore the fitteſt image to repreſent them, yet can it not be ſaid, but that cometh ſtill to be idolatry.

The weight then of this argument will ly in the aſſumption, viz. then even theſe heathens who are charged with worſhipping images in ſcripture, the work of their hands, did yet ſolemnly diſclaim their accounting theſe images to be gods, but that they worſhipped them for the honour of the God whom they repreſented. This appeareth, 1. By conſidering theſe places of ſcripture, Rom. i. verſe 21. Acts xvii. where the apoſtles diſpute runneth to condemn that opinion, that the unknown God, ignorantly worſhipped by them, could be worſhipped by mens hands, ver. 25. that is to ſay, by making of images, or could be repreſented by ſilver or gold, or an other thing, ver. 29. And although their thoughts of God might be more groſs, yet this is ever true, that they accounted not their images to be the god whom they worſhipped, and ſo did not worſhip them for themſelves (or *ſecundum ſe*) but relatively with reſpect to others alſo, Acts xix. 35. expreſs difference is put betwixt Diana and her images, and the ſilver ſhrines that were made to her, and Jupiter, is aſſerted to be in heaven, and therefore was diſtinctly conſidered by them from the images they made unto him.

2. It will appear from reaſon, 1. If we conſider that they placed their gods in heaven. 2. That they had many images of one God. 3. That they often changed their images, but not their gods. 4. That many whom they worſhipped by images, were once ſuch as had been living in the world, unto whoſe honour they erected ſuch images, but could never (nor did never) ſuppoſe them to be the perſons themſelves.

3. It will appear from the heathens own diſputings and aſſertions whereby they ſhifted that abſurdity of worſhipping the works of their hands; yet is it by the fathers, on this ground, born in upon them. See Aug. in Pſal. 113. *(nobis 14.)*

where having aſked the queſtion, Why the ſcripture inſiſteth ſo much, to clear that the images of the Gentiles can neither ſpeak nor hear, &c. which could not but be known to a child; the reaſon is, ſaith he, becauſe by erecting ſuch images, people are ready to conceive ſome Godhead to be in them. Hence when they were preſt with this abſurdity of worſhipping the work of their hands, they did deny it, ſaying, that they worſhipped not the image, but the *numen*, or God which dwelt in it, and was repreſented by it, and that after its dedication. If ſome of them were preſt further, that that *numen*, or God, was but a devil, they would anſwer, *nec ſimulachrum nec daemonium colo, ſed per effigiem corporalem ejus rei ſignum intueor, quam colere debeo;* I neither worſhip an idol nor a devil, but by a bodily image I behold the ſign of that thing which I ſhould worſhip. If Chriſtians preſt yet further, that the things repreſented were but creatures, as Tellus, Neptune, Vulcan, Lucifer, &c. or ſome ſtar, or this, or that creature which was a body, yet, ſaith he, they durſt anſwer, *non ſe ipſa corpora colere ſed quae illis regendis preſident numina;* that they worſhipped not the creatures, but the God that ruled in them. In conſideration whereof he citeth that place, Rom. i. *Of changing the truth of God into a lie, and ſerving the creature more than the Creator, &c.* as if by the firſt part, the apoſtle did condemn images of God, and by the ſecond, their interpretations of the worſhip given to them, becauſe it is there counted a ſerving of the creature, whatever their pretext was; for, ſaith he, who praying or worſhipping, beholding an image, is not ſo affected as if he thought to be heard by it, and hoping to have what he deſired performed by it? Therefore, ſaith he, men involved in ſuch ſuperſtitions, turn themſelves to pray to that image which they call the Sun, or Neptune, &c. as if they could affect them with their ſighings, and give that ſame reſpect to them as to the thing ſignified by them. and pray to the image before they pray to the thing itſelf; this, ſaith he, cometh, and ſome way is extorted by that viſible image; as thinking that readieſt to hear which is in ſhape likeſt to ourſelves, &c. where many other things are further to this purpoſe. Alſo, in Pſal. xcvi. *nobis* 97. where he bringeth in the heathen, giving this anſwer, *Non illud colo ſeu adoro quod vedio, ſed ſervio ei quem non video, quis eſt iſte? Numen quoddam inviſibile quod praeſidet illi ſimulachro:* where they diſtinguiſh betwixt *adoro* and *ſervio*, as Papiſts do between *latreia* and *duleia*. If it were objected further to theſe heathens, that they worſhipped devils, they would anſwer, they worſhipped good angels and *virtutes Dei*. It is replied in the ſame place, if they worſhipped good angels, they would reject their worſhip, as that angel did to John, Rev. xix. &c. This way of ſhifting alſo may be found in Lanctantius, De origine erroris, lib. 2. cap. 2. apud Chryſoſt. in Eph. 5. hom. 18. From all which we may gather, that the heathens wanted not the ſame ſhifts for excuſing their worſhipping of images, yet was it ſtill charged upon them, that they worſhipped idols which neither ſaw nor heard, &c. although ſtill they denied it.

2. Thus we argue: if the people of Iſrael were accounted guilty of idolatry, and worſhipping of devils, and the work of their hands, becauſe of their worſhipping images, which they profeſſedly erected to the true God, and even when they pretended the abhorring of falſe gods, and the adhering unto the true God, then muſt the ſame guilt be juſtly charged upon the Papiſts, who worſhip images, as is ſaid; but the former is true. Therefore, the connection of the major dependeth on this, that the inhibition of idolatry, and manner of worſhipping God under the New Teſtament, is as ſtrict and ſpiritual as it was under the Old. And therefore theſe who ſay, that ſuch making of images of the Godhead, and worſhipping them, was unlawful before Chriſt's coming, but now is made lawful, muſt ſhew ſome repeal of that law, before that can be granted. Beſide, theſe images being pleaded for as books for the rude and ignorant, it is unreaſonable to ſay, that there is more uſe of ſuch books under the light of the goſpel, than during the law which ſtood in types.

The weight of this alſo will ly then upon the aſſumption, viz. that the people of Iſrael were charged with idolatry in their worſhipping of images, even then when they pretended the worſhipping of the true God by them. For clearing this, we ſhall conſider theſe four inſtances, 1. Exod. xxxii. 2. That of Micah, Judges xvii. 3. That idolatry of Jeroboam which the tribes of Iſrael continued long in. 4. That worſhipping in the high places, condemned in the tribe of Judah, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 17. In all which places, we ſuppoſe theſe two to be clear, 1. That theſe worſhippers intended not the

worſhipping of falſe gods, or of the images which they had made, but to worſhip the true God by theſe. And, 2. That yet they are ſtill condemned as idolaters, and that ſin of Jeroboam's is expreſsly called worſhipping of devils, 2 Chron. xi. 15. For the firſt inſtance, Exod. xxxii. it is clear, 1. That they were not utterly forgetful of the true God, tho' practically that might be charged upon them, eſpecially conſidering Aaron's uncontroverted going alongſt with them. 2. That that image is called Jehovah, which brought them out of Egypt, which being a deliverance paſt before theſe images had a being, muſt certainly be underſtood to be the repreſentation of that God which brought them out of the land of Egypt. 3. It can hardly be thought they ſhould have eſteemed theſe to be gods themſelves, and ſo ſoon to have paſſed from them. 4. The ſervice is ſervice to the Lord, ver. 5. *To morrow is a feaſt*, (not to the calf) but to Jehovah. The worſhip performed, ver. 6. is not that which they uſed to give to idols, but to the Lord himſelf; the people's end in requiring it, that they might have ſomething to ſupply the want of Moſes' preſence by ſome viſible ſign, and to have theſe to go up before them to Canaan, whither the Lord called them, and not back again to Egypt, doth make it appear, that their ſin charged on them, ver. 8. of turning out of the way, looketh to point out their falling to have been in their manner of worſhipping the true God by an unwarrantable mean, eſpecially if we compare this with Acts vii. 40, 41, 42. where this idolatry is made the cauſe of God's giving them up to worſhip the hoſt of heaven. Now, by Stephen's arguing, the worſhipping the hoſt of heaven, muſt be idolatry of a groſſer nature, than that committed by the Iſraelites, Exod. xxxii. and yet if their idolatry was profeſſed worſhipping of the calves as gods, it will be found more groſs than to worſhip the hoſt of heaven, at leaſt there can be no ſuch ſenſible gradation of heightning that ſpiritual plague of worſhipping the hoſt of heaven beyond the other, which is Stephen's ſcope; therefore it is thus to be underſtood, that becauſe they corrupted the worſhip of the true God, contrary to his command, therefore God gave them up to the worſhipping of theſe that are not gods, ſuch as the hoſt of heaven; which way of juſtice, was formerly obſerved in reference to the Gentiles, from Rom. i. &c. So that the conſtruction put upon their deed, Acts vii. 41. is the Lord's eſtimation of it, and not their own profeſſion, and that the Iſraelites intended the worſhip of the true God in theſe calves, Bellar. thinketh it not improbable, De imag. lib. 2. cap. 13.

The ſecond inſtance is in Micah's practice, Judges xvii. where it is clear, that they counted not that idol to be God, but intended the worſhip of the true God by it: for, ver. 3. *the mother ſaith, ſhe had dedicated that money to the Lord, to make a graven and molten image*, intending expreſly to honour the Lord, in beſtowing ſo much on that image for him: for ſhe firſt dedicateth the money to him, and then beſtoweth it, as it were, for his uſe upon that image. 2. It appeareth by Micah's great zeal to have a Levite to be his prieſt, and his joy when he obtained it, and his promiſing himſelf a bleſſing from the Lord upon that account; which certainly ſupponeth, that he intended good ſervice to Jehovah in the doing of that, verſe 13. And *Laſtly*, We find that prieſt enquiring counſel for the Danites; not from the image, but from the Lord: whereby it appeareth, that they intended not the ſetting up of new gods, but the honouring of the Lord, and confirming of themſelves by viſible ſigns of his preſence.

The third inſtance, is, that of Jeroboam, 1 Kings xii. 2 Chron. xi. in his infamous ſin of ſetting up calves at Dan and Bethel, whereby he made Iſrael to ſin: that this is moſt groſs idolatry and worſhipping of devils, the ſcripture frequently holdeth forth. Yet, 2. That it was not Jeroboam's deſign to withdraw the people from the true God himſelf, to the worſhipping of theſe calves as God, but allanerly by corrupting the manner of his worſhip, to ſet up theſe viſible ſigns of his preſence, in place of theſe appointed by himſelf at Jeruſalem, will alſo appear, if we conſider, 1. Jeroboam's motive, inducing him to this ſin; it was not for fear the people ſhould worſhip the true God, or to prevent that; but it was for fear of people's going to Jeruſalem, and to prevent that; hence his pretext is not to put theſe calves in the room of the God worſhipped at Jeruſalem, but to equal Dan and Bethel with theſe viſible ſigns to Jeruſalem, according to his ſaying, *it is too much for you to go up to Jeruſalem*, as if he would ſay, ye may worſhip God nearer home in theſe places deſigned. Neither is it likely, that he could have ſo expected to have effectuated his enterpriſe by propoſing a change in the object of their worſhip. 2. It will appear

from this, that that idolatry of Jeroboam is not only diſtinguiſhed from the true worſhip of God, continued for a time in Judah, but alſo from the idolatry of heathens abroad, and idolatrous kings ſucceeding to him, ſuch as that of Ahab, 1 Kings xvi. 30, &c. (who yet it ſeemeth wanted not all profeſſion of worſhipping the true God) Jeroboam's idolatry is counted light in reſpect of Ahab, and no other reaſon can be given, but becauſe Ahab, and theſe Sidonians, whom he followed, erred in ſetting up ſtrange gods; and Jeroboam his error did conſiſt in ſetting up ſtrange worſhip to the true God; and when Jehu is commended for deſtroying the idolatry of Ahab, 2 Kings chap. ix. and x. it cannot be thought, that he changed only the worſhipping of Baal into the worſhipping of Jeroboam's calf, without reſpect to the true God. For, 1. What leſs abomination were it to worſhip the image of a calf, than the image of Baal? 2. That could not conſiſt with John's fair profeſſions of zeal for the Lord, if he had not thought the worſhipping of theſe calves (upon the former politic conſideration of Jeroboam) conſiſtent with worſhipping of the true God, 2 Kings x. 31. Jehu's challenge, is, that he *took not heed to walk in the law of the Lord with all his heart; for, he departed not from the ſins of Jeroboam:* which words imply, that Jehu had ſome profeſſion of worſhipping the true God, but was not ſincere in the manner of it: which phraſe is alſo ſometimes ſpoken of ſundry kings of Judah. Beſide, 2 Kings x. 23. Jehu ſeparateth between the worſhippers of Baal and of the true God: and who were theſe, but even ſuch as continued in the ſins of Jeroboam.

3. We will find, even in Iſrael, while that idolatry continued in it, a general acknowledgment of the true God, (by the kings and people of theſe times) and of his prophets: all which were inconſiſtent with their worſhipping of the calves as the true God: beſide, even after the captivity of theſe ten tribes, we will find the new inhabitants plagued for their idolatrous worſhip, which made them enquire for the manner of the god of the land; which mixture in the ſervice of the true God with their idols, continued even till Chriſt came. By all which, it appeareth, that the people of Iſrael never ſo eſteemed of their calves, as to account them gods, or to place them in the room of the true God; but that they eſteemed themſelves to be worſhipping him, when they worſhipped them, which was the thing intended to be proven.

The fourth inſtance, is, from 2 Chron. xxxiii. 17. *Nevertheleſs, the people did ſtill ſacrifice in the high places*, yet *unto the Lord their God only.* That this ſacrificing in the high places, (where the groves and images ordinarily were) was to no idol, but to the Lord only, is expreſsly aſſerted in the text: and in this it is differenced from the people's ſacrificing formerly before Manaſſe's repentance unto idols. Now, their fault is, that they continue that manner of worſhip, formerly uſed to their idols, and apply it to God.

That this practice of theirs is a kind of idolatry, will alſo thus appear, 1. It is excepted as a thing that was diſcommendable, *Nevertheleſs, they ſacrificed in the high places, &c.* and conſequently it muſt belong to one of the commands, which can be to none ſo well as the ſecond, and muſt therefore be a breach of it. 2. Their ſacrificing now is in general a ſin of that ſame kind with their ſacrificing formerly: but their ſacrificing formerly was idolatry: only this is the difference, it was formerly idolatry againſt the firſt command, but now it belongeth to the ſecond, as falling in the manner of worſhipping the true God. If it be ſaid, there is no mention of images here? We anſwer, it doth make the more to the ſcope to condemn worſhipping of God by images, ſeeing he noteth it as ſo great a ſin, where no images are, that there was yet ſo much of Manaſſe's idolatry unremoved, while the people continued that cuſtom. And, 2. The people's ſacrificing there doth imply, 1. A worſhipping of God in a way not warranted by him. 2. A worſhipping of him as heathens (and they themſelves) uſed formerly to worſhip their idols. 3. Their ſacrificing in the high places, doth ſuppoſe a greater ſanctity and fitneſs in theſe places, than in other places, and a greater acceptableneſs to their ſacrifices in theſe places, beſides that, it is derogatory to the place appointed by the Lord for that end. All which ſins do come under the idolatry forbidden in the ſecond command, and do ſtand on theſe ſame grounds, upon which worſhipping of God by images is built; and therefore doth infer a charge of idolatry upon people, even while profeſſing to worſhip the true God in that unwarrantable way.

3. We argue, if this worſhip, formerly deſcribed, be againſt the ſecond commandment of the moral law, *Thou ſhalt not make to thyſelf any graven image*, &c. It muſt then be idolatry: but the former is true. The connection is undeniable; for whether we take theſe words as a diſtinct command by themſelves, (as neceſſarily they muſt be) condemning an idolatrous manner of worſhip, as is ſaid, or, if we take them as a part of the firſt command, (as Papiſts and Lutherans generally do) yet ſtill they are a part of the moral law, and muſt be binding according to their native ſignification; and ſeeing by theſe ten commands, the Lord hath laid on ties of perpetual obligation upon Chriſtians under the goſpel, as well as on his people of old, if it be found that the forbidding of making or worſhipping of images, cometh under this command, whether firſt or ſecond, it muſt alſo be ſtill obligatory, and will not be gotten eaſily ſhifted out of the roll of the commands. For the *minor*, viz. that this command condemneth, as idolatry, all repreſenting of the true God, or worſhipping of him by images, even when the images are not worſhipped for themſelves, but for him; it may be thus made out, 1. If by this command the idolatry of Jeroboam, and that ſacrificing in the high places, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 17, &c. be condemned, then ſuch worſhip, as hath been ſaid, muſt be condemned by it alſo. That theſe practices were of this nature, and are condemned, hath been formerly made out. That they are condemned by this command, appeareth: for, they muſt either be condemned by it, or by the firſt, they are not condemned by the firſt, which requireth the only true object of worſhip to be worſhipped, for they did not diſclaim that: therefore it muſt be by the ſecond.

More particularly, the ſcope of this command, is to condemn all will-worſhip, and worſhipping of God, otherwiſe than he hath preſcribed, as idolatry; and worſhipping of him by images, is grounded upon no ſcriptural warrant, but their own tradition, as is ſaid. 2. This command forbiddeth all ſerving of the true God, after the manner which the heathens uſed in ſerving their idols: ſo Deut. xii. comparing verſe 2, 3, with the 4. Ye *ſhall not do ſo unto the Lord your God*, &c. Again, verſe 30. *Take heed to thyſelf that thou be not ſnared*, by enquiring *how did theſe nations ſerve their gods?* verſe 31. *Thou ſhalt not do ſo to the Lord thy God.* It is not, thou ſhalt not do ſo to theſe idols, but not ſo in that manner to the true God, as they did to their idols: but ver. 32. *What thing ſoever I command you, obſerve to do it: thou ſhalt not add thereto nor diminiſh from it.* Yet, more particuluarly, the command doth inſtance two things, 1. That no image ſhould be made; not ſimply condemning all painting, &c. but all images of God, or, for worſhip, Deut. iv. 12. It is obſerved, that the people heard a voice, but ſaw no image, leſt thereby they had taken occaſion to repreſent him: which fault the Lord upbraideth, Iſ. xl. 18. *To whom will ye liken me, that I ſhould be like him?* And though Chriſt Jeſus, the ſecond perſon, hath now aſſumed our nature, yet it cannot be thought that the making the image of a man can repreſent that perſon who is God and Man in two diſtinct natures: and this command being moral, and binding now, as we ſaid, it muſt be ſtill as impoſſible, and unwarrantable, to repreſent God as ever. Even the Tridentine Catechiſe, (Sect. 19. in 1. Praecept.) affirmeth this to be a breach of this command, and ſaith, that Iſrael ſinned ſo in repreſenting God by an ox, Exod. xxxii. with Pſal. cvi. The ſecond thing condemned in this command is, the worſhipping of images, made of whatever ſhape or kind, and with ſuch expreſſions, *Thou ſhalt not bow down thyſelf to them, nor ſerve them*, and backed with ſuch reaſons, *For I the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, &c.* as purpoſely intending the overthrowing of all diſtinctions in this matter. In a word, if multiplying of images in God's ſervice be not contrary to this command, we can conceive no other meaning to it, nor imagine any other uſe of it; which were abſurd to attribute to the only wiſe God, as having needleſsly put ſo many words in ſuch a ſhort ſum; and yet by denying the ſame meaning of it, this will follow; and therefore the razing it out of the number, and oftentimes from the ſociety of the reſt of the commands, (as the Papiſts uſually do, by omitting this in their Catechiſes, which neceſſarily followeth on their expoſition, muſt infer one of two, either the uſeleſsneſs of this command, as is ſaid, or its direct ſtriking againſt ſuch worſhip, which may be the reaſon why they ſo willingly are content to bury it. If therefore this command be a peculiar and perpetual command of God, binding us Chriſtians to ſerve him according to the rule of his word, and particular inhibiting the making or worſhipping of images for his ſervice, then it will follow, that the

worſhip of the Romiſh church, as formerly deſcribed, muſt be idolatrous, and againſt this command. And ſo they are juſtly to be charged with worſhipping gold and ſilver, and the work of men's hands, which was the thing propoſed to be enquired into.

From all which it may appear, 1. What the Popiſh worſhip is eſteemed of before God; it is *devilry, idolatry, murder, theft and adultery*, &c. This is his conſtruction of their ſervices: and what a ſad thing is it, that the moſt part of the Chriſtian world, with delight, ſhould own theſe abominations?

2. It appeareth, that when once men darken the light of the word, and come over that, there is no rod readily that doth convince or profit them; now they adhere to their former ſuperſtitions, notwithſtanding of all theſe rods that the Lord had brought upon them. There is need to uſe light well; for, it is precious; and when once it is put out, men may for ever continue in darkneſs. This is fulfilled in the particular inſtanced; for, though the Popiſh ſervice is lothſome to a ſpiritual diſcerner, yet is the world ſo drunk and bewitched with it, that hardly, by any mean, the favourers thereof are brought to abandon it, which is the fulfilling of this propheſy; and therefore, although it were never ſo clear, that their practice is idolatry, yet can it not be expected that they will acknowledge it, this being both a part of their ſin and plague, as is uſual in the moſt groſs idolatry, Iſa. xliv. 18, &c. Rom. i. Which ought to make men admire and tremble at the depth of the unſearchableneſs of God's juſtice, and ſcar them from communion in theſe ſins, that mar even the reaſons of theſe that fall in them, which is no leſs diſcernible and terrible, in reſpect of theſe who are mad upon their idols, in the way of Antichriſtian idolatry, than in heathens, in reſpect of their blind doting upon their idols. And there is reaſon for this, that theſe who have not received the light of the goſpel in love, ſhould be given up to ſtrong deluſion, 2 Theſſ. ii. as theſe, who did not walk according to the light of nature, and *did not like to retain God in their knowledge, were given over to a reprobate mind*, Rom. i. 28.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *And I ſaw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the ſun, and his feet as pillars of fire.*

2. *And he had in his hand a little book open: and he ſet his right foot upon the ſea, and his left foot on the earth.*

3. *And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, ſeven thunders uttered their voices.*

4. *And when the ſeven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven, ſaying unto me, Seal up thoſe things which the ſeven thunders uttered, and write them not.*

5. *And the angel which I ſaw ſtand upon the ſea, and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven,*

6. *And ſware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are; and the earth, and the things that therein are; and the ſea, and the things which are therein, that there ſhould be time no longer.*

7. *But in the days of the voice of the ſeventh angel, when he ſhall begin to ſound, the myſtery of God ſhould be finiſhed, as he hath declared to his ſervants the prophets.*

8. *And the voice, which I heard from heaven, ſpake unto me again, and ſaid, Go, and take the little book, which is open in the hand of the angel which ſtandeth upon the ſea, and upon the earth.*

9. *And I went unto the angel, and ſaid unto him, Give me the little book. And he ſaid unto me, Take it, and eat it up, and it ſhall make thy belly bitter, but it ſhall be in thy mouth ſweet as honey.*

10. *And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up, and it was in my mouth ſweet as honey: and aſſoon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.*
11. *And he ſaid unto me, Thou muſt propheſy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.*

THE ſixth angel having ſounded, whereby the ſecond great woe is brought into the world, it might be expected that the ſounding of the ſeventh ſhould be immediately ſet down; but, as after the opening of the ſixth ſeal, chap. vi. there is ſomething neceſſarily premitted for the conſolation and confirmation of the people of God, before the ſeventh ſeal be opened, chap. viii. even ſo here, there are two material conſolations laid down, ch. x. and xi. before the ſeventh trumpet ſound, for the comforting of the elect in reference to the ſad eſtate of the church formerly propheſied of: for, the viſible church now being darkened, and drawn into defection by Antichriſt under the fifth trumpet, and a third part thereof being deſtroyed by Mahomet's followers under the ſixth; and, withal, conſidering, that the reſt did not repent of, but did continue in, their former abominations, it might be the occaſion of many ſad fears and doubts concerning the church of God, both before, and during that time; and what that defection and impenitency ſhould turn unto. In reference to theſe fears, there is one conſolation laid down in this chapter. In ſum this, that that darkneſs ſhall not continue, but at the peremptory appointed time, Antichriſt ſhould be deſtroyed, and the purity of the goſpel again brought to light, which is divers ways not only aſſerted, but confirmed in this chapter, for ſtrengthening the faith of God's people in the hope of an outgate. And, 2. Becauſe that outgate cometh not till the ſeventh angel ſound (which yet ſeemeth to be for a long time delayed, conſidering not only the interruption put in here before its ſounding, which yet ought to be obſerved, ſeeing it ſoundeth not immediately upon the back of the ſixth, as the other did upon the back of each other) but the many ſad effects alſo which are to be performed by the fifth and ſixth trumpets, which do ſo neceſſarily imply the continuance of a long time for the bringing of them about; and therefore the people of God might have a new doubt and fear concerning the ſtate of the church, during all that time that Antichriſt and Mahomet were in their height, and the ſounding of this trumpet delayed. In the xi. chapter, the Lord obviateth this, by deſcribing a church and miniſtry to be reſerved for himſelf during that time, who (although few in number, and poor in their outward condition) ſhould continue unpolluted by the corruptions, and undeſtroyed by the tyranny of theſe times, until their teſtimony ſhould be finiſhed, and the days of their propheſying ended: upon the back of which, the ſeventh angel bloweth, ver. 15. By which the former promiſed outgate beginneth to be accompliſhed. This, we conceive, to be the native ſcope of theſe two chapters, x. xi. And hence, chap. xi. ver. 14. it is obſerved, that *the ſecond woe is paſt;* thereby implying, that what hath been formerly ſpoken, ſince the ſounding of the fifth and ſixth trumpets, is to be taken as cotemporary with them, and likewiſe belonging to one of them.

In ſetting down the firſt conſolation, chap. x. we have, 1. The deſcription of the publiſher of theſe glad tidings, intermixed with ſome circumſtances, ſet down in the firſt four verſes, which do not a little contribute to the conſolation itſelf. Then, 2. The ſum of the ſeventh angel's commiſſion is ſet down, and the events foretold, is certified by the publiſher's oath, ver. 5, 6, 7. 3. The effect of the ſeventh angel's ſounding, viz. the reviving again of a miniſtry, and public preaching of the goſpel, after that darkneſs, is both expreſſed and confirmed by John's eating of the little book, and the word added, that he *muſt propheſy again* (as it were, be revived) after ſuch a ſad interruption. This is ver. 9, 10, 11.

The publiſher is four ways deſcribed: 1. He is called an *angel*, and a *mighty angel*, to difference him from theſe that ſounded the trumpets: we conceive it to be underſtood of no created angel, but of Jeſus Chriſt, the angel of the covenant, as the deſcription following will hold him forth. 2. His clothing and appearing are ſet down in four particulars: 1. He is *clothed with a cloud;* often applied to God, and only to him, in the *pſalms and prophets*, whereby the unconceivable, and inexpreſſible glory, and ſovereignty of God is point-

ed at. 2. He is said to *have a rainbow upon his head;* so is the Lord's throne described, chap. iv. 3. and Ezek. i. 28. which is marked here, not only to shew the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, but that as the rainbow, Gen. ix. 4. was a sign and a sacrament, as it were, of the Lord's covenant with Noah, of not destroying the earth again by water; so our blessed Lord Jesus, being often suspected to be forgetful of his covenant, and being now to give warning of the deluge of wrath which was to come upon the Antichristian world, he doth thus appear, to evidence his mindfulness of his covenant, both in the over-ruling of the church's affliction, and his enemies ruin. His face and his feet are described as formerly they were, chap. i. 15. whereby it appeareth to be one and the same person.

The second verse hath the third thing whereby he is described, *he had in his hand a little book open*, someway like him that sat upon the throne, chap. v. only with this difference, that there it was in the Father's hand, here in Christ's: there it is called simply *a book*, here *a little book;* that was sealed, this is open: what is meant by his appearing with the book in his hand, will appear from the end of the chapter. It holdeth forth here our Lord Jesus Christ to be the sender of the gospel through the earth, and the having of it, as it were, in his hand, to send in a manifest and clear manner, even then when it is most obscured and darkened in the world; for which cause, this book is open in his hand, when the temple and ordinances were shut up among men, as we may gather from the last verse of the xi. chapter.

It is much debated what this little book is, whether it be the same mentioned, chap. v. or, any distinct book, containing distinct prophesies from what was in that book, as if what followeth in this prophesy were revealed to John, by his eating of this last book, as being contained in it. It is not necessary much to debate this, considering it is represented to John in vision, and for another scope than the present furnishing of John for compleating of this prophesy. It will therefore be more suitable to say, that this book is the same mentioned, chap. v. as now in the hand of the Mediator, and opened by him, and now called little, because so much only may be accounted, as hath not been by the former prophesies discovered; or, we may take the type of the open book, to signify the preserving of the doctrine of the gospel, as if it were written on record, and keeped in the hand of the Mediator, and therefore can neither of itself be vitiate nor destroyed by Antichrist or Mahomet. This, the scope, and the commanding of John to eat it, seem to favour; but, that it should contain prophesies, different from what was contained in the former book, chap. v. so that the former prophesies belong to that book, and what followeth this chapter, to this book, mentioned here, we cannot assent to, 1. Because all the trumpets belonged to the first book, as being comprehended under the seventh seal of that book, chap. viii. but the seventh trumpet followeth in the close of the eleventh, and is further explicated to the end of the book: therefore all these prophesies are contained in the first book, mentioned chapter v. 2. This chapter and the next, unto the 15th verse, do belong to the second wo; and therefore must be supposed to be contained in the same book with the first part, chap. ix. Again, 3. If that series, laid down in the preface to the vi. chap. hold, that the seventh seal comprehendeth the seven trumpets; and again the seventh trumpet, the seven vials; then the seven vials are comprehended under the seventh trumpet, and so both the vials and trumpets under the seventh seal. Beside, if this following part of the prophesy were compared with the former, we see no reason why it should either be called little or open, more than the former; the reason why this book is open in the hand of Christ, we conceive to be, (beside what was above hinted) 1. To shew Christ Jesus his acquaintance with the mysteries of God; this book is open to him, and therefore that we may trust in him, in the revealing of the secrets of God. 2. To typify the future spreading of the gospel, and to confirm it upon this ground, that as Jesus Christ had prevailed to open the book of the secrets of God, when it was sealed, and none was found able to open it; so might it be expected from him, that the gospel should be again brought to light, notwithstanding, that during the reign of Antichrist it seemed to men impossible.

The posture wherein this angel was, is observed, he *setteth his right foot upon the sea*, and his *left foot on the earth:* by which is set out his sovereignty over both, and so that he hath authority and power to make out what he now pronounceth. Or, this *setting his foot on the earth and upon the sea*, being compared with the first part of the 1st verse, *I saw a mighty angel come down*, it may look to

be a type of Chriſt's coming to take poſſeſſion of the earth again, who, during Antichriſt's reign, ſeemed, as it were, to be keeped in heaven; yet afterward he ſhall come down and eſtabliſh his government through the earth, and by his power bring under the greateſt and moſt raging enemies. This ſuiteth with that expreſſion, chap. xi. 17. of his taking to him his great power, and reigning as if there had been an interruption of his kingdom formerly; which place is the fulfilling of what is here propheſied of.

Before the angel's words be ſet down, ſeveral circumſtances are marked for making this proclamation the more obſervable, verſe 3. *He cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth:* which holdeth forth ſerioufneſs and authority in him who goeth about this work, and that he purpoſeth to have what he hath to ſay, taken notice of. The ſecond circumſtance, is an intervening effect before his words be marked; *ſeven thunders uttered their voices.*

We may look upon what proceedeth this, as preparatory, and take up what followeth in the chapter, in three diſtinct principal parts, yet all tending to one ſcope. The firſt is expreſſed by theſe ſeven thunders uttering their voices: wherein we have, 1. The voices of theſe thunders. 2. John's practice, he was about to write what they uttered, which ſuppoſeth that he underſtood it. 3. There is the inhibition whereby he is reſtrained from that. We may look upon this, 1. Generally, as prognoſticating ſad judgments to come upon that unrepenting world; for by thunders, ſuch as are often ſignified in this propheſy, as chap. xi. 19. (thundering in itſelf being an evidence of God's dreadfulneſs) and though this general may be gathered ſafely, yet it is like the Lord intended not, at leaſt in this place, particularly to ſet them forth, which we are to reverence, and not to ſeek any new myſtery from theſe words, but what elſewhere may be gathered, till the event ſpeak. Or, 2. Seeing they had intelligible voices, and were of concernment to the church, which made John aim to write them, and ſo not like to have been for no purpoſe at firſt revealed, with reverence, they may be conceived to hold forth the ſame ſeven judgments, which are executed by the ſeven vials following. For, theſe ſeven thunders ſignify future judgments, and moſt probably muſt hold out the third and laſt wo which is yet to come by the ſounding of the ſeventh angel; eſpecially conſidering, that, chap. xi. 19. thunderings and earthquakes are marked to follow upon that angel's ſounding, and theſe ſeven vials are the ſame with the laſt wo. Beſide, the number of the vials being ſeven, and the ſeven laſt plagues which followed theſe thunderings in the event, we conceive it not unſuitable to take theſe ſeven vials as the fulfilling of what was more generally hinted at by the thunders: and ſeeing we ſeek no new myſtery out of the words, but rather do bound curioſity, and do content ourſelves with what is afterward revealed, we conceive there is no danger to ſay, it is either thus, or nothing, which we can or ſhould ſearch into.

John, as he had formerly done, he goeth about to write, but is inhibited by a voice from heaven, ſaying, *ſeal up theſe things which the ſeven thunders uttered, and write them not.* He intended preſently to communicate theſe things to the church; and no queſtion, ſincerely, from which yet the Lord reſtraineth him. This ſaith, miniſters ought to live in great dependence upon the Lord, not only for obtaining, but alſo for venting of light when it is obtained. It will not be warrant enough for them to communicate any thing, becauſe they know it and underſtand it, there will need alſo a warrant for this; and it is no little part of wiſdom, not to preach ſimply what they know, but what they know to be edifying, pertinent and profitable to be brought forth, and ſo as approven by him. It is not ſimply neceſſary to expound this inhibition of ſealing, as perpetual, but as temporary, till ſome other viſions were inſerted, or till he had that matter expreſſed in other types; in which ſenſe we will find the like inhibition, Dan. xii. 4. as alſo, Dan. viii. 26. but in this we conceive it not material to inſiſt, providing we keep off the groundleſs myſteries, which ſome dig from theſe thunders.

Now he cometh to ſhew what the angel publiſhed, and the manner of his doing it, verſe 5, 6, 7. Firſt, he prefaceth, as it were, with a ſolemn oath, which tends to make the people of God give credit to his meſſage, who, it is like, at that time would be much oppreſt with miſbelief: the manner of proceeding to the oath, is ſolemn, with *hands lifted up to heaven;* and by the true God deſcribed by his eternity, *him who liveth for ever;* and by his relation to all creatures, as being Crea-

tor of them: not only in general, to ſhew how ſolemn a thing an oath is, and how reverently we ought to aſſume the name of God, eſpecially in this piece of worſhip; but alſo to difference the true God, and the right way of ſwearing, from the idolatrous oaths uſed under Antichriſt. Beſide, this poſture and manner of ſwearing do fully agree with that recorded Dan. xii. 7. After he hath made faith in the thing, his diſpoſition (to call it ſo) is ſet down more generally, verſe 6. and more particularly explained, ver. 7. It is firſt expreſſed in few words that he doth ſwear, *that there ſhould be time no longer*. What this ſhort negative doth ſignify, is poſitively expreſſed in oppoſition to this, verſe 7. *But in the days of the voice of the ſeventh angel, when he ſhall begin to ſound, the myſtery of God ſhould be finiſhed, as he hath declared to his ſervants the prophets*. Where we have theſe three, 1. That *time ſhould be no longer*, is expounded by this, the *myſtery of God ſhall be finiſhed*. 2. This myſtery is deſcribed to be that ſame which was *declared* to the former prophets. 3. The time of finiſhing this myſtery, is ſet down to be *the ſounding of the ſeventh angel*: and ſo we muſt gather the interpretation of this myſtery, and what this is, *that time ſhould be no longer*, from the events following the ſeventh trumpet. *The myſtery of God*, (the opening whereof will clear all) is three ways taken in ſcripture, 1. It is taken for the end of the world, 1 Cor. xv. 51. This was alſo ſpoken of by the prophets Iſaiah, Daniel, &c. This place being ſo underſtood, the meaning is, the end of the world ſhall be haſtened, and time, properly taken, ſhall be continued no longer: but the reſurrection of the dead, formerly declared to the prophets, ſhall be accompliſhed, and the effects following upon the ſounding of the ſeventh angel ſhall bring it about. This is truth: for, though at the ſounding of the ſeventh angel immediately time endeth not; yet the ſeven vials being the laſt plagues, have no temporal judgments ſucceeding to them, and immediately upon the ſounding of the ſeventh trumpet they begin, and go on to put an end to time. And it is not unuſual among the prophets to ſay ſuch an event is fulfilled, when the mean, having influence upon the fulfilling of it, is certainly and ſpeedily driving it on. 2. By the myſtery of God, is underſtood the ſpreading of the goſpel, and inbringing of Jews and Gentiles after the days of Antichriſt, as it is expreſſed by the apoſtle, Rom. xi. 25. &c. Which alſo was not unknown to the prophets, as the apoſtle proves in that ſame chapter. Thus the finiſhing of the myſtery of God will ſignify the removing of Antichriſtian darkneſs, and the ſpreading of the light of the goſpel, that Chriſt Jeſus may have a flouriſhing kingdom again in the earth, as hath been propheſied of: and that *time ſhall be no longer*, that is, though this be for a time ſuſpended, yet after the ſounding of the ſeventh angel, it ſhall no longer be delayed. The words being thus underſtood, are the ſame with Chriſt's taking to him his power and reigning, chap. xi. 17. and the opening of the temple in heaven, verſe 19. 3. By *finiſhing the myſtery of God*, may be underſtood God's bringing down the Roman Antichriſt, as the building up of that kingdom is called the working of Satan, and myſtery of iniquity, thus the meaning is, although the myſtery of iniquity now be at a height; yet, ſaith he, God's deſign of bringing him down ſhall be accompliſhed, and this ruin ſhall be begun when the ſeventh angel ſhall begin to ſound. This expoſition is neceſſarily implied in the former, the exalting of Chriſt's kingdom having the overthrow of Antichriſt carried along with it. This agreeth alſo well with the ſcope, which is to ſtrengthen God's people particularly againſt his tyranny. And, 3. If we look to the event of the ſeventh trumpet, chap. xi. 17, 18. it is the ſame for which the ſaints give praiſe that God hath deſtroyed them, who formerly deſtroyed the earth. We conceive all theſe three expreſſions may well ſtand together; for the haſtening of the day of judgment, ſupponeth the preceding of the other two; and the finiſhing of theſe two, viz. the ſetting up of Chriſt's kingdom, and bringing down of Antichriſt, doth infer the haſtening of the day of judgment; which is alſo marked in the event, chapter xi. 18. The underſtanding of them alſo jointly, doth ſerve to the ſame ſcope, viz. the comforting of God's people in the faith of an outgate from Antichriſt's tyranny. And, 4. We will find them all particularly obſerved in the ſong which is ſung upon the ſounding of the ſeventh trumpet, which is the fulfilling of the event propheſied here; and therefore we conceive all theſe three may be taken in, but moſt properly and directly the laſt two, eſpecially the middle acception, as coming neareſt to the immediate ſcope of the place: and therefore *time ſhall be no longer*, is not to be underſtood ſimply, but comparatively,

in ſome reſpect, *i. e.* of ſuch time of darkneſs, ignorance, and perſecution, as then it was, that time ſhould be no longer when Antichriſt ſhould continue to prevail, and the ſaints to ſuffer; thus it may relate to the forty-two months afterward ſet for his reign, which cometh to an end at the ſeventh angel his ſounding.

The third part of the conſolation or confirmation, followeth from verſe 8. to the end. Wherein, 1. There is a type; and, 2. The expoſition of it, verſe *ult.* The type conſiſteth in a twofold direction given to John, and his obedience to both, ver. 8, 9, 10. though at firſt, it is like he knew not what was intended. The type ſerveth both to illuſtrate and confirm, what was formerly ſaid, and alludeth to that, Ezek. ii. *ult.* and iii. 1, 2. where eating of the book ſignifieth God's inſtructing the prophet for the work of propheſying, when he ſent him out, and his confirming of him by that ſign: the effect of his eating, is *ſweet in his mouth, and bitter in his belly:* to ſhew, that communication of light from God is in itſelf pleaſant to miniſters; but in reſpect of the difficulties that they meet with in their exerciſing of it, or in reſpect of the ſad meſſages they carry, it is in its digeſtion ſad and bitter to them, however they muſt carry it; and John neither ſcareth at it before, nor complaineth of it after he had eaten it.

4. (Verſe 10.) There is John's obedience: tho' it was told him it would be bitter, yet he took it, and ate it up, and found as it was told him in the event, or effect, of his eating, whereby he might be the more confirmed in the truth of what was typified by it. What is meant by John's eating of the book, is expreſſed to him in plain words, verſe *ult.* He went on ſtill, not diſputing, nor aſking what is meaned, till he ſhew him who gave the command; *thou muſt* (ſaith he) *propheſy again:* intimating by this ſpeech, 1. That there had been propheſy. 2. That ſome intermiſſion had intervened. 3. That it ſhould be again revived. 4. That it ſhould be ſpread again before kings, nations, tongues, &c.

If it be queſtioned, whether John be to be looked on here, as getting a new commiſſion for himſelf only, or as being a type of God's raiſing the former decayed pure preaching of the goſpel, and furniſhing, or commiſſionating, of miniſters for that end, after that darkneſs ſhould be paſt; for we will ſee, chap. xi. miniſters may live and propheſy in their ſucceſſors, when they are gone? *Anſ.* I conceive both to be meaned, but the laſt principally; and John's eating, and commiſſion that he getteth to proceed himſelf in this propheſy, to be but a type to repreſent the other, and a ſign to ſtrengthen him and others in the faith of it; that as truly as God ſetteth him on work again to propheſy, and maketh him eat an open book, which before was ſealed, ſo will he do in reference to that which he hath promiſed in the former part of the chapter, in bringing the goſpel again to light after Antichriſtian darkneſs. Reaſons of this are, 1. It is moſt agreeable to the ſcope of the angel's appearing, and this little book open in his hand, which is to comfort particularly in reference to the ſtrait the church was then in. John had no other uſe of eating the book; for his commiſſion was clear before to write what he ſaw and heard, and all his viſions afterward are what he ſaw, without reſpect to this book, as if he had not eaten it. Neither was there any ſuch intermiſſion of John's propheſying, to ſay he *muſt again propheſy*, nor did he ever actually, firſt or laſt, propheſy before *kings, &c.* But this being a main part of the propheſy, muſt certainly be of a larger uſe, as it is prophetical, than to ſtir John up to a particular duty. It muſt then be underſtood, eſpecially of the revealing of the apoſtles doctrine, which was to be for a long time almoſt buried, yet was it, even that ſame doctrine, again by the Lord to be revealed, in which John was again to propheſy in his doctrine, or when this revelation, eſpecially by events, ſhould be made more plain, then it cometh again, as it were, to the world, and ſpreadeth amongſt nations, tongues and kingdoms: and this agreeth alſo well with the event which followeth on the ſeventh trumpet, chap. xi. and is in its ſcope a confirmation of what was ſaid by the angel in the verſe before: firſt, expreſſing it in a word, and confirming it by oath in the firſt ſeven verſes of the chapter. 2. Expreſſing it in a type, and confirming it by ſign in the reſt; which is well conſiſtent with the former, ſeeing the angel's appearing with this book in his hand, and what followeth, do aim at the ſame ſcope.

This which was repreſented to John in type, we we ſee, through God's bleſſing, in ſome meaſure fulfilled in our eyes, the goſpel is again revived, and the fulfilling and finiſhing of this myſtery (which beginneth in the enlargement of the goſpel, and ſhall go on in calling in of the Jews, and end in per-

fecting the bride, when ſhe ſhall be made ready for the Bridegroom) is already begun; which proveth us to be under the ſeventh trumpet.

In this tenth chapter we may obſerve, from its ſcope in general: 1. Our Lord is tender of the conſolation of his people, and alloweth them to have confident expectation of comfortable outgates from him in their loweſt difficulties; therefore is conſolation laid down before-hand in reference to this. 2. The Lord's people are often ſuſpicious of him in their affliction, and although it be moſt groundleſs, yet is he thought to have forgotten his promiſe, Pſ. lxxvii. and ſcarce will his word at ſometimes get credit by them; therefore doth he ſwear here to put that ſuſpicion out of their hearts, which needleſsly he would not do: for this cauſe hath he alſo ſworn his covenant, Heb. vi. Here grace ſomeway contendeth with our ſuſpicions; therefore the Lord ſo condeſcendeth to our weakneſs, as to give us, for our ſecurity, that which one mutable creature uſeth to reſt in from another, as the yondmoſt of what can be attained. 3. Our Lord Jeſus is a moſt ſtately and glorious perſon, and it is not the leaſt part of this conſolation that he is ſo; therefore this glorious deſcription is begun with, to ſhew that there is ſuch a connection between him and his people, that if he be glorious, they will be ſo, and he is glorious, even then when the world ſeemeth moſt to ſlight him. 4. The ignorance of the excellency of Chriſt doth much increaſe his people's diſcouragements; therefore is this deſcription laid down as the remedy thereof, ſhewing alſo that the right uptaking of Chriſt in his excellency, and in reſpect of his covenant-adminiſtration, whereby his faithfulneſs appeareth to his people, is a main foundation by which the daily comfort of his people is ſuſtained: if this were thoroughly believed and improven, there would not be ſuch room to confuſion and profanity in evil times. *Obſerv.* 5. Men ought reverently to ſpeak and make mention of the holy God: when this mighty angel ſpeaketh ſo of him, ver. 6. what ought we to do? If we heard the holy angels ſpeak of him, and to him, we might be both inſtructed in our duty, and aſhamed of our practice, in reference to this, which is no little evidence of our atheiſm. *Obſerv.* 6. Time certainly ſhall have an end: every purpoſe that the Lord hath concerning his church ſhall be accompliſhed. This is here confirmed by this mighty angel's oath, and this end will be ſhortly; what therefore is bounded within time, is not much to be valued. *Obſ.* 7. It is none of the leaſt of the conſolations that God's people have, that time ſpeedily paſſeth away; and ſo, whatever is promiſed haſteth to be performed. This is the end why this is ſet down here: the men of *time*, who have but their portion in this life, and all their projects within time, will have a poor bargain, when time ſhall be no more; and then the great conſolation of the people of God is but beginning.

Concerning Propheſying.

THere is much ſpoken of propheſying in this book, and of prophets, chap. xi. and Jezebel, chap. ii. is reproved for taking to her the name of propheteſs; and here the reviving of propheſy is ſpoken of in this chapter: it may be enquired then, how theſe places are to be underſtood? And if propheſying may be now expected in the church? Or, if that gift hath now fully ceaſed? or in what reſpect?

We may conſider *propheſy* or *prophets*, in a threefold conſideration:

1. In reſpect of the matter that is brought forth: which is either, 1. Some general truth not formerly revealed in the word. Or, 2. Some particular, contrary to what is formerly revealed there, either in doctrine or practice. Of this kind might be the Iſraelites their borrowing of jewels, Abraham his taking of his ſon to ſacrifice him, and many ſuch practices which cannot be condemned, yet doth not agree with the precepts that are in the word for directing of the people of God in their ordinary carriage. Or, 3. It is ſome particular, neither formerly revealed, nor yet in itſelf contrary to the word, but that which concerneth ſome particular event, or perſonal duty allenarly.

2. We may conſider it again, as it holdeth forth an ordinary or extraordinary way, how theſe things, or any thing elſe, come to be known, although the matter be a truth formerly revealed in the word, ſuch as the matter revealed to theſe prophets, 1 Cor. xiv. which was to be tried by the word.

3. It may be conſidered, in reſpect of the propoſing of what is revealed to others, to be a direction, or, to rule them in their practice, and that

either by recording it as ſcripture, as ſome of the prophets of old did, or, by taking on an office or authority, and by virtue of that to do it. Or otherwiſe, we may anſwer in theſe aſſertions.

Aſſert. 1. There is now no gift of propheſy, either for the bringing forth of any truth not formerly delivered, nor any gift to warrant one in a particular, ſimply condemned in the word, as to take another's goods, life, ſtation, &c. ſo as to be warranted merely by ſuch a revelation in things otherwiſe unlawful, as it is like prophetical men of old, in ſome of their practices were, which to us are no precedent for our warrant; which appeareth, 1. Becauſe now the word is complete, furniſhed with truths, to make the man of God perfect for every good work, and that in reſpect of the laſt adminiſtration of the covenant; there is, therefore, no acceſs to the adding of any new matter. 2. Becauſe, if any other goſpel, or duty, contrary to this word which we have received, be preached, we are not to receive it, but to account him accurſed that carrieth it, under whatſoever pretext he do it, if he were an angel; and this leaveth no place for admitting either of truths, or duties, contrary to the word, Gal. i. 3. The commination added in the cloſe of this book, chap. xxii. confirmeth this, there being the ſame reaſon againſt adding unto, or detracting from the ſcriptures in general, or any part of them, as there is in reference to this book, all of them being of the ſame authority, yet is it not without weight added to this as the cloſe of all. 4. The gifts of propheſies, being now generally ceaſed, as afterward will be clear, and the Lord having thought good more mediately and ſolidly, as it is called *a more ſure word of propheſy*, 2 Pet. i. 19. to feed his church, viz. by his word; and he having given now much more ſcripture under the goſpel than under the law, to ſupply the want of immediately inſpired prophets; and, conſidering how rare the examples of God's calling for duties, ſeemingly contrary to moral commands, are, and what abſurdities would follow, if now any ſuch gift ſhould be pretended unto, in reference to ſuch matter. We conceive it therefore ſafe and neceſſary to conclude, that there is now, after reformation, no ſuch gift of propheſy, or prophets, to be expected or admitted, who may add any new truth to the word, or command any new duty contrary to it, by arrogating to themſelves, or impoſing ſomething as duty on others, which the moral grounds of the word do not allow of; and its confirmed by this, that we are commanded to *try the ſpirits;* and even the revelations of extraordinary prophets, 1 Cor. xiv. were to be tried and judged: which can be by no rule, but by the word. It followeth, therefore, that no revelation, containing any thing contrary to the word, is to be admitted or received as from the Spirit of the Lord.

Aſſert. 2. Yet it is not altogether to be denied, but that the Lord may, in particulars of the laſt kind, ſometimes, reveal himſelf to ſome, by foretelling events before they come, ſuch as the famine that Agabus foretold of, or Paul's impriſonment were; of ſuch the hiſtory of the martyrs and ſaints do ſometime make mention: and particularly, Athanaſius is often adverтiſed of hazards, as is recorded, and in the verity cannot be denied: and of this ſort there were many at the reviving of the light of the goſpel, who, by foretelling of particular events, were famous, as John Huſs his foretelling, within an hundred years after him, to follow the outbreaking of reformation; ſuch, it is like, was Hieronymus Savonarola, who was burnt by the Pope, not as was pretended, for foretelling of events, as they imputed to him, by unlawful means, but for faithful reproving of his faults, as he is deſcribed by Philip de Cumius, and other authors: of ſuch many were in this land, as Meſſrs. Wiſhart, Knox, Welch, Davidſon, &c. And this cannot be ſaid altogether to be made void: for, although God hath now cloſed the canon of the ſcripture, yet that he ſhould be reſtrained in his freedom, from manifeſting of himſelf thus, there is no convincing ground to bear it out, eſpecially when experience hath often proven the contrary in the moſt holy men. Yet, 1. This is not habitual or ordinary to any, but is ſingular at ſome few times, and in ſome few caſes. 2. Every perſuaſion of mind before the event come, and anſwerableneſs in it when it cometh, will not be ſufficient to make it paſs for a prophetical foreknowledge, more than when in dreams it may often ſo fall out. 3. This will not denominate one to be a prophet, although, in ſome ſingular events, God maketh this uſe of him. Nor, 4. Can ſuch predictions warrant any to do a thing as a duty, which otherwiſe would not be warrantable unto them. 5. There is difference to be put betwixt

the ſimple foretelling of an event, which may be of God, and a concluſion which may be drawn therefrom; this may be of ourſelves, as we may ſee in the predictions of theſe, Acts xxi. who foretold of Paul's impriſonment at Jeruſalem, yet was not that to divert him from his going there, as many collected; that therefore was not from God, as Paul's preſſure in the ſpirit to go notwithſtanding, doth clear; every ſuch prediction therefore cannot be made a rule of duty, ſeeing the Lord may have other good ends of trial, advertiſement and confirmation in it. And we will not find, that any have made uſe of ſuch particular revelations, as from them to preſs a duty upon others, that would not otherwiſe be warrantable, although, when it concurreth with other grounds, it may have its weight for ſwaying in lawful things.

Aſſert. 3. Propheſy, taken for an immediate revealing of goſpel truth and myſteries, ſuch as that, 1 Cor. xiv. and what was frequent in the apoſtolic times, is now ceaſed; and there is neither ſuch a gift, nor ſuch an office: 1. There is not ſuch a gift; for it is not common to all that are renewed; it was not ſo in the apoſtles days; there were diverſities of gifts; and this gift is diſtinguiſhed from ſaving grace, 1 Cor. xii, and xiv, &c. neither is that particular gift of propheſy continued; for, there is no other gift continued, as theſe of *healing*, *tongues*, and *interpretations*, whereby men may come in an immediate way to the exerciſe of theſe. And, 2. Experience ſheweth, that that hath ceaſed, and God calleth men to the uſe of ordinary means for the attaining of the knowledge of his will; and there being now no ſuch gift that will abide trial, there is therefore no ſuch office to be pleaded for, that followed upon that; yet even theſe prophets, in the matter propheſied by them, were to be tried by the word and judged; and, in the gift, if it were a revelation indeed, 1 Cor. xiv. Now, there being none ſuch who can abide that proof, we are not, at leaſt, without that, to acknowledge ſuch a gift, or ſuch an office.

Aſſert. 4. Yet, if we take *Propheſy* for the underſtanding of God's mind, and for attaining to be well acquainted with the myſteries of God, by a mediate way; yea, and that beyond the applied means, or to have a gift and capacity for diſcerning of theſe things with little pains, and that beyond what ſome others can attain unto by any labour, we conceive, that in this ſenſe *Propheſy*, and *Prophets*, may be ſaid to be continued in the church; and ſuch God raiſed up in the time of reformation, men ſingularly gifted with a prophetical ſpirit in this ſenſe, which may be the fulfilling of this propheſied in this chapter.

Aſſert. 5. No gift of propheſy now can warrant one authoritatively to ſet down his light, although it be truth, as canonic ſcripture, or as of equal authority from itſelf with the writings of Moſes, &c. and other ſcriptures, that in the firſt aſſertion was caſten, though one, by his gift, may reaſon from, or genuinely open theſe ſcriptures by writ, as by word.

Aſſert. 6. No gift can warrant one to take on him the office of an authoritative preacher, even though, in ſome particulars, God's mind extraordinarily ſhould be revealed to him; for, it is not the gift that giveth the authority of an office, but God's authoritative miſſion; otherwiſe a woman, as Philip's daughters, might be an officer in the church, and have public acceſs to preach and teach, which yet the New Teſtament admitteth not, even when it ſpeaketh of this gift of propheſy, 1 Cor. xiv. and ordereth the practice of extraordinary prophets; there, this inhibition is inſerted, and elſewhere; yea, even in theſe primitive times, there was a trial of ſpirits and gifts by the prophets, before any was to be accounted ſuch: beſide, one may have a particular event revealed to him, who yet may be more unacquainted with the myſtery of the goſpel than others, who, by God's bleſſing, have attained to knowledge in an ordinary way; and if it cannot warrant an office to ſuch, neither will it do in this caſe: there is now therefore no prophet by an immediate call.

Aſſert. 7. Yet we ſay, that as God, by gifts, may furniſh ſome in a more than ordinary way; ſo may he, and uſeth he to thruſt them out in a mixed way to the exerciſe of theſe for the edification of his church, and make the ſeal of his call extraordinarily ratify his ſending of them, that is, as he may furniſh men partly by means, and eſpecially by his bleſſing, extraordinarily accompanying them out, partly in a mediate way, by men's opening of the door, partly by his more than ordinary thruſting of them out, making up ſo what was defective in the mediate call, by ſome extraordinary concurrences of impulſe and gifts within, of circumſtances of providence without, and of efficacy upon, and acception of it amongſt others, by which it is ratified. This the

Lord fulfilled at the entry of the reformation, raising up men comparatively, extraordinarily furnished and commissionated for his work, yet still ministers of the same gospel, and walking according to the common rule with others in their ministerial charge; this is not ordinarily to be imitated, but where the like cases, call, and circumstances concur; and thus the Lord in old stirred up men at times of reformation, to take on them the furtherance of his work, who yet were not properly extraordinary prophets, or officers, or Levites; nor ordinarily called magistrates, as Nehemiah, Ezra, and others, who did both differ from Haggai, Zechariah, and such who were properly prophets, on the one hand, and from Joshua, Zerubbabel, and such who were ordinarily and properly priests and magistrates on the other; which yet in ordinary and settled conditions was not done.

Concerning a Minister his particular message to a particular auditory, and if it may be again and again insisted on and repeated.

BEsides what is already said, there are two things in this chapter which we may consider a little further. And, 1. from ver. 4. We may see there is no less spiritual wisdom, and dependence on Christ called for in the venting of light, and in bringing forth of what we know, than there is diligence required in searching of God's mind that we may know; and it is not warrand enough for ministers to communicate that to the church at all times which they know, because it is the truth of God. For, John knew that these seven thunders were such, but there is a more special warrand to be looked unto. We mean, not that there should be some extraordinary thing here. But as from John's call, in general, we may gather the necessity of a call to the ministry; so from his being commanded to write this, and not that which was also revealed to him, we gather proportionably, that ministers ought to try what in such and such a particular case is called for, to be communicated unto people as God's message, at such a time to them, seeing every thing which he knoweth cannot be delivered at once; something therefore is to be chosen, and that upon such consideration, as may be sufficient for his peace who conscientiously aimeth to follow God's mind: in reference to which we may adventure to propose these generals, 1. That men would not look for any extraordinary impulse in swaying of them to the choice of texts or doctrines, it will be safest to walk by reasons that will abide the trial, especially where that which the impulse driveth at, doth not appear upon rational grounds to be so edifying indeed, where any extraordinary offer of a text, and solid reason from the conveniency of that matter concur, in that case it is not to be neglected; yet now seeing God hath not left men to an immediate way of attaining to the knowledge of the gospel preached, but doth require of them the use of mediate and ordinary means, so also are men, both in reference to their calling in general, and to particular messages, to collect the mind more from solid sanctified reason, than from a meer internal impulse, lest thereby God be tempted, and Satan get occasion to insinuate himself too much in our choice, or, at least, to confuse us by proposing one thing after another, that so he may indispose for all; reason therefore would fix the determination, and even sometimes against the apprehended inclination, and once being fixed, would not easily or rashly be altered, lest thereby one be brought to question one place after another, and so fall into confusion, and anxiously consume the time in choosing of a text, which might otherways be more profitably employed.

2. Although God be not tied to any immediate or extraordinary pointing out of such a particular subject, or condition of souls, yet is he not to be slighted, but humbly to be depended upon, and seriously to be prayed unto for guidance, and signifying of his mind in that, either by some inward leading of the mind to that which may be profitable; or, by enabling of us singly to discern, and conclude, from rational grounds, what may be called for by him, that so his pointing at some one thing beside another, either by inward stirring, or outward circumstances, be not despised, but, at least, brought to trial, if it be found fit; and we are sure, if it be of God, the more it be tried it will be found to be the more suitable.

3. In this trial, not only the matter is to be considered if it is truth, but also if it be edifying and profitable, as lying near the great end of the gospel. viz. the engaging of souls to Christ, and conforming of them to him, Christ being the end of the law, and the foundation which the wise master-builder layeth and buildeth upon among

a people, 1 Cor. iii. and all builders are to take heed, not ſimply only, how they build, but how they build thereupon, ibid. verſe 10. leſt they build hay and ſtubble thereon inſtead of gold; and all truths that conſidered in themſelves, are more remote, are to be ſquared by, and levelled ſo as may further this. 2. If it be pertinent to the preſent hearers and their preſent caſe, either for convincing, comforting, or inſtructing, &c. as we would conceive Chriſt would do, if he were writing from heaven to ſuch a people as he did once, chap. ii. and iii. and to the ſeven churches. 3. In this choice, even the temper and diſpoſition of the people is to be conſidered, and ſo what may moſt edify theſe who are ſo qualified, in which a miniſter is neither to ſeek to be pleaſing unto them, not yet needleſsly to irritate, but ſo to level at edification, as he may moſt probably gain the end on ſuch; for, as in bodily diſeaſes, medicines are not to be given alike to all perſons for the ſame diſeaſes, but reſpect is to be had to ſeveral conſtitutions, and accordingly applications more ſtrong or more gentle are to be prepared; ſo here ſome are more ſharply to be dealt with and contrarily: order alſo is to be obſerved where ſeveral things are neceſſary what to begin at, and how to proceed and prepare them, ſo as they may be received and admitted, for, as the moſt healthful potion cannot profit the patient, except he receive it, and it be ſo prepared as he may not utterly nauſeate and loath it; ſo is there often no leſs dexterity called for in the managing and ordering of a fit matter, &c. and in the chuſing of an oppoſite mids, and gaining manner, (that what is uſeful for reproof, conviction, &c. may, without prejudice from the way of propounding it, be accepted and digeſted,) than there is faithfulneſs neceſſary in aiming at that ſcope.

4. In all this, there is much need of ſingleneſs, that the conſcience may have a teſtimony of its aiming allenerly at edification, when it is ſearching to diſcern what is mainly called for; neither will it be unuſeful to obſerve what doctrines occur; to which of them a door is opened; making the enlargement thereof the more eaſy; which of them have the moſt pertinent uſes natively flowing from them; this is a rule to be obſerved in the making choice of doctrines, and in chuſing upon theſe, and the like grounds, the conſcience may have quietneſs: for although they be not ſufficient to ſway one ſimply to the chuſing of any matter, yet where the queſtion is betwixt things equally pertinent and profitable, at leaſt where the difference is not ſo eaſily diſcernible, they may have weight comparatively to ſway to one more than to another: and although, eſpecially where there is occaſion, miniſters ought deliberately to chuſe their purpoſe, and know it is truth, even from the place they are to ſpeak of before they go to public, that they may in faith aſſert that to be the meaning of the Spirit, and with the greater boldneſs go to ſpeak when they are clear of their warrant; yet we conceive, that miniſters would not peremptorily limit their meſſage to what matter or expreſſions the Lord ſhall furniſh them with in their private ſtudy, ſo as to repel every motion that may be ſuggeſted to them in the time of delivery: in this indeed men had need to be ſober and to fear, leſt in hunting after other doctrines, or by their negligence or preſumption needleſsly, they tempt God by ſlighting the ordinary means when they may uſe them, much leſs would they accept of every motion, of every matter, as coming from God to them, to be brought forth at ſuch a time; for, if theſe motions be dangerous, and not always ſafe in private, as was formerly hinted, much more have they need to be adverted to in public, before one forbear the following of ſome digeſted purpoſe to inſiſt on ſome other thing but preſently occurring, yet where ſome outward providence changeth the caſe from what it was in the ſpeaker's apprehenſion before his coming to public, or where the matter ſuggeſted is pertinent both to the place of ſcripture and preſſing of the ſame purpoſe which the preacher aimeth at, ſo as if it had offered in private, he would have embraced it before ſome things he had thought of, and the matter being ſuch that he is not altogether unacquainted with, but hath clearneſs in the thing which is now preſented before him; if alſo it hath with it ſome convincing proof, and weighty expreſſion, of the thing which is in itſelf profitable: we conceive that that is not altogether to be ſlighted and neglected, but may warrantably, and in faith, be yielded unto, and embraced, as if it had been formerly thought upon, eſpecially when the Lord hath been ſought in private, and diligence hath been uſed; yet if there hath been a reſtraint, as to the Lord's furniſhing of ſome appoſite meſſage, till then there can no reaſon be given why the Lord may not ſuſpend the anſwering of theſe prayers till the

ſpeaker come to public and then do it: and except this were, miniſters ſhould never go to public however neceſſary their call were, till firſt they had ſatisfaction about their particular meſſage in private, which were too great a limiting of God, and unbecoming that dependence which his miniſters ought to have on him, which daily experience doth prove not to be in vain; and ſeeing the meſſage muſt come from the Lord, is it not alike as to the thing itſelf, whether he give it in private or public? neither can this be called a leaning to immediate and extraordinary inſpirations, becauſe by this, there is neither any new doctrine approven, nor any new way of attaining the knowledge of the Lord's mind commended, but only this, that truths mediately revealed in the word, and upon the matter known to the preacher, with the grounds and the reaſons thereof, may be ſometimes brought into the mind of the preacher in public, which he did not think of in private, yet when preſented to him, they are in themſelves as clear to him to be the truth, and able to abide the trial of the word, and alſo fit and appoſite for his preſent purpoſe as much, and it may be, more than what he had thought of in private; and can he be denied freedom now to chuſe to inſiſt on theſe which he would have accounted a favour to have had preſented to him in his ſecret chamber? Sometimes, alſo, the Lord will think meet, that the miniſter proſecute ſome point in its application beyond what he purpoſed in his private thoughts, and will put an edge upon him, and give him liberty in the delivery thereof beyond ordinary, and furniſh him with expreſſions ſuitable for the following thereof, and ſhall he ſtraiten his own liberty, which all miniſters are to pray for, and ſhun the preſſing of that which is profitable upon his hearers, even when he is fitted for it, becauſe that was not preſented to him in private? It cannot give him peace to deſpiſe that motion, when the judgment is convinced of the ſoundneſs and edifyingneſs thereof: for, in ſuch things as are moſt profitable to people, and which therefore the Spirit doth ſuggeſt, there is to the intelligent miniſter an unqueſtionableneſs; and the queſtion is not here, whether ſuch a thing be truth or not; for we ſuppoſe that it is obvious, and if it be not ſo, there is then good ground to lay it by till in a due way it may be tried (for it is not like that at ſuch a time the Holy Ghoſt will propound matter, which is debateable, to be the ſubject of a miniſter's preſent meſſage for the edifying of people;) but the queſtion is, whether the bringing forth of this truth now preſented, the reproving of this ſin, the preſſing of this duty, &c. be pertinent, and may not more uſefully be brought forth at this time than ſuppreſſed? We conceive there can be no ſuch difficulty here in this, but the deciſion thereof may be eaſy. Sometimes alſo a matter ſtudied, may in the Lord's wiſdom be forgotten, and ſome other profitable matter offered in the room thereof, by which he ſometimes neceſſitateth the inſiſting on this, which may be by his bleſſing more uſeful than the other; it is recorded of Auguſtine by Poſſ. in his life, that being extraordinary cutted ſhort in his memory from his intended purpoſe, he was led abruptly and with vehemency to inſiſt againſt the Manichean error, contrary to his purpoſe, and that palpably both to his own obſervation, and to the obſervation of others, which made him thereafter, at dinner, expreſs his confidence, that the Lord would evidence ſome deſign of his, in that particular, which accordingly came to paſs; for, a Manichean, beſide Auguſtine's knowledge, being a hearer, within ſome few days openly diſclaimed that error, and acknowledged that digreſſion, by the Lord's bleſſing to have been the mean of his converſion. And many ſuch caſes there are, wherein the Lord may ſignify his mind of a meſſage to a miniſter at the inſtant of ſpeaking, which ought not to be deſpiſed by him.

5. There is much help in this debate, when a miniſter, who hath ordinarily the ſame hearers, and no extraordinary occaſion intervening, doth ſettle on an ordinary, either in reſpect of purpoſes to be gathered from divers ſcriptures, or of one portion of ſcripture continuedly together; in which caſe the general at firſt is to be choſen according to the former grounds, which alſo will warrant in the following thereof, although no ſuch explicit debate be about every part; and this is neither unuſeful to the miniſter or people, becauſe in ſcripture, and particularly in the epiſtles, the doctrines that ſuit perſons and churches, are wiſely and compendiouſly often compacted together: and the following of the method of the Holy Ghoſt, and the dependence that one thing hath upon another, doth both contribute much for the bringing forth of his mind in the word, when it is followed in the order propoſed by him, without diverſion and interruption, and alſo maketh it more weighty to the hearers, and more native, and to be digeſted with the leſs pre-

judice, when they ſee ſuch doctrines and purpoſes ſo linked together by the Holy Ghoſt, and obvious without any immediate choice of the miniſter himſelf, whereas often people are ready, with more prejudice, to look on particular texts made choice of by the miniſter, as having more of men in it than in the former way; and certainly, the Holy Ghoſt's putting of purpoſes together, ſometimes in one method, ſometimes in another, is not to be deſpiſed, although Chriſtian prudence would chuſe what matter and method doth more ſuit the caſe of ſuch a people than another, and accordingly to fix on the ſcripture that is moſt agreeable to that. It ſeemeth alſo, that, among the Jews, order in reading and expounding of the law was obſerved, and we ſee it for the moſt part ordinarily followed by the antients in their ſermons; yet, in this way, every verſe, or every doctrine, is not to be equally inſiſted on or proſecuted in the application, but theſe are to be choſen, which make moſt for the edifying of the preſent hearers, ſeeing now it is to theſe we preach, and not to the Romans or Galatians, &c. and therefore are eſpecially to inſiſt on theſe truths, duties, ſins, &c. which concern moſt the preſent caſe; thus one may inſiſt on ſome things that are leſs touched in theſe epiſtles, they being more neceſſary now, and paſs more ſhortly theſe queſtions that are more inſiſted on in theſe epiſtles, becauſe now not ſo edifying: and in ſo doing the intent of the Holy Ghoſt may be neareſt attained, becauſe it was upon that account of edification that Paul inſiſted much on ſome things, becauſe then their caſe required it, when he did more ſhortly paſs over other things: in this alſo, a miniſter may have ſome reſpect to his own gift, as it is moſt fitted for explaining of difficulties, inſtructing in poſitive truths and caſes, convincing, wakening, or comforting, &c. and ſo one may more ordinarily follow one ſtrain which would not be ſo pertinent to another, as it ſeemeth there hath been a difference in this reſpect between the ſons of thunder and the ſon of conſolation.

Further, by occaſion of this angel's ſaying to John, *Thou muſt propheſy again, &c.* It may be inquired, If preaching over and over the ſame matter be allowable and uſeful? For anſwer we ſay, 1. That the end of preaching being edification, we conceive it is not unſuitable often to inſiſt on the ſame things, even though they be known and underſtood by the hearers; becauſe the end of preaching is not only to inform the judgment, and alway to bring ſome new increaſe to that, but to further converſion, by the eſpouſing of hearts to Chriſt, and holineſs, by preſſing the practiſing of known duties, and eſchewing of known ſins; and this being certain, that many who know the doctrine of faith, and holineſs alſo, are yet defective in their practice; there is need, therefore, both in invitations, exhortations, expoſtulations, reproofs, &c. often to come over the ſame thing, eſpecially where the truths are material, and concerning in their uſe, and the duties are ſlighted, or the ſins followed in the place. In that caſe, it ought neither to be grievous to the miniſter to inſiſt on the ſame things, as the apoſtle ſpeaketh, Philip. iii. nor yet be ſtumbled at by the people, although it vill require deniedneſs in both; yea, ſometimes it may be more difficult for a miniſter to get over his own inclination, that aimeth to carry ſome new thing, and not again to carry the ſame meſſage, which may both reliſh now leſs to himſelf, and to the hearers, than formerly it did, yet ought he not to think it grievous, if it be ſafe for them. This we ſee the prophets of old did with their hearers, uſing the word as an *hammer*, (as it is called by Jeremiah, Jer. xxiii. 29.) by doubling the ſtrokes to bear that in, which at firſt took no impreſſion: this way alſo the Lord followeth in the goſpel: how often preſſeth he the neceſſity of repentance, the difficulty of entering to heaven, what concerning the abounding and hazard of hypocriſy, the neceſſity of his own ſuffering, of ſelf-denial, and bearing the croſs, and other truths, in themſelves needful, and to the preſent hearers uſeful? This is alſo uſed by the apoſtles, who, in their preaching and writing, inſiſt again and again in the ſame things: and although often hearers itch after ſome new thing, yet are miniſters not to feed that humour. Chryſoſtom hath a notable expoſtulation with his hearers to this purpoſe, on the 2 Theſſ. chap. ii. hom. 3. ſaith he, *Some hearers ſay, Why ſhould we come to church, to hear the ſame things over and over?* To theſe, he ſaith, *Are ye not ready to go to theatres to hear the ſame things? to the running of horſes to ſee the ſame things? &c. Doth not*, ſaith, he, *the ſame ſun riſe again, and its light is not the worſe? Do we not uſe the ſame food for our bodies, and they are not the leſs wholeſome?* Or, *If ye have often heard them, ought ye not then to profit by*

them, and the better to know them? Others again ſaith he, *when enquired in any thing, were ready to reply, We heard it but once:* whereby he would bear out the neceſſity of repeating the ſame things, and the inexcuſableneſs of a people that yet could neither endure it, nor profit without it. 2. We ſay, Miniſters would do this, ſo as it may neither foſter their own lazineſs, nor become trivial and leſs ſavoury to the hearers, but in reſpect of his own livelineſs, and the weightineſs of the manner of his propoſing it, and in reſpect of theſe expreſſions, and the manner of following it, it would be ſo convoyed, as being indeed a new ſermon, though an old matter: hence we ſee, that in the ſame matter our Lord Jeſus multiplieth parables, and ſometimes one way, and ſometimes another way, preſſeth the ſame thing, as we ſee by the parable of the ſower, Matth. xiii. of the labourers, who were in their opinion firſt, yet made laſt, chap. xx. of the marriage-ſupper, and wedding-garment, Mat. xxii. of the fooliſh virgins, Matth. xxv. many otherwiſe. Paul alſo, Phil. iii. prefaceth to this, and giveth the reaſon of it, thereby to remove taſtineſs and itching from the hearers, or any prejudice againſt his practice, which might mar the weight or fruit of the thing which he is to inſiſt on; which practices, no queſtion, may be laudably followed by miniſters, both in the matter and manner; and truths, ſo preached, ought to be received by the hearers, as healthful to them to feed upon the ſecond or third time, as if they had never formerly heard them; yea, thereby they ought to gather the neceſſity of their uſe-making of theſe doctrines, reproofs, &c. more now than if once only they had heard them, leſt they conſtrain the propoſing of them again unto them, and draw on more guilt by not making uſe of them, now again and again repeated and preſſed, than if they had heard them but once.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *And there was given me a reed like unto a rod, and the angel ſtood, ſaying, Riſe, and meaſure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worſhip therein.*

2. *But the court which is without the temple leave out, and meaſure it not: for it is given unto the Gentiles, and the holy city ſhall they tread under foot forty and two months.*

THE Lord hath diſcovered the firſt part of the conſolation againſt the two firſt woes, viz. a comfortable outgate, which the church ſhould have from under them, and a reviving again of the goſpel after that: a type and confirmation whereof, was John's eating of the little book; but ſeeing this is ſuſpended until the ſounding of the ſeventh trumpet, and it might be a doubt, what became of the church till then, or if there were any during the time of Antichriſt's prevailing. In this chapter, to ver. 15. the eſtate of the church, in reference to that time, is particularly deſcribed: wherein is ſhown, that even then there ſhould be a church provided for by God, and that there ſhould be prophets and preachers of the goſpel, although both paſtors and people ſhould be few, and in a low eſtate outwardly.

That this doth relate unto the condition of the church under Antichriſt, and belongeth to that time, as cotemporary with the fifth and ſixth trumpets, will appear: 1. This belongeth to the ſtate of the church immediately preceding the laſt wo, or ſeventh trumpet, by which Antichriſt's fall beginneth; and it doth deſcribe the eſtate of the church for the forty two months immediately before his fall: and therefore muſt neceſſarily cotemporate with his dominion and height, which doth immediately alſo, for the ſame ſpace of time, precede the ſeventh trumpet. 2. This part of the propheſy holdeth forth that trial of the church, when her prophets propheſy in ſackcloth, and have war with the beaſt: which trial endeth with the beaſt's prevailing over them, and their riſing again, and being taken up to heaven; but that trial, in the continuance of it, a thouſand two hundred and threeſcore days, is the ſame with the beaſt's dominion, chap. xiii. and cloſeth with his begun fall:

and therefore must belong to the same time. 3. These times of forty-two months, one thousand two hundred threescore days, time, times, and half a time, &c. five times mentioned, chap. xi, xii, and xiii. being all of equal extent, must be understood to be cotemporary one with another; for that successively they should follow one another, cannot be thought, beside the agreeableness of the same matter and state of the church under all of them, and the common beginning and rise which all of them have: but it is certain, that forty-two months, chap. xi. relate to the Antichristian tyranny; therefore we must understand this giving of the outer court to the Gentiles, and this prophesying for the like time, ver. 2, and 3. of the same also. 4. The measuring of the temple, and treading of the outer court, do cotemporate and belong to the same time: for when the temple is to be measured, the outer court is cast out, when the temple is measured: and therefore seeing the leaving out of the outer court, belongeth to the time of Antichrist, that part of the measuring of the temple, must cotemporate with it also: for, the describing of the church, by comparing it to the temple and to the outer court, is not to distinguish the visible church, in respect of time successively; but to distinguish some in it at the same time from others, that should be really differenced before God, as the temple and outer court used to be, in respect of the ceremonial differences that were between these two: beside, the scope formerly laid down, and other circumstances of the exposition being well considered, it will be found, that the intention of the Spirit is not to delineate the Christian church from its beginning, but from this time of Antichrist's rise, that cotemporateth with the prophets their prophesying in sackcloth.

The state of the church then is two ways set down, *First*, More generally in respect of the condition of the church herself, ver. 1, 2. *Secondly*, More particularly in respect of her prophets unto verse 14. That by putting these two together, it may be seen what posture she was to be in. Both these descriptions are set down with allusion to phrases in the Old Testament. The state of the church, in respect of herself, during that time, is again two ways set out, 1. With reference to the true worshippers, verse 1. 2. With reference to false and hypocritical corrupted worshippers, verse 2. That we may understand it, there is a threefold allusion in the words. The first is, to the description of the material temple, where there were (as we may gather from 2 Chron. iv. 9. and what goeth before) three several courts, the one called the *most holy*, into which the high-priest, only once a year entered. The second without that, was called *the court of priests*. The third is called the *great court*, or *court of the people*, which was without all, and next to the city: Unto this court the multitude of professing worshippers had access at their solemn times: and this allusion holdeth forth, that as the inner court being compared with the outer, was small: and as many had access to this, which were not admitted to the former; so, during this time, the number of true worshippers shall be few, though the multitude of nominal professors shall be great, because the Lord will set apart some few to himself, and disown the rest, even as if under the Old Testament he had appointed the outer court to be divided from the inner, the greater part had been rejected, but the better part reserved; so shall it be in the gospel-church at that time, some few like the temple shall be ordered and set aside for himself, and the visible body of professors left out without any such special care: which leaving, or casting out, we conceive to be the same, as not to be sealed, and so taken notice of by God, chap. vii. And this measuring will be found to belong to the same persons who are sealed.

The second allusion of measuring respected that vision, Ezek. xl. 41, &c. And it may signify, 1. The Lord's putting a difference amongst professors of that time; and that profession will not be sufficient to make men pass, but they must be tried and put to the touchstone; and that the Lord will do so. 2. It holdeth out the Lord's setting apart of some for himself, in opposition to others who are neglected; thus the land was to be measured, Ezek. xlvii. 18. and for this cause Israel is often called *the rod of God's inheritance*, Psal. lxxiv. 2. Jer. x. 16, &c. as measured by to him, in opposition to all other nations. 3. It signifieth a care and special oversight of the Lord's, in reference to these in the temple beside others, as if he were building and preparing a house for them, even like a little sanctuary to rest in during that time. Thus *measuring* of the temple here, is opposed to the *casting out of the outer court* to the Gentiles, which is not to be measured, or so taken notice of by the Lord;

and this agreeth with that, chap. xii. 14. of providing a place for the woman, *i. e.* the church, during the ſame time. And, *Laſtly*, This meaſuring of the temple, is oppoſed to the opening of it, chap. xv. And opening of it there, being to be underſtood of an enlarged eſtate of the church, and bringing of the goſpel to open light, this here muſt ſignify a ſecret retired ſtate of the church, wanting that ſplendor and viſibility of ordinances which it had before this time, and which after the ſeven trumpets ſounding it was to have.

A third alluſion is unto Daniel's propheſying of Antiochus his making deſolate of the material temple, Dan. vii. 13. and ſo the meaning will be, that as the church of the Jews, and their ſanctuary, was tread upon, during ſuch a time under Antiochus; ſo ſhall the viſible face of the church be abuſed and over-run by Antichriſt's followers, during his tyranny over the ſame. Yet ſtill will the Lord preſerve a remnant, as in that former caſe.

Ver. 1. Now, it will be eaſier, more particularly, to clear the words: wherein there is, 1. Something done. 2. Something ſaid. *And there was given unto me a reed like unto a rod.* A *reed* is uſed in meaſuring, either to find out the quantity of a thing, or the regularity of a thing, or for the dividing and ſetting apart of it. It is *given to John*, not only to ſignify the ſmallneſs of that number which ſhould be ſet apart for God, (for as numbering importeth fewneſs, ſo meaſuring doth ſmallneſs) and the regularneſs of their worſhip, beſides all the reſt of the world: but to ſhew, that the church, during this time, was not to be reckoned by the multitude, but that the rule behoved to be applied for diſcerning of it; and theſe who were furniſhed by a meaſuring reed, ſhould find it out, and none other. That which is ſaid, may be taken up in theſe three, 1. What he ſhould meaſure. 2. What he ſhould not meaſure. 3. Why? His direction what to do, is, *Riſe, meaſure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worſhip therein.* The *temple* here, is that which we called the court of prieſts, where the altar ſtood; it is oppoſed to the outer court in the following verſe. *Theſe that worſhip therein*, point out true worſhippers, who reſt not in the outer court with the multitude, to whom they are oppoſed, ver. 2. but like prieſts to God, they worſhip him in the temple where the altar is, ſignifying the continuance of the preſcribed worſhip, in oppoſition to the will-worſhip of others, particularly their continuing to make uſe of Chriſt's ſacrifice, which is ſignified by the altar which the multitude did not inquire for. Theſe are to be ſet apart, after they are tried and found, for God himſelf. The ſecond part of the direction is, What ſhould not be meaſured, and that is, the court without the temple, *leave*, or *caſt it out, and meaſure it not*, ſaith he: by which is underſtood the viſible face of the Chriſtian church, which, in reſpect of external profeſſors, is like unto the outer court, during the Jewiſh ſervice. This not meaſuring of it, implieth a ſlighting and miſregarding of it, and not ſetting it apart as the former, as the following words do clear. 3. The reaſon of this, is, *For it is given to the Gentiles, and the holy city ſhall they tread under foot forty and two months.* Where, 1. The ſtate of the outer court is ſet down to be given to the Gentiles. 2. The height and continuance of their tyranny is expreſſed, *The holy city ſhall they tread under foot forty and two months.* By the law, Gentiles were inhibited the congregation or aſſembly of the people in this outer court; ſo this giving to the Gentiles, muſt ſuppoſe a profaning of the viſible church, and corrupting and mixing of public ordinances and worſhip, even as admiſſion of Gentiles to the outer court would have been under the law; for which Paul was complained of, Acts xxi. By Gentiles, is to be underſtood, not properly Pagans; for they are not capable to poſſeſs the viſible church, and to partake its name: for, it continueth to be the outer court, even while it is given to them, and is tread on by them. Beſides, as was hinted, the time of their treading of it, will fall under the time of Antichriſt's ſitting in the temple of God; and therefore it muſt be underſtood of his vaſſals and followers. They are called Gentiles in this reſpect, that altho' they ſeem to bear the name of Chriſtians, and ſo did not deſtroy, but poſſeſs the outer court, and retain the name of the Chriſtian church; yet, in reſpect of their defection from the purity of the goſpel, and of the ſuperſtitious and idolatrous worſhip propagated by them, they are rather to be accounted Gentiles than Chriſtians; in which reſpect their head, Antichriſt, chap. xiii. is ſaid to have a *name of blaſphemy*, even as the Pagan heads had, which went before him. This is further explained in the following expreſſion, *The holy city ſhall they tread under foot forty and two months.* What he calleth *the outer court* formerly, here he calleth *the holy city*, viz. the viſible Chri-

ſtian church, whereof Jeruſalem (called *the holy city* for the ordinances of God in it) was a type. *They ſhall tread upon it*, that is, ſhall poſſeſs it, brook the name of it, pollute it, marring the beauty of it, and that with an high hand, as the temple was polluted during Antiochus his tyranny.

4. What is meaned by the time, forty and two months, is not ſo eaſy to determine: we think in all this, there is an alluſion to Dan. vii. 24, 25, &c. where Antiochus his trampling Jeruſalem, was limited to a time, viz. one year; times, viz. two years; and the dividing of a time, viz. half of a year, or ſome odd time more than three years: which holdeth forth in general, that as Antiochus got great power over the Jews and their temple, ſo Antichriſt ſhall get great power over the church. 2. That as the people of God, his ordinances and ſervice were brought low by him (who may well be Antichriſt's type) ſo ſhall the church be by Antichriſt. 3. That as that cruelty was limited and bounded for years; yea, for days, ſo ſhall Antichriſt's be, who in many things is deſcribed from Antiochus for that end, as *changing times*, *having a mouth ſpeaking blaſphemous things*, &c. and that there is an alluſion to this time of Daniel in all theſe times, chap. xi. 2, 3. xii. 6. and xiii. 5. it appeareth by chap. xii. 14. where, what was ſpoken, verſe 6. of the woman's flying, by days, he expreſſeth thereafter in Daniel's words, *time*, *times*, *and half a time*, &c. all coming to one ſum. So that as Antiochus for ſo long, till the time ſet of God expired, trod on Jeruſalem, temple and ordinances, ſo ſhall Antichriſt during his appointed time: with this difference, the inner court is reſerved from Antichriſt; though he cometh very near it, yet he waſteth not all: even as in Jezebel's perſecution (which probably was three years and an half) there were ſeven thouſand reſerved. The reaſons moving us to expound times throughout this propheſy by a general indefinite time, rather than particularly to determine, are, not becauſe they are not determined by God, for that is meaned certainly; but,

1. Becauſe he hath reſerved the diſcovery of times and opportunities, eſpecially in his own power, Acts i. 6. Neither think we it edifying ſo much to inſiſt in theſe. 2. Becauſe there are ſo many difficulties in applying them particularly; for, it is not certain how many days ought to be aſſigned to every month, if to all thirty, after the Grecian account, or to ſome thirty-one, after the Julian account, which goeth to make up the year to us: yet that doubt is helped here by the alteration of months into days, &c. 3. Becauſe hiſtorians differ in their ſetting down of events and matters of fact, ſome aſcribing them to one year, ſome to another, whereby application particularly muſt be exceeding various, as men chuſe what hiſtory to follow, or whoſe reckoning to lay weight on. 4. In taking times definitely, it will be very hard to agree men with themſelves, as, whether to take them all literally and properly, or all prophetically and improperly: for, the thouſand years in the xx. chap. is, by the moſt part, taken literally. Again, 1260 days is expounded for ſo many years; and why it ſhould be underſtood properly in one place, and prophetically in another, is hard to give the reaſon, eſpecially conſidering that theſe places, Numb. xiv. and Dan. ix. and Ezek. iv. whereon this opinion of days for years is built, ſeem not ſufficient to bear it; for, theſe places are particularly expounded by the Lord, to ſignify ſo many years, and ſo to be underſtood, and ſo cannot be a precedent, except in ſuch caſes, where by circumſtances we may evince the ſame to be intended in that particular application; yea, by this opinion, it will be hard for a man to reconcile his thoughts, as, compare this time of Antichriſt's reign with that of the devil's reſtraint, chap. xx. it is hard to ſay the devil is reſtrained when Antichriſt his ſpecial miniſter and Mahomet prevaileth, and he in them reigneth, yet there cannot be ſo many years as to allow ſtrictly to each of theſe ſo long a time by particular application, except they fall in one time together; for, it would take 2260 years ſucceſſively. If it be alledged from the common rule, that whole, complete, and even numbers in reckonings of this and other propheſies, as ten days or times, two hundred thouſand thouſand horſemen, chap. ix. and the like, are to be taken indefinitely, but not ſo of broken numbers, as 1260 days, *three days and an half*, *&c. Anſw.* 1. What reaſon can be given from the ſcripture to prove the one is definite and not the other, 1260 more than ten days. 2. All odd times may be reſolved in ſome whole, odd years in whole months, or in days, or ſo many hours. 3. Why rather are forty-two months here to be underſtood prophetically than five before, chap. ix? and why not five there, as ſeven, Ezek. xxxix? 4. Many odd numbers are indefinite in other

things, as seven thousand men were killed, verse 13. a thousand six hundred furlongs, chap. xiv. yea, of broken times, chap. viii. half an hour, and 144000 that were sealed, are odd; even these who make the rule take sometimes unbroken times definitely, as that of the thousand years, chap. xx. And can there be a solid application of three days and an half, in which the witnesses are dead, to any definite time, more than to shew a short time in comparison of their prophesying? yet, that all is determinately known to God, is not to be disputed: yea, why the number of days more than the number of horsemen, armies, spirits, &c. so frequently mentioned in particular numbers in this book, should be definitely taken, will not easily appear? Beside, if all these numbers were definitely to be taken for so many years, then, supposing the beginning of them to be known (which seemeth possible, otherways the particular determination of the time would be for no end) it would follow that men might know to a year, month, or day, the continuing of Antichrist's reign, and the performing of other great effects mentioned in this prophesy, which yet seemeth not usual to the Lord in such propheſies, who even in this respect hath reserved times in his own power, as was said. If any thing were objected from the Lord's determinating seventy years for the captivity by Jeremiah, and such like. *Answ.* That is in a particular, and was rather to dash the presumptuous expectation of a sudden delivery, and therefore was particularly and plainly revealed for that end. All which maketh us account it most safe to hold in the indefinite which is certain, and to gather the definite time rather from other grounds laid down in this prophesy, especially compared with the event and numbers here mentioned, than to settle upon them alone. Therefore because this number (which is so often repeated here in so various terms) is not altogether to be slighted, we shall shew what seemeth most profitable to us on the matter afterwards.

Only, if any ask, why forty and two months, or three years and a half, is pitched on rather than any other time, for all these troubles of the church, the prophets prophesying, Antichrist's reign? &c. *Ans.* That time is pitched on with respect to former trials of the church, and includeth this consolation, that as God limited such and such enemies, and closed such troubles, so will he do this. Antichrist is compared with Antiochus, the church's hiding to Elias fleeing, while seven thousand were hid, see Ja. v. 17. The prophets prophesying, alludeth to Christ's performing his ministry for three years and an half, his suffering and rising the third day; so it is with them, their sufferings shall have an happy outgate also.

From which allusions we may gather, 1. That the church during Antichrist shall be in a very mean outward condition. 2 That yet there shall be some pure professors reserved by God. 3. That there should be a great multitude professing the name of Christians and claiming the title of the visible church, yet exceeding gross and superstitious in their worship. *Lastly*, That for all their confident asserting themselves to be the only true church, yet even then should they, indeed, be disclaimed by God, and as the outer court, being possessed by Gentiles, could not ground an interest in him, so neither should an external profession, and pretension to the visible church, be a ground of any real interest in Christ to these pretended Christians.

LECTURE II.

Verse 3. *And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days clothed in sackcloth.*

4. *These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.*

5. *And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies; and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.*

6. *These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophesy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.*

THE second part of the description of the church followeth. John describeth the state of the church at this time from her ministers; and this is set down in three steps with the several circumstances. First, Their prophesying, till ver. 7. 2. Their death and killing, till verse 11. 3. Their restoring

from verſe 11. and as it is not to be ſuppoſed, that theſe ſame were the witneſſes that were raiſed, but others in their ſpirit and power (as is ſaid of John baptiſt, Mal. iv. with Luke i. 17.) preaching the ſame truth, and purſuing that ſame Antichriſt; ſo was it not to be thought, that the ſame witneſſes ſhould live and propheſy all that time: but that there was, and ſhould be, a ſucceſſion of them, ſome after others, ſo that they ſhould never be wanting altogether, till their teſtimony were finiſhed. The church's ſtate is eſpecially ſet out by the ſtate of her miniſters, becauſe they are linked together, ſo that it ever appeareth in them how it is with her. If perſecution be, they are firſt in it, if it be hard with them, it is not well with her and contrarily.

The prophets are particularly deſcribed, verſe 2. 1. By their ſpecial work to witneſs and give teſtimony for Chriſt, againſt the corruptions and uſurpations of theſe times: ſo miniſters are called Chriſt's witneſſes, Acts i. 7, 8. their work ſhould be to be witneſſes for miſtaken truth, and againſt Antichriſt. 2. Their number is ſet down, viz. two, a definite for an indefinite number.

They are ſaid to be two, 1. Becauſe two witneſſes are the leaſt that confirm a truth, but they are ſufficient; ſo it importeth they ſhall not be many, yet ſufficient to teſtify againſt theſe evils fully. 2. Becauſe of alluſion in the words following, where ſomething of three couple of famous witneſſes is attributed to theſe two mentioned here; in alluſion, I ſay, to God's way of making uſe of two, in all dangerous periods of the church, viz. Joſhua and Zerubbabel, Moſes and Aaron, Elias and Eliſha, in reſpect to which three couple, the following deſcription of the witneſſes here, is holden forth in the effects of their propheſying, both to friends and enemies; viz. 1. They are as Zerubbabel and Joſhua, two olive trees, Zech. iv. 3. from whom droppeth the oyl to keep light and life in the two candleſticks, that is, the churches which are now few in number: and it is not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit that they prevail. 2. *If any will oppoſe them, fire proceedeth from them*, as Elias deſtroyed the two fifties, 2 Kings i. 10. ſo their enemies ſhall be deſtroyed as ſurely, and their word and threatnings ſhall take effect on them. 3. Their power is deſcribed by other effects, that as Elias, by prayer, prevailed to ſhut heaven, *that it rained not*, and Moſes and Aaron did *turn waters into blood*, and wrought other wonders in plaguing of Egypt, ſo ſhall they have. But all this in a ſpiritual ſenſe (to denounce judgments which ſhall truly take effect) as appeareth by this, that the city ſpiritually is called Sodom, ſo all is ſpiritually underſtood. They have the power of the keys, diſcipline and doctrine, ready to be applied when they find ground to revenge diſobedience. And this is no leſs terrible than outward judgments are, that they preach freely and authoritatively, and that for many days, 1260, extending, according to thirty days in the month, to forty two months. In a word, all the time of Antichriſt's reign, God ſhall have a church, though ſhe be little; and miniſters, though they be few: ſo long as he uſurpeth, ſo long ſhall they teſtify; and though he may fight with them, yet till they have done what the Lord had commiſſionated them for, he ſhall not prevail. 4. They are deſcribed in their mourning weed or habit. They propheſy in ſackcloth: when many idle bellies were well fed, and clothed richly, they were thus clothed; partly, to ſhew their outward, poor, contemptible, and deſpicable condition in the world. There are not great rich men made uſe of for this ſervice; partly, to ſhew how deniedly now under the croſs they went about that employment, in heavineſs, mourning for that declining generation that they lived in. In a word, it ſheweth their condition to be the croſs, and their carriage and courage to be ſuitable to it.

If it be aſked, why the ſame time is changed from days to months, and from months to years? *Anſw.* 1. To ſhew it is numbred to a month, to a year, to a day; yea, to an hour, as it is chap. ix. verſe 15. 2. To ſhew, that their propheſying was a daily work and taſk. 3. To ſhew, that it was a work of the day, as treading under foot is a work of darkneſs, therefore counted by months, which the moon ordereth. 4. It is years, to ſhew it will be of a conſiderable continuance; it is days and months for encouragement, that they may know theſe evil times ſhall have an end. 5. The alteration of months into days, will help to diſcern, how many days are to be aſſigned to every month, for making up the total.

Laſtly, It is marked, that it was given to them thus to do, verſe 3. which holdeth forth the ſpecial commiſſion they had, and that not only to enter

that ſtation, but alſo to continue therein, implying, with all aſſiſtance and ſucceſs beyond, what could be expected in the diſcharging of their teſtimony.

This power looketh eſpecially to the authority that God had given them to denounce his judgments againſt Antichriſt's followers, with the certainty of the event thereof, and that both temporal in due time to be fulfilled, but eternal alway according to that denunciation, chap. xiv. 9, 10. *as often as they will*, is not to be underſtood as if they had it committed to them at their arbitrement to uſe the keys (even extraordinary prophets did not work miracles and propheſy in foretelling of events at their pleaſure, or by any habitual power, but when and where it pleaſed the Lord ſo to bring forth ſuch effects) but it holdeth forth the ſupremacy and independency of their power as to men; they were in the exerciſe thereof no ways ſubordinate to that beaſt, which the world admired; and it holdeth forth the reſpect and court, to ſpeak ſo, which they have with God, he will refuſe them nothing, and make good all his word ſpoken by them, as he had done in the perſons of Moſes, Elias, and theſe alluded unto; for which cauſe, theſe expreſſions are more eſpecially uſed. Juſtus Jonas uſeth ſuch an expreſſion of Luther's effectualneſs in prayer, that *quicquid voluit potuit*, which is upon the matter, agreeable with what is ſaid here.

This propheſy of the witneſſes, is fooliſhly applied by Papiſts to Enoch and Elias, as if they were to come in perſon and propheſy againſt Antichriſt, with a number of vain circumſtances: it is enough to ſay of this, 1. There is no ſhadow from the word of any ſuch application to Enoch and Elias; and therefore more eaſily may be rejected than affirmed. 2. It no way contributeth to the ſcope, nor is conſiſtent with what here is intended, which is to ſhew the low condition of the church's viſible eſtate in her ordinary miniſters. Nor, 3. Can it ſtand with what is ſaid of theſe two their glorified eſtate, and that both in body and ſoul, and of Enoch that he was tranſlated never to taſte of death, Heb. xi. It were ſtrange to bring glorified perſons from heaven to ſuffer, and to make them die moſt ſhamefully, whom yet the ſcriptures exeem abſolutely from death: and although ſome perſons have been brought to life, whoſe ſouls were glorified, while their bodies were in the grave, yet where body and ſoul are both compleatly glorified, that can in no ways be aſſerted, more than to be immortal as to the body, as well as the ſoul, and to be mortal, can ſtand together. There is another application no leſs ſtrange, whereof Grotius is the author, of applying this to two biſhops of Jeruſalem their teſtifying againſt Simon Magus. This is alſo deſtitute of reaſon, there being no evidence of the thing: beſide John is here propheſying of an event to come, and that of great and univerſal concernment to all tongues, nations, &c. and that of Simon Magus was paſt, and of no ſuch conſequence: beſide the particular expoſition of theſe witneſſes killing and their being raiſed again viſibly, will be enough to confute that opinion of itſelf. And the title of witneſſes can no ways be aſtricted to theſe two biſhops, ſupponing ſuch to have been; for, there were ſtill many more teſtifying even againſt Simon Magus; and rather Paul and Peter ſhould be, by eminency, accounted witneſſes againſt him, they living in his time, and encountering with him, yea, he being deſtroyed by the miniſtry of Peter, if hiſtory be to be credited in this, and yet all the Lord's witneſſes, the miniſters, are repreſented by theſe two, and their eſtate deſcribed by theirs, in oppoſition to the beaſt's followers, and all the reſt of the world which rejoiced in their ſufferings: it is a wonder how ſuch an invention could be entertained by learned men, which, to the moſt groſs Papiſts, is ridiculous.

If it be moved who theſe are, that the Lord acknowledgeth here for his prophets, or how any could be ſo accounted of then who had one common call with Antichriſt's followers?

Anſw. 1. They are certainly ordinary miniſters, continuing faithful witneſſes againſt Antichriſt, as the ſcope of the place, and the oppoſition cleareth: for which the Lord calleth them my witneſſes: and although the difference of the call be not always diſcernible to us, yet it is not impoſſible, but, as there was diſtinct profeſſors, and for a time, at leaſt, particular churches, ſo might there alſo be a diſtinct ſucceſſion of miniſters; for this is certain, that the Waldenſes in Bohemia, at Merindole, Piedemont, and other places, had their own diſtinct miniſters without dependence on the church of Rome, Sleidan and Thuan mention two of them who were ſent to Luther at his firſt appearing. But, 2. Although that were not clear, yet one, called by that ordination that was continued in Popery, having the Lord's ſeal put to it, by an in-

ward fitting and diſpoſing of him for that work, and bleſſing him, it may be accounted the Lord's miniſter, as baptiſm continued amongſt them, was enough for initiating of one to be a viſible Chriſtian, and if abſtracted from their corrupt practices, was enough with ſound faith and holy life to make a man to be accounted a true Chriſtian, ſo was their ordination enough for the external part of a call; and a man having it, and being furniſhed with gifts and inward zeal to exerciſe them for Chriſt, and not in a dependence on the Roman Antichriſt hierarchy, as ſuch at leaſt, not for promoving of their errors, but the edification of ſouls, it was enough to make a man to be accounted a miniſter of Chriſt, and not of Antichriſt, even as the ſcribes and phariſees as ſuch, and as following their corrupt traditions, and oppoſing Chriſt, were no church officers, nor plants of the heavenly Father's planting: yet, if ſitting in Moſes' chair, and preaching his doctrine, they were to be accounted builders; ſo much more here are theſe, ſeeing by their way there is a ſtated conteſt between them and Antichriſt. The reaſon is, becauſe Antichriſt, and the moſt of his worſhip, are accidents that intrude on the church, and the worſhip of Chriſt, he ſetteth himſelf in the temple, and therefore his corruptions and additions being removed, the worſhip is not his but Chriſt's, even as if wholly he were removed, the church and temple would ſtill be the Lord's; for, baptiſm is not Antichriſtian, nor doth of itſelf initiate any in his church, but as men, by their after carriage, devote themſelves to him, and take on his name or mark; and therefore when one diſclaimeth what is Antichriſtian, his baptiſm is to be accounted the Lord's ordinance; ſo ordination and appointment of ſome for the miniſtry is the Lord's ordinance; the reſtriction of ordination to ſuch perſons excluſively, and the adding of many ceremonies with rules for them to teach, but ſo and ſo, that is Antichriſt's addition, and may be removed from the former, ſo that one may have been ordained by them, and yet become a preacher of pure doctrine, even as they might be baptized by them, and yet became profeſſors of it; and therefore no doubt many, in all that time were called to the miniſtry by the Lord, through theſe ways of theirs who did prove faithful witneſſes for Chriſt againſt Antichriſt, even unto death; they cannot therefore be accounted Antichriſtain miniſters who do not own that hierarchy, but are to be accounted miniſters of Chriſt, for ordination ſimply doth not flow from Antichriſt, but as it ſtandeth in a ſubordination to him, and is a ſtep of that hierarchy, and not in a ſubordination to Chriſt: now theſe not being in ſubordination, but to Chriſt, are to be accounted his. Indeed it may be in reſpect of the ordination itſelf not diſcernible for the time, whether ſuch a perſon be a miniſter of Chriſt's or Antichriſt's: and it may be for ſome ſpace one may miſtake his maſter, and continue in Antichriſt's camp, not knowing what his commiſſion leadeth him unto, yet when in effect it is diſcovered, and he made to take up his taſk, and to walk according to it, and the Lord evidently ſealing his call to him, he is then to be accounted a miniſter of Chriſt, when all acceſſory dependence on Antichriſt is caſt off. We do therefore ſay, that it is not the ordination of that time ſimply, that was ſufficient to make one a miniſter of Chriſt, but ordination going alongſt with Chriſt's call, and diſpenſed according to his allowance (though it may be the diſpenſers intended no ſuch thing) and having an after charge ſuitable to a miniſter of Chriſt, and therefore it will not follow from this, that all that were ſo ordained, as to the outward ceremonies and manner, are to be accounted miniſters of Chriſt, except they have Chriſt's call concurring and evidenced in their fitneſs for it, and conſcientious diſcharge of it; now, this being certain, that for the moſt part in Popery ſuch were ordained whom the Lord never called to it, and who in their carriage never walked by his commiſſion, or owned him as maſter, therefore are not theſe to be acknowledged as miniſters of his, but of Antichriſt, whoſe deſign they drive, and whoſe orders they obey; and therefore as on the one ſide that ordination alone cannot conſtitute and evidence one to be a miniſter of Chriſt's, if he walk not accordingly, ſo cannot their additions that are mixed in therewith prejudge the ordinance itſelf, when in ſo far as it is from Chriſt it is owned, and when what in it is from Antichriſt is diſclaimed, even as it will not prove one of their members to be a true Chriſtian that he is baptized, if his way be Antichriſtian, yet where a Chriſtian converſation, as to faith and manners, doth concur, it will be ſufficient; and the additionals that are amongſt them, in the adminiſtration of baptiſm, cannot in that caſe prejudge that ordinance, ſo is it here.

If it be aſked why they are not only called the *two olive trees*, verſe 4. but the *two candleſticks*

alſo, which (chap. i. 20.) are expounded to be the churches and not miniſters? *Anſw.* We conceive they are ſo to be underſtood here alſo, and it is done, not to confound miniſters and churches, which in chap. i. are diſtinguiſhed; but to ſhew the ſibneſs that is between theſe two, and the likeneſs that is in their caſe; ſo that we may gather the implied caſe of the church, from what is expreſſed of the miniſters, which is the ſcope here, viz. that the church ſhould be few in number, and low in her outward eſtate, as theſe two prophets are: and they are two candleſticks to ſhew that proportionableneſs which is between the increaſing and decreaſing of the number of profeſſors with the number of miniſters. By ſome this is taken to be an Hebraiſm, as if it were to be rendered, theſe are the two olive trees, *with or beſide the two candleſticks*, the copulative in the Hebrew being ſometimes to be ſo rendered. But the ſcope is clear, viz. that under that type of two prophets propheſying in ſackcloth, is holden forth both the low condition of miniſters and churches; and this ſheweth the abſurdity of both the former miſapplications. And the church's eſtate is rather deſcribed by her miniſters than by her profeſſors, becauſe in that time the continuance of truth is more diſcernible in the preachers than in the profeſſors thereof, who may be very obſcure in reſpect of any combined profeſſions, and becauſe alſo the violence of Antichriſt will be eſpecially bent againſt miniſters, yet the Lord's continuing of theſe two olive trees doth infer the being alſo of two candleſticks whom they are to furniſh with their oil, and to give light unto. Hence obſerve,

1. As our Lord Jeſus hath a church, ſo hath he witneſſes in it: theſe two are ever inſeparable, the church and witneſſes; he may have ſaints where he hath no miniſters, but he hath never a politic body of a church without miniſters. There is in this book a ſtrange connection between a church and miniſters; the churches are the candleſticks, and the miniſters the candles; they are the olive trees that entertain oil in the lamp; they have a ſpecial influence in keeping life in the church, as the one is up, ſo is the other; and when the one is down, ſo is the other. It is a ſtrange religion that ſpeaketh of doing for ſaints, and to promove their intereſt, yet hath little reſpect to miniſters. 2. As miniſters meet with oppoſition, ſo doth the church; and as the church meeteth with oppoſition, ſo do her miniſters. 3. Miniſters ought by their place eſpecially to witneſs for Chriſt againſt corruptions. 4. When miniſters have moſt to do, and meet with moſt oppoſition, God often furniſheth them accordingly with more boldneſs, gifts and aſſiſtance, than ordinary. 5. Chriſt's witneſſes are a terrible party: for as few as theſe witneſſes are, none of their oppoſites do gain at their hand; whoever hurteth them, ſhall in this *manner be killed.* Tho' they be deſpicable in ſackcloth, yet better oppoſe a king in his ſtrength, and giving orders from his throne covered in cloth of ſtate, than them: though they may burn ſome and impriſon others, yet their oppoſers will pay ſickerly for it. This is not becauſe of any worth that is in them, or for their own ſake; but, 1. For his ſake, and for his authority that ſendeth them. 2. For the event of their word, which will certainly come to paſs, and that more terribly, and as certainly as ever any temporal judgment was brought on by Moſes or Elias. Fear to come in tops with this world, it is a ſword with two edges, and will kill theſe who oppoſe and do not ſubmit unto it.

LECTURE III.

Verſe 7. *And when they ſhall have finiſhed their teſtimony, the beaſt that aſcendeth out of the bottomleſs pit, ſhall make war againſt them, and ſhall overcome them, and kill them.*

8. *And their dead bodies ſhall lie in the ſtreet of the great city, which ſpiritually is called Sodom, and Egypt, where alſo our Lord was crucified.*

9. *And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, ſhall ſee their dead bodies, three days and a half, and ſhall not ſuffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.*

10. *And they that dwell upon the earth ſhall rejoice over them, and make merry, and ſhall ſend gifts one to another, becauſe theſe two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.*

FRom the ſeventh verſe he proceedeth to deſcribe the church's eſtate in the condition of her miniſters. The firſt ſtep whereof, *i. e.* their propheſying in ſackcloth, cotemporary

with the Gentiles treading the holy city under foot, is paſt: now follow other two ſteps further, 1. What was the loweſt condition they were brought unto, and the beaſt's prevailing over theſe witneſſes, killing and murdering them, to verſe 12. The laſt ſtep is their reſurrection, and the making of them and their teſtimony, and the ſtate of the church more glorious and viſible than before.

Their low condition is ſet out, 1. In their death. 2. What went before it, ver. 7, 8. And, 3. In what followed after in the enemy's inſulting, ver. 9, 10. ſet forth in ſeveral circumſtances.

The firſt circumſtance, whereby this is ſet out, is the time of their killing, ver. 7. *When they have finiſhed their teſtimony*, or were *about to finiſh their teſtimony:* for it is within the term of Antichriſt's height that this is done: what was called propheſying before, is called their teſtimony here: becauſe for that end they were to teſtify and preach. It is called their teſtimony, to ſet out that peculiar taſk which God hath given them as their work and errand that behoved to be done and ended, even as it is ſaid of John, that he finiſhed his courſe, Acts xiii. and ſo Paul ſpeaking of himſelf, 2 Tim. iv. Thus was it with Chriſt, he preached about three years and an half (who was the true witneſs) and could not be impeded till his hour came, and his teſtimony and work given him was finiſhed, John xvii. More particularly, it will be found to be about the expiring of the forty-two months, which is one with the beaſt's coming to an height; for, as we ſhew before, theſe prophets propheſying is cotemporary with the beaſt's reign; their putting on ſackcloth and mourning is occaſioned by his riſe; and ſo beginning together they go on in an equal length, and therefore muſt end together, that is, at the beaſt's begun fall, when they begin to put off their ſackcloth. But the queſtion thence riſeth, 1. How can it be ſaid that their teſtimony is finiſhed, and they are killed and reproached, when miniſters teſtifying is a continuing work? And, 2. How can it be ſaid that the beaſt prevaileth more againſt the witneſſes now at the beginning of his fall, than in the time of his reign? For anſwer,

1. Conſider, That though now more witneſſes have appeared againſt Antichriſt, whereby it cometh to paſs, that theſe two witneſſes are about to finiſh their teſtimony, and, as it were, to go off the ſtage, becauſe God had now provided many for that taſk; yet the period of Antichriſt's abſolute tyranny is not at a cloſe, as we will find afterward. And the Lord wiſely made his church ſomewhat more viſible before, that ſo this great act of his cruelty might be the more diſcernible, and that thereby marches might be the more clearly rid betwixt the period containing his height, and that which immediately follloweth, wherein is contained his decay and ruin.

2. Conſider, Theſe two witneſſes teſtimony may be ſaid to be finiſhed when the manner of their teſtimony is finiſhed or changed. That is either, 1. When their number is increaſed, and God giveth more witneſſes, by bringing ſome others in their tour. Or, 2. When they then teſtify more publicly and boldly who were before hid, and ſcarcely diſcerned, as the church while ſhe was in the wilderneſs, now they appear, and openly avow their doctrine, and give a public viſible teſtimony. Or, 3. When their ſackcloth is ſomething altered, and that contempt and reproach that was upon honeſt miniſters is ſomewhat diminiſhed, and they begin to get countenance, (it may be ſome great perſons or princes) their teſtimony may be ſaid to be finiſhed, though not ſimply, yet in ſome reſpect; for, this Teſtimony of theirs ſeemeth to be eſpecially intended as a check againſt Antichriſt's reign, when all the world ſhould be going after him: now, after ſuch a long time, the miniſters ſtep out more publicly to cry down Antichriſt; he is irritated, and fighteth, and warreth againſt them, and by his diſcerning them better now than before, he cometh at them with outward cruelty more. And God having guarded his own teſtimony, and made the world more ſenſible of theſe evils by their public appearing and ſuffering, in his righteous judgment and deep wiſdom he permitteth Antichriſt to prevail, that this teſtimony may be ſealed by ſuffering and blood, in which the ſufferers are overcomers, as it is chapter xii. 11. And Chriſt getteth no leſs teſtimony and victory in that.

The ſecond circumſtance, is, the party by whom they are killed, it is *the beaſt that aſcended out of the bottomleſs pit*, viz. Antichriſt, or the Pope: compare this with chapter xiii. and 17, 18. It is a beaſt making war with the ſaints there, and here, who will be found guilty of their blood. Firſt, he is called the beaſt, (as theſe in Dan. vii. and viii. are called,) 1. For his

power and greatneſs. 2. For his cruelty and inhumanity. *Secondly*, He is ſaid to come from the bottomleſs pit, viz. out of hell; ſo his doctrine came from thence: chap. ix. 1. He is called the angel of the bottomleſs pit, and cometh after the working of Satan whatever he pretend. *Thirdly*, He is ſaid to be aſcending, in the preſent time, 1. To ſhew propinquity, that in its firſt ſteps he was beginning to work, 2 Theſſ. ii. 2. That he roſe inſenſibly, and, as it were by degrees till he was on his ſeat: and there is but one beaſt mentioned here, becauſe theſe two, chap. xiii. are indeed but one and the ſame.

The third circumſtance is in the degree of this, in three expreſſions, viz. *make war*, *overcome* and *kill them*. *Queſt.* What? Was he not making war againſt them before? Yes, his rage, hatred and perſecution, was always during theſe forty and two months. But, 1. It was not properly war; for, he had no conſiderable party to deal with, but ſome lurking hidden ones, he had all at will, treading under foot the holy city at his pleaſure, verſe 2. Now, they are a public party, and bid him ſome more conteſt. 2. His making havoc of orthodox Chriſtians, was now more palpable, and his rage and violence at a greater height, having more fear, and more matter to work on. 3. This rage purſueth till death; yea, continueth after it; yet, it is not only to be reſtrained to bodily killing, but it may take in excommunications, baniſhments, forfeitures, preſcriptions, and all theſe ways uſed to undo his oppoſites. In ſum, it is here ſhown, that when religion ſhould get up its head, and miniſters begin boldly and openly to preach the goſpel, than he ſhall rage, and leave no mean of deſtruction uneſſayed, and ſhall, in a great meaſure, prevail to the outward marring of its liberty for a time; and more eſpecially, vent this his malice on the miniſters of it, and take away the lives of many, which clearly in Charles the fifth his time, in the wars of Germany, wars and maſſacres of France, martyrdoms and perſecutions in England and Scotland, after religion ſprang up firſt, may be ſaid, to be fulfilled. By all which it evidently appeareth, 1. That after the forty-two months immediately, neither cometh the church to peace, nor Antichriſt to ruin, he fighteth, and in part prevailed then. 2. That this propheſy belongeth, and relateth eſpecially and particularly to that time when reformation began, and the Pope's kingdom took a turn.

Verſe 8. Two circumſtances of their low condition are further added, 1. That after death *they ſhall not be buried:* which cometh from two grounds, 1. From that beaſt's malice that was not content with the bodily death of Chriſt's witneſſes, but followed them with contempt, and expoſed them to opprobry, even after death, it being common and ordinary in the perſecutions of France, England, Germany, Helvetia, &c. to keep the bodies (eſpecially of miniſters, unburied after their death) long. So Zuinglius, being killed by the Popiſh cantons, was thus inſulted over, and the Admiral of France and many others at the maſſacre of Paris. Sometimes their bones were raiſed and burned after their burial, as Bucer's was in Queen Mary's days. However, it holdeth forth cruelty, even after death, ſeeking to ſhame and rub reproach upon their very names and works, when they thought they had their will. 2. It proceedeth from God's over-ruling providence, that will not have all memory of theſe witneſſes' teſtimonies buried; but though they be low, and as it were killed, and unburied; yet he maketh their enemies inſulting over them in their low condition, the forfeiting, impriſoning, baniſhing, and keeping of them under reſtraints, a mean to keep their teſtimony alive. So that though the witneſſes be deſpicable to them, and they think now that they are down, and ſhall never riſe again; yet there is a teſtimony viſible, and they are witneſſes above the ground ſtill; and things are not deſperate, but even theſe witneſſes in their death, impriſonments, &c. witneſs and overcome.

The ſecond circumſtance in this verſe, is, the place where it ſhall be. It is in the *ſtreet of the great city, ſpiritually called Sodom and Egypt;* by this city is certainly underſtood Rome, yet ſo as it is not only meaned that town, as it is within walls, but that empire (urbs and orbis being at that time when this was written almoſt equal) called the great city, chap. xvii. ult. that reigneth over the kings of the earth; and the privileges of this city ſpread as far as their government did: in which reſpect Paul calleth himſelf a Roman born, as being born of a city, or parents, privileged with that liberty. And it is alſo obſervable

when in this propheſy he ſpeaketh of Rome, he doth it ever eminently, *the great city, the great whore*, BABYLON THE GREAT, chap. xvii. 5. and xviii. 2. and of no other he ſpeaketh ſo, ſave of the new Jeruſalem, in oppoſition to it.

This great city is ſet out in three properties, which are ſpiritually, that is, myſtically to be underſtood; ſo, 1 Cor. x. *They all eat that ſpiritual food, &c.* that is, ſomething repreſented by theſe names, which is to be underſtood in a ſpiritual ſenſe, and not literally, but as ſhe is called MYSTERY, BABYLON, &c. chap. xvii. 5. becauſe there is a myſterious reſemblance, ſo here ſhe is called ſpiritually Sodom, that is, for luxury, pride, fulneſs of bread, and ſpiritual uncleanneſs, abominable, Ezek. xvi. 2. Egypt, that is, having and exerciſing a ſpiritual tyranny over God's people, and abounding in ſpiritual idols, as Egypt did in a more groſs way, for which Iſrael could not ſacrifice among them. 3. It is ſaid, that *our Lord was crucified there:* not literally but ſpiritually, as the word before cleareth, and as that word alſo doth clear, that is, either not only was he crucified at Jeruſalem, but alſo there, or it is ſpiritually Egypt, alſo ſpiritually our Lord was crucified there, which cannot agree to Jeruſalem, neither to Egypt nor Sodom at that time literally taken; neither were it any myſtery, or ſpiritually to be underſtood of Jeruſalem (which never getteth the name of great city) literally. And it is rather deſigned by that paraphraſe, *where our Lord was crucified*, than by Jeruſalem, becauſe myſtically the true church is ſtill in this book ſet out by that. This part of the deſcription agreeth to Rome. 1. In that under its dominion, Chriſt was crucified, and by its authority, viz. by a preſident of theirs Pontius Pilate; for he was delivered to the Gentiles. 2. In reſpect of his members, ordinances, &c. there he had been long perſecuted and crucified in them, and put to open ſhame, Heb. vi. 6. *In the ſtreet of this city*, That is, publicly by their authority, as malefactors uſe to be in the ſtreets: this is not private murder, but open avowed perſecution. See for this, Petrarcha, lib. epiſt. ſine titulo. epiſt. 16. who wrote 300 years ſince.

This is amplified in the 9th and 10th verſe. In the 9th verſe. 1. In the delight that men ſhall take in the low condition of theſe witneſſes, *They ſhall ſee them*, that is, they ſhall with delight behold it and hear it, and will not be content to have them buried; and this is done by all kinds, their hatred is univerſal. 2. The time is not long; and this ſad condition of the prophets, and mirth of this world, will change. It is but *three days and an half*, with an alluſion to Chriſt's being under the power of death, and to keep a proportionableneſs to the three years and an half before, an indefinite time certainly, and cannot be three days; for then all kindreds ſhall not have time to ſee them, and ſo make merry. 2. It is not literally to be taken; for they are ſaid to riſe again, and their death muſt be ſuch a death as is conſiſtent with that, and with the manner of their riſing. 3. It is not three years for days: for, 1. No conſiderable application can be given that agreeth with it. That which interveneth between Charles the V. his taking, and impriſoning the elector of Saxon and Landgrave of Heſſen; and Mauritius duke of Saxon his making him again to flee, and the peace which was concluded at Pauſſow with Ferdinand, will, in ſtrict account, be about five years and odds, viz. from April 1547, to Auguſt 1552.

The third circumſtance is verſe 10. their exceeding great mirth and jollity, which is aggreged from the reaſon of it, in the end of the verſe. *All that dwell on the earth*, that is, all carnal profeſſors of that Antichriſtian kingdom (for the earth here is oppoſed to the true church which is called heaven) ſhall make ſuch feaſts and cheerfulneſs, and uſe all ſigns of joy, which men do in their greateſt mirth, and upon obtaining greateſt victories. See Eſth. ix. 18. after their delivery, and Nehemiah viii. 10, &c. Theſe are the greateſt tokens of mirth.

Let us conſider the victory which is the cauſe, theſe two prophets that before tormented them, now they are rid of them, and at eaſe. We ſhall enquire in the reaſons of theſe, 1. Why faithful preachers are often a torment and torture to men of the world, who neither can abide their conſciences to be ſtirred, their faults touched, their deſigns marred, or luſts reſtrained? &c. ſuch Moſes and Aaron were to Pharaoh, the prophet to Jeroboam, Elias and Micajah to Ahab and Jezebel, John baptiſt to Herod? &c. 2. Why a profane people will be ſo glad to be rid of honeſt miniſters, and yet well pleaſed with hirelings? Ahab could abide four hundred prophets of Jezebel, but could not endure one Micajah that ſpoke the truth. The world is now ſwarming with the ſupport-

ers of Antichriſt, who live delicately on the fat of the earth uncontrolled, yet two poor witneſſes of Chriſt are unſufferable. And, 3. Why the Lord often, upon the back of a begun riſe of the goſpel, will ſuffer an exceeding nipping ſtorm to ariſe againſt it?

For the firſt, faithful miniſters, eſpecially in times of declining, may be ſaid to torment the earth theſe ſix ways: 1. Their word and teſtimony hath influence on the conſcience, when it forcibly diſcovereth and reproveth the ill, which a hearer is guilty of: it is ſaid, Acts vii. 54. that Stephen's free witneſſing, cut the hearers that were guilty, *to the heart;* that is, when they cannot get leave to quench all challenges, and to ſleep on; but theſe witneſſes, by the power and evidence of the Word and Spirit, doth condemn their deeds, and conſequently themſelves, that galleth them, and wanteth not influence upon profane conſciences, though they ſtopt it, as Stephen's hearers did their ears.

2. It tormenteth their will and affection, that when they would ſleep on, and delight themſelves in theſe ways of their own, free preaching marreth their quietneſs, even as when Elias cometh to Ahab with this word, *Haſt thou killed, and gotten poſſeſſion?* and ſo proceedeth in the threatening, 1 Kings xxi. 19. He goeth home ſad, and all the pleaſure that he expected in his new garden evaniſheth; ſo ſaith the ſame king of Micajah, that *he hated him, becauſe he never propheſied good to him*, he was always torturing him, as Elijah did, and as Moſes and Aaron did to Pharoah.

3. It tormenteth their corruptions, and lighteth upon their idols, by diſcovering and reproving them, and ſo ſtirreth up their enmity, as John's free preaching did to Herod and Herodias; they touch folks ſores, and that torments them, though it be tenderly done; yea, ſome good men, as Aſa, 1 Kings xvi. 10. have been tormented with this, and could not abide it; and when enmity and envy are wakened, they have a cruel torment, as we may ſee in Haman at Mordecai. There is no greater torment to a malignant heart, ſwollen with enmity againſt the power of Godlineſs in the Godly, than to have a faithful teſtimony againſt it: and this pain proceedeth not from any unſkilfulneſs and untenderneſs in the miniſter, but from the deſperateneſs of their corruption, which is like ſome grievous ſore than cannot abide to be cleanſed or purged by the moſt tender phyſician.

4. It affecteth and tormenteth their credit and pride, when their religion is called ſuperſtition, idolatry, and no religion, they cannot away with that; to be called guilty of ſuch and ſuch crimes, men in nature, and as ſuch, cannot digeſt it; and faithful witneſſes muſt tell them when they go to the left hand; yea, and to the right alſo, and lift up their voice for that end *like a trumpet:* hence the Phariſees ſay, *They will bring this man's blood upon our heads*, Acts v. 28. and that tormenteth them, to call the Pope, Antichriſt; and Rome, Babylon, muſt be pricking. This hath often made faithful miniſters appear intolerable, when proud humours diſdained to have them meddling with their actions, much leſs to condemn them.

5. Their teſtimony affecteth the eaſe and outward quietneſs of the world; for, men naturally love ſo much religion as never putteth them to trouble; but where faithful witneſſing cometh, it will not be content with a form, but it caſteth their old ways, and bringeth in new, as they ſuppoſe, and that (ordinarily meeting with Satan's oppoſition in the world, and mens corruption) bringeth changes, conteſts, wars and judgments, for abuſing this world, which judgment the witneſſes threaten: in this ſenſe, Ahab calleth Elijah the troubler of Iſrael, 1 Kings xviii. 17. And the apoſtles are ſaid to turn the world upſide down: and from this, many ſay it was a good world before, but ſince theſe miniſters aroſe, there is no peace: hence ſome places of the world; yea, ſome Phariſees have more outward peace with formal miniſters; yea, with idolatry, than when Chriſt is preached: therefore Chriſt ſaith, *He came not to ſend peace, but a ſword;* and thus the world thinketh, if they were quit of ſome heady miniſters, all would be quiet. It is no marvel then that worldly men rage at this, and that it torment theſe who have their portion here only.

6. Men in darkneſs have acceſs to their private deſigns, but light croſſeth their intereſt, and ſo tormenteth them; for, the keeping of a good conſcience, (which miniſters, that are faithful, muſt preſs) maketh folks inflexible to theſe crooked ends which the world cannot abide to have obſtructed or croſſed: thus the prophet that teſti-

fied againſt Jeroboam's worſhip, croſſed his intent, and ſo marred the ſecuring of the kingdom to him, as Jeroboam thought, and this made him hate that freedom: this may in part vex all ſorts, but eſpecially it is intolerable to great men, who fret to be bounded either in reference to end or midſes, and cannot abide to be reproved, which was in Aſa's caſe formerly hinted; we may ſee it alſo in the three children, Dan. iii. It galleth the king, that a pretext of conſcience, as he thought, ſhould impede their abſolute obedience to him: kings and great men think there is no living with ſuch miniſters, they are peſts and debauchers of the people, they wrong ſtates, outward peace and all, keeping folks from their own mercies, ſo ſome men call temporal deſigns, and this troubleth them: eſpecially, when no obligation whereby others are win to flatter them, and heal their wound ſlightly, will prevail with them to make them go alongſt as others do; they are then accounted implacable, and but enemies to mens perſons, when they oppoſe freely their crooked deſigns. Seeing then, by theſe prophets, they were ſo tormented, it is no wonder they make merry. For, 1. Now they ſuppoſe that they have much more liberty, ſo that they may ſpeak and do, and not be preſumptuouſly quarrelled therefore. 2. Their enmity is delighted, which is like a waſp that feedeth on ſores, counting that the time which they deſired; and tho' no good reaſon can be given for this, yet are they puffed up with it, as if they had obtained much. 3. They have now free way to their own deſigns: when John is away, none reproveth Herodias; and Ahab ſtood ſome awe of Elias, and he might and would have gotten folks with him better, had he wanted Micajah, &c. Faithful teſtifying againſt Popery, ſtruck at many mens particulars. When John duke of Saxon, did aſk Eraſmus concerning Luther's doctrine, he anſwered, *Firſt*, Merrily, *He had committed two unpardonable faults, which by all means ſhould have been abſtained from.* viz. 1. *That he touched the Pope's crown.* 2. *The Monks bellies:* this faithful witneſſing is like the angel to Balaam, who would fain have been at *the wages of unrighteouſneſs*, and was tormented by his appearing to hinder him. The apoſtle hinted at this, that he and his miniſtry was deſpiſed by many that counted gain godlineſs, 1 Tim. vi. and would not ſuffer for the croſs of Chriſt, Gal. vi. 12. This readily is a ſore that tormenteth in all times. And here again, 3. Further, it may be aſked, Why the Lord ſuffereth his miniſters, and his work, conſequently in them, to be ſo ſoon trod upon, even when it is but beginning to peep out and appear; it ſeemeth that the miniſters and profeſſors of it are then in a worſe caſe than formerly? Or, what may be his ends, now to let the witneſſes be trod upon, and all, as it were, to be caſt in the hollow, even at the entry, ſo as, in the event, the Pope ſeemed to be more ſtrengthened, and the profeſſors of reformation to get a further daſh, than if reformation had never been intended to be eſtabliſhed? *Anſw.* For theſe and ſuch good reaſons:

1. That he may make it appear, that it is neither might nor power, but his Spirit, that beareth through his work, which is then moſt clear when theſe fail, (as the temple was immediately interrupted in its rebuilding, and partly for this very end) for then it appeareth to be he, when nothing can do it, and yet the thing is done. 2. He will then appear in his glory, Pſal. cii. and the lower the foundation be laid, and the greater difficulties appear, he getteth the more glory; as when Moſes and Aaron go to Pharoah; and when they are gone upon the begun delivery, it fareth worſe with them for a time, and not only Pharaoh and his court, but even the Iſraelites, Exod. v. and vi. are offended at Moſes, and their burdens are increaſed, and Pharaoh venteth more malice, from which God getteth the more glory, and then the work is ſeen the more to be of him, and he hath, as he muſt have, occaſion of exalting his glory. 3. He doth it ſo ſoon, to be a confirmation to theſe witneſſes, and their ſucceſſors, in all their following ſtraits: when he hath, in his providence, ſuffered them to meet with great ſtraits at firſt, and hath brought them through them, theſe may, in time to come, be encouragements to them, as theſe miracles done in Egypt, were to be unto the people of Iſrael confirmations of their faith in the following ſtraits for ever. 4. It is for his peoples profit; they readily are carnal, even at the entry of a good work, and almoſt think God engaged to own them, however they carry in it: the Lord, by ſome ſuch croſs diſpenſation, curbeth, or preventeth their preſumption. Thus Moſes, in his going down to Egypt, is purſued, and made to circumciſe his ſon, to make him the more watchful afterward over his own particular carriage; and ſo poſſibly Elias is made to flee, even at his begun reformation, 1 Kings xviii. leſt he ſhould think all done, or take occaſion to ſit down. 5. It is done for trial at the entry, for

many falſe friends are ſoon diſcovered, that have had but corrupt ends, much corruption, fainting and fretting unbelief appeareth among the generality of the godly, but eſpecially the carnal hearted, they, like the Iſraelites, would be back again, and now they get time to diſcover themſelves. And enemies at the entry by this occaſion, or advantage, are the more hardened, as Pharaoh was to purſue on; and ſo God hath more occaſion to glorify himſelf. 6. By this the Lord ſaith, *All that would follow him, muſt take his way, and take on the croſs;* for, whatever be in the end of the day, the croſs beginneth, and the morning is foul, and the wall is built in troublous times, Dan. ix. and he would not have any who engageth to be on his ſide, putting the croſs far behind, but reſolving at firſt to meet with it; theſe that have an expectation to eſchew trouble, by taking them to ſuch a work, will be miſtaken. 7. Ordinarily a people, at the beginning of a work, and miniſters at their firſt ſetting to, (for, proportionally, this agreeth to all that are ſent, at their entry) are moſt tender, zealous, and have the warmeſt frame of ſpirit then, and can abide, and will bear more then nor afterward, when that is gone: at the riſe of reformation, it is a wonder what zeal and boldneſs will be amongſt miniſters and people, whereas often readily when either that temper of ſpirit is off people, or they ſitten up, and become cold, they would not endure ſuch trials; and we may ſee it confirmed in our own experience. 8. Any oppoſition to a reformation, and ſome bringing of it low, maketh it often the more conſpicuous and terrible, when it is recovered again; for, now, all eyes are faſtened on them, and looking to them, and when they ſee them riſe, while they expect it not, it doth the more affright them, as may be clear in the verſe following, when theſe witneſſes ariſe. 9. He bringing all his works about by degrees and ſteps, that he may have out of every ſtep multiplied and renewed evidences and occaſions of his glory, as it were by ſo many ſeveral miracles on Egypt: now, if there were no advantage at no time to enemies, there would be but one delivery; whereas this one delivery is manifold. 10. There is ordinarily ſomething of a temporal greatneſs affected at the beginning of the goſpel's riſing, which fault the diſciples fell into; that was alſo in Germany; this Chriſt not only curbeth with the doctrine of the croſs, but with the croſs itſelf alſo, that they may be brought to deny themſelves, and, as he ſaith to Baruch, Jer. xlv. not to ſeek great things for themſelves. All which are good ends, and profitable to his people, and may make us all reverence his way, although it look ſtrange like unto fleſh.

LECTURE IV.

Ver. 11. *And after three days and a half, the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they ſtood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them which ſaw them.*

12. *And they heard a great voice from heaven, ſaying unto them, Come up hither: and they aſcended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them.*

13. *And the ſame hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were ſlain of men ſeven thouſand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.*

14. *The ſecond wo is paſt, and behold, the third wo cometh quickly.*

ANTICHRIST and his kingdom are now very glad, ſuppoſing the witneſſes to be quite overthrown, never any more to appear in oppoſition to them; but that mirth laſteth not long, after three days and a half they revived, and the public face of affairs quite changed; for, God taketh this opportunity of the low eſtate of this church to manifeſt his work, and bringeth the preaching of the goſpel, and the proſperity of its preachers, to a more conſpicuous viſible condition than they were in before, by giving theſe witneſſes, ſuppoſed to be killed, a viſible and glorious reſurrection: which is ſet out in theſe two ſteps: 1. Their reviving from the dead, ver. 11. 2. Their glorious condition after they are riſen, ver. 12. and 13. Both which are ſet forth by ſeveral circumſtances going before, accompanying, and following after them.

By reſurrection here, we are not to underſtand, literally, the riſing again, and taking to heaven of men once really dead; the frame of all the propheſy,

which is figurative, and the ſcope of this, will not admit that: but this reſurrection of the witneſſes, and their glorious condition after it, is to be looked on as holding forth a more viſible profeſſion of the goſpel, with a greater number of preachers following their footſteps, and taking up that ſame teſtimony which theſe few oppreſſed ones under Antichriſt did formerly bear witneſs unto. In this ſenſe, they are ſaid to riſe again, becauſe their teſtimony reviveth, men coming with that ſame ſpirit and power, as if theſe were again brought to the world, as is ſpoken of John the Baptiſt's coming in the ſpirit and power of Elias, Matth. xvii. 11, 12, 13. That thus it muſt be underſtood, appeareth, 1. This reſurrection is ſo conſpicuous and evident, that the *enemies behold it*, ver. 11, 12. which looketh liker a public change of affairs, than what particularly concerneth two perſons, eſpecially conſidering, as was hinted before, that the low condition of the church is deſcribed by the low condition of the witneſſes; and therefore a change of the church's eſtate to the better, muſt be deſcribed by the raiſing up of theſe witneſſes. 2. It is ſuch an exaltation, as worketh fear upon all the oppoſers. 3. It is accompanied with a great earthquake, and the ruin of a conſiderable part of Antichriſt's dominions, ver. 13. which ſheweth, it muſt be ſuch a change, as proveth prejudicial and deſtructive to that kingdom. 4. It is a reſurrection, and good condition in oppoſition to their former death, and low condition; but that conſiſteth mainly in the bearing down of their doctrine and profeſſion; this muſt be therefore in the vindicating of both. *Laſtly*, This change is that which followeth, and is expounded by the ſeventh trumpet, *That the kingdoms of this world are become our Lord's, &c.* which we will find to hold forth a more free and glorious manifeſtation of the goſpel, after the darkneſs of Antichriſt ſhall be over, and the temple of God again be opened in heaven, &c. All which do more particularly explain and proſecute what is generally ſummed up, and begun here.

The firſt ſtep of this change is ſet forth in theſe circumſtances:

1. In the time of it, *After three days and an half, &c.* a definite time for an indefinite, it is like, alluding to Chriſt's lying in the grave; and ſignifieth this, that, within a little time, after Antichriſt's ſeeming to ſuppreſs the truth, and the preachers of it, God ſhall again, wonderfully, bring it, and them, to light, as if they were raiſed from the dead. 2. The mean and manner of their reviving is expreſſed, *The Spirit of life from God entered into them.* It is like, this alludeth to the Lord's creating man at firſt, when he breathed the breath of life in him, Gen. ii. and to the Lord's reviving the dead ſtate of Iſrael, Ezek. xxxvii. 4, &c. which ſheweth, that however it looked impoſſible like to men, yet was it not ſo in itſelf, becauſe God, who at firſt made man, was to be the worker. And, 2. That the great mean effectuating it, was not human might or power, but the Spirit of the Lord, which he hath to communicate to ſuch inſtruments, and at ſuch times, as he ſhall find expedient for promoving of his work. 3. It is ſaid, *They ſtood upon their feet*, and that ſo conſpicuouſly, that their enemies ſaw them: whereby the efficacy of the Spirit of life, and the reality and certainty of the effect following, is ſignified: ſo that inſtruments, for promoving of the goſpel, ſhall unexpectedly appear when the Lord ſhall pour out his Spirit, as if dead bones would ſtand up to reſume their teſtimony; which is, in ſum, the ſame with that type, Ezek. xxxvii. 4. The effect is, *great fear fell upon them which ſaw them.* The world, a little before, was inſulting to look upon them; now, their rejoicing turneth to terror: for, the more powerful, glorious, and unexpected the reſtoration of theſe witneſſes is, who formerly tormented them, the greater is their fear now, when their expectation of getting them ſuppreſſed faileth, and nill they, will they, this goſpel will come to light. The conſequent of diminiſhing their greatneſs, and interrupting their peace, proveth terrible to them.

Their glorious condition, after their reſurrection, is further expreſſed, ver. 12, 13. In theſe circumſtances: 1. There is a call given them. 2. Their obedience, or the conſequent following it. 3. Some effects are marked to accompany and follow their aſcending. The call is ſeveral ways ſet out: 1. It is *from heaven;* to ſhew a divine warrant, and an extraordinary call of God, which the firſt reformers after Popery ſhould have. 2. It is called a *voice*, and *a great voice*, to ſignify the diſtinctneſs and clearneſs of their warrant, and the weight it had on them for putting them to this duty, either by ſome external authority, provoking them to it, or, which is moſt probable

ſome extraordinary inſtinct and impulſe of the Spirit conſtraining the preachers and profeſſors of the goſpel now to a public ſeparation from Rome more than formerly was. 3. *And they heard it:* whereby is ſhown, that though God had given many commands of ſeparating from Antichriſt, and of coming out of Babel in the former ages; yet were they not heard nor underſtood, even by many godly then living in that fellowſhip, and burdened with their ſuperſtitions, but now God giveth theſe revived witneſſes at the beginning of reformation to hear, and diſtinctly to underſtand his mind in this particular: and it doth imply alſo, that tho' many ſaw their practice, yet was not their call cleared to all, poſſibly alluding to that of Paul, Acts ix. where though many ſaw a glimpſe of the light about him; yet he only heard the voice that ſpake to him. 4. The great thing in the call, is the duty called for, *come up hither*, that is, to heaven, as the words following do clear, that the term *from which*, is the Antichriſtian church and world, and the low condition that Chriſt's ſervants had by her means, is evident. The term *to which*, viz. heaven, we conceive is not properly to be underſtood of the glorious ſeat of the bleſſed, but of a glorious viſible church-ſtate upon earth, (it being ordinary, eſpecially in this book, to ſet forth the viſible church under this name) and ſo the meaning is, they ſhall not continue in their former ſackcloth condition, but God ſhall erect a viſible church diſtinct from Antichriſt, which ſhall be, as to the purity and beauty of ordinances, and to freedom from Antichriſt's tyranny and perſecution, in compariſon of what formerly the ſaints were obnoxious unto, like an aſcending to heaven. That thus it muſt be underſtood, beſide what was ſaid at the entry, appeareth,

Firſt, It is a heaven, in oppoſition to the world formerly mentioned, which was that of Antichriſt. 2. It is an happineſs, oppoſite to their former low eſtate: now when they are revived, they are not permitted to live within the precincts of Antichriſt's dominion, and under his tyranny as before, but are called up from without his reach. 3. It is the ſame heaven mentioned under the ſeventh trumpet, ver. 19. that is, where the temple, ark and covenant is, and their aſcending is the opening of that temple, &c. 4. It is ſuch a heaven as that, chap. xii. that Satan is caſt down from, as that the man child is taken up into, ver. 5, and 8. and ſuch an heaven as the everlaſting goſpel is preached into, chap. xiv. 6. and that after the beaſt's begun ruin; but all theſe are to be underſtood of a viſible church-ſtate. Therefore this muſt be ſo alſo, eſpecially conſidering that theſe witneſſes are called ſtars, they are now fixed to ſhine in this heaven of a viſible church-ſtate, as put on a candleſtick that they may give light to the world, more than formerly they were in capacity to do.

Their obedience followeth, they *aſcend up to heaven*, &c. Meaning their taking on them that public owning of the goſpel which they were called to, and the certainty of the effect, following the former call, ſuch a condition followed indeed as they were called to. 2. The manner of their aſcending, was *in a cloud*, that is, glorioufly and ſafely, as the Lord is ſaid to be clothed with a cloud: their glory and ſafety is by divine power; it is like with alluſion to Chriſt's aſcenſion, Acts i. both theſe reſurrections being by one power. It is ſaid alſo to be in *a cloud*, becauſe, tho' it were diſcernible to onlookers, yet was it myſterious and dark to them, who could not diſcern, through the many reproaches and imputations put upon the firſt reformers, the beauty of the work in their hand, and the glory of God's diſpenſation to his church in them. 3. It is marked that their *enemies beheld them:* they ſaw them dead, they ſaw them raiſed to their feet, and now they behold them aſcending; which ſheweth ſtill a viſible and remarkable change in the ſteps and progreſs of his church, and the reality and greatneſs of it, which could not be marred by their oppoſers, though they beheld it; which certainly would provoke their enmity, and increaſe their envy the more, They are called their enemies, not for any particular wrong theſe witneſſes had done to them, but for the work in their hands, theſe witneſſes ſhould ſtill have enemies retaining their enmity, yet were reſtrained from marring their exaltation, which ſheweth that the reviving of the goſpel, and down-bringing of Antichriſt will be by degrees. In ſhort, theſe two verſes ſay, that the goſpel ſhall again flouriſh, and the witneſſes thereof ſhall be placed in an honourable condition ſuitable to their profeſſion, in deſpite of all their oppoſers.

In the 13th verſe, this glorious condition of the witneſſes, is ſet out by four glorious concomitants going alongſt with it, or conſequents following upon it. 1. *And the ſame hour was there a great earthquake.* By *earthquake*, chap. vi. 12. and verſe 19. of this ſame chapter, is underſtood great and ſudden temporal mutations. By this we underſtand the great commotions which uſually accompany reformation, whereby kingdoms are put in an uproar, Satan and his inſtruments wakening up enmity againſt the goſpel, and the Lord powerfully carrying on his deſign, maketh the earth, as it were, to ſhake till he accompliſh it. This did really fall out, (and it may well be thought to be the fulfilling of this propheſy) in Germany, France, Holland, England, Scotland, &c. when, at firſt, the witneſſes were brought to a viſible church-ſtate ſeparated from Rome.

The ſecond effect following upon the former, is, *A tenth part of the city fell.* It hath no name here, and therefore muſt be underſtood to relate to that called the great city, verſe 8. that is, the city having dominion over the kings of the earth, chap. xvii. 18. that is, Rome, to be taken not ſtrictly in reſpect of that particular town, but more largely in reſpect of its empire and dominion, as was formerly ſaid, It is ſaid, a tenth part of this dominion falleth, becauſe by this public preaching of the goſpel, and the witneſſes ſeparating of themſelves from her, a great and conſiderable part of that dominion is diminiſhed and brought down: or, as chap. xiv. by that expreſſion, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen*, is ſet forth not the deſtruction of a city alone, but the ruin of Antichriſt's kingdom; ſo here, by the fall of ſome part of that city, we are to underſtand the begun ruin and deſtruction of that kingdom, which was to accompany the reviving of light in the world, as is ſaid, and was actually fulfilled in the withdrawing of England, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, and a great part of Germany, France, Helvetia, Poland, Low-countries, &c. from their former dependence upon the beaſt.

The third effect following on this, is, a great number of men, *even ſeven thouſand men were ſlain.* In the original it is names of men, pointing at ſome more eminent than others in this city: the meaning is, that as by the ſudden ruin and fall of cities, eſpecially by earthquakes, many inhabitants uſually are deſtroyed: ſo by this begun ruin of the Romiſh Antichriſtian dominion, many of her followers ſhall be deſtroyed, and that of the moſt eminent and renowned among them: which may be fulfilled, partly, in the overthrows and defeats of Popiſh armies, but eſpecially the overturning of abbeys, monaſteries, cloiſters, and religious orders, whereby indeed a great part of that dominion was eclipſed, and many of Babylon's citizens were caſt out, and their habitations deſtroyed and brought to nought.

The fourth effect followeth, *And the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven:* which is not to be underſtood of a real work of repentance upon all the remnant of that kingdom, (for chap. xvi. even when the vials are poured forth, we find they repent not) but as at Chriſt's crucifixion, Matth. xxvii. 54. God's hand was ſo diſcernible that it made many on-lookers ſmite on their breaſts, and acknowledge ſomething of God to be there; ſo this ſudden begun overturning of Antichriſt's kingdom, and particularly the pulling down of monaſteries and abbeys, formerly ſo ſacred, ſhall be ſo remarkable, that many of that kingdom ſhall, at leaſt in profeſſion, renounce fellowſhip with it, and others be made to acknowledge ſomething more than human in this buſineſs. The ſcope is, to ſhew the extraordinarineſs of God's appearing, and the impreſſion which it ſhould have upon many, formerly friends to Antichriſt's kingdom.

This 14th verſe (*The ſecond wo is paſt, and behold, the third wo cometh quickly*) is to be expounded as verſe 12. chap. ix. by it the march of the ſeventh trumpet is cleared to be at the begun change of religion in the world, and to ſhew, that what formerly hath paſſed, doth belong unto the former trumpets, tending to that ſcope, that John and the people of God might be comforted againſt the ſad things foretold by the fifth and ſixth trumpets: therefore, that which formerly was under a type revealed to John, chap. x. is in this chapter by word (for his greater confirmation) renewed and repeated.

Before we leave this part of the propheſy, it will be needful to enquire, 1. If theſe 1260 days of the Gentiles treading under foot the outer court, and the prophets propheſying in ſackcloth be expired? And if the killing of the witneſſes be paſt? 2. How, or what way this propheſy is fulfilled? That ſo we may take occaſion to conſider this time

more particularly, and compare the event in hiſtory with this propheſy. In clearing of the firſt, we would not be underſtood, as ſuppoſing all the trial of the ſaints and miniſters to be paſt, or that, by analogy from theſe witneſſes killing immediately after the finiſhing of their teſtimony, it might not be gathered, that the work of God often ſuffereth great obſtruction, even after its begun riſe; and that the ſaints and witneſſes are moſt ſubject to great difficulties and ſtraits, when the goſpel in their hands is even come to the birth, and bringing forth, as in the example of Moſes, Elias, Zerubbabel, and the apoſtles may be ſeen: we grant, that by proportion, ſuch doctrines may be raiſed from this propheſy: yet, if we will more ſeriouſly conſider the particular event and time, prophetically aimed at by the Spirit in this place, we will find, that theſe days here intended, are expired, and that this killing of the witneſſes is fulfilled, and ſo, that the ſeventh trumpet hath ſounded, and our time is to be reckoned as under it: for making out whereof we offer theſe conſiderations.

1. The ſounding of the ſeventh trumpet, and cloſing of the ſecond wo, do immediately, or without long interval, follow the abſolute and uncontroverted dominion of Antichriſt, and his treading under foot the holy city forty and two months; ſo that the controverting of Antichriſt's power, and diminiſhing of it, muſt neceſſarily infer the expiring of theſe forty and two months, and the ſounding of the ſeventh trumpet. Now, any acquaintance with the ſtate of the church, during theſe 100 years paſt, in compariſon of what it was before, will evidence Antichriſt's power to be in a great meaſure ſhaken, and his kingdom to be eclipſed, and that this cannot be called the time of his abſolute and univerſal tyranny, and therefore muſt be ſubſequent to it.

2. It is clear, that this ruin of Antichriſt is not inſtantly brought to a height, but it is perfected by ſeven vials, chap. xvi. whereof the ſeventh trumpet is a ſum. Seeing then the expiring of theſe 1260 days of his domineering, cannot be reſtricted to the time of his total fall; becauſe, at the cloſe of theſe days, he maketh war againſt the witneſſes, and prevaileth, and not the whole city, but a tenth part thereof, by their reſurrection falleth, and the ſeventh trumpet followeth, whereby his ruin is accompliſhed; it will therefore follow, that we muſt reckon the fulfilling of this propheſy of the expiring of theſe days, and the raiſing of the witneſſes from the begun decay, and the ruin of Antichriſt's kingdom, by the vials: and it being certain, that the vials are already begun to be poured forth, and alſo certain, that theſe vials belong to the ſeventh trumpet, which goeth alongſt with, or immediately followeth after, the witneſſes aſcenſion; it muſt alſo follow, that this time falleth under the ſeventh trumpet, and ſo is beyond theſe former events and ſuppoſeth them to be fulfilled.

3. That time, when *nations become the Lord's, and when the temple is open, and the ark of the teſtimony is ſeen therein*, doth belong to the ſeventh trumpet, as the expoſition thereof will clear it, being ſuppoſed, that before the blowing of the ſeventh trumpet, and during theſe 1260 days, that the kingdoms of the earth were not the Lord's, that the temple was ſhut, and that the ark of the teſtimony, or word of God, was not ſeen into it; and it being now clear, that theſe events are fulfilled in our days, we muſt therefore look upon this time as belongeth to that trumpet.

Before we confirm it further, we would remove ſomewhat objected againſt the fulfilling of this propheſy by ſome learned and worthy men (Mede and Robert's upon the place) endeavouring to prove this propheſy of the witneſſes killing, to be yet to be fulfilled, and ſo thoſe 1260 days not to be expired.

The 1. *Object.* is, This propheſy cannot be fulfilled, ſo long as Antichriſt continueth in ſuch power, and reigneth with ſuch freedom: therefore, the fulfilling of it is yet to be looked for. *Anſw.* This ſupponeth the fulfilling of this propheſy to depend upon Antichriſt's compleat deſtruction, which being carried on by many degrees, under the ſeventh trumpet, as is ſaid, cannot be granted. And therefore, we ſay, the fulfilling of this propheſy, and Antichriſt's abſolute dominion, are not conſiſtent; this is granted: but the fulfilling of it, and his begun ruin, though continuing to reign in part, may ſtand together, and muſt go together, as is ſaid. Now it is granted by the ſame reverend authors, that the ruin of Antichriſt is begun, and therefore this propheſy muſt be fulfilled alſo. Otherwiſe we muſt ſay, that this begun ruin, and his height can conſiſt together.

2. It is objected, that the fall of this tenth part of the city, is the ſame with the overturning of the ſeat of the beaſt under the fifth vial, chap. vi. But that is not fulfilled; therefore nei-

ther this propheſy. *Anſw.* This objection is grounded upon an unwarrantable ſuppoſition: for, 1. The city here ſpoken of is not properly the beaſt's ſeat or Rome itſelf, but the dominion thereof, as it is expounded by that ſame learned author, upon verſe viii. preceding 2. The expreſſion here of a falling of *a tenth part* thereof, doth evidently and manifeſtly differ from that total overturning propheſied of by the fifth vial, it being certain that the overturning of the tenth part is here to ſet forth a partial, and ſo a begun overthrow, diſtinguiſhed from a total overturning threatned by the fifth vial: and therefore cannot be underſtood of the ſame event; but here the riſe and beginning of that ruin is hinted at, which is perfected by the ſeventh trumpet and vials following.

The ground of this their miſtake proceedeth from this, that they make the vials, at leaſt the firſt ſix, to be cotemporary with the ſixth trumpet, and not to be comprehended under the ſeventh. For clearing this therefore, beſide what is ſaid in the preface, chap. vi. and afterward on the ſeventh trumpet and vials, whereby is held forth the ſucceſſive dependence of the firſt vial, upon the blowing of the ſeventh trumpet, we ſhall further add.

A fourth reaſon to the former three, That act of killing the witneſſes, is the very laſt part of the height of the reign of Antichriſt; for, he reigneth during the 1260 days preceding, which is the time of their propheſying in ſackcloth, and inſulteth and rejoiceth in a moſt eminent way when theſe witneſſes are killed, therefore cannot that be cotemporary with any of the vials which do ſucceed to Antichriſt's height, and ſucceſſively carry on his ruin: ſeeing therefore it is granted by all, that Antichriſt's ruin by the vials is begun; and it cannot be denied but Antichriſt's triumphing over the witneſſes, is, as it were, the laſt part, and very criſis, of his uninterrupted tyranny, and ſo inconſiſtent with his decaying kingdom; it muſt therefore be eſteemed to precede the vials, and ſo to be fulfilled. And therefore this being the laſt act of the ſixth trumpet, wherein Antichriſt is at his height, and ſeeing the vials each after other carry on his ruin, it cannot be thought that any of them, much leſs the firſt ſix, can cotemporate with it.

5. It may thus appear, if the vials expreſs a different eſtate of the church, viz. its flouriſhing and Antichriſt's weakening, from that which the fifth and ſixth trumpet expreſſeth, (viz. Antichriſt's height, and the church's low condition) then they cannot cotemporate together, but the one muſt be ſuppoſed to precede the other; but this is true, that they hold forth different eſtates of the church, as the expoſition of them will clear, therefore cannot fall in one time.

We may add, that by the ſame learned author, the time of Antichriſt's full reign, and the prophets propheſying in ſackcloth, are demonſtrated exactly to be cotemporary, having one beginning and continuance: and the expiring of either of them will prove the expiring of both, and infer the killing of the witneſſes, which is immediately upon the back of both. Now, the time of Antichriſt's abſolute dominion being expired, as is ſaid, it muſt alſo follow, that the other two events in the propheſy, viz. the prophets propheſying in ſackcloth, and their killing muſt be fulfilled alſo.

Again, if 1260 days be accounted for ſo many years, and the beginning of them to cotemporate with the opening of the ſeventh ſeal and firſt trumpet (as the ſame learned author doth aſſert) then it will follow, that they muſt be ere now expired: for we have formerly cleared the firſt trumpet, and opening of the ſeventh ſeal to begin about the three hundred year or thereby, and therefore theſe days cannot be running (according to theſe principles) till now: yea, from that firſt author, theſe things are clear, 1. That the witneſſes propheſying the woman's flying, Antichriſt's reigning, and treading of the outer court by the Gentiles do cotemporate, and that with the firſt ſix trumpets. 2. That the woman's travelling, her bringing forth, and the lifting of her child to heaven, chap. xii. do cotemporate with the firſt ſix ſeals. 3. He maketh, chap. xii. that taking up of the child to heaven, to be fulfilled in Conſtantine's regin and his admiſſion to the empire, as alſo that the woman's flying and wilderneſs condition (which to him ſpeaketh out a freedom of the church to religious exerciſes tho' abuſed by her to much defection and idolatry, as was in the people of Iſrael's wilderneſs eſtate after their delivery from Egypt) doth take in the whole eſtate of the church from the cloſe of heatheniſh perſecution immediately till the ſeventh trumpet blow. And ſeeing both theſe will fall about the 300 or 310 year, it followeth that this propheſy in ſackcloth muſt begin then alſo, and ſo cannot be continuing till now.

To be more particular in the application thereof, we think that conceit, or dream, of the Papiſts expounding all ſo literally of an Antichriſt who ſhall come of the tribe of Dan, and that ſhall reign juſt three years and an half ſitting in Jeruſalem, and building that temple, and the two witneſſes of Enoch and Elias. This dream invented by them to keep their Pope from being apprehended as the true Antichriſt; this, I ſay, is not worth the inſiſting on to refute, as being ſo contrary to the frame of the propheſy paſt, and alſo of that which followeth concerning the beaſt, chap. xiii. For, certainly this trial being ſo long, as the great part of the revelation is ſpent on it, and ſo many things to be done under it, it cannot be performed in ſo ſhort a time.

In the application of it, we ſhall, 1. See what general characters may be drawn from the text for helping us to fix the time. 2. See how the application may be made out.

In the firſt we intend not to be peremptory, yet theſe things may be concluded concerning it, according to the grounds formerly laid, 1. It is clear, that the end of theſe forty and two months of the witneſſes propheſying in ſackcloth, and Antichriſt's tyranny, is diſcernible, being ſo clearly evidenced by the witneſſes laying by their ſackcloth, their death, and glorious appearance again in a ſettled and ſecure condition. This certainly will fall in about the time that religion was reformed, and the Pope's tyranny, in a great part, diſcovered and rejected. The forty and two months then muſt be acknowledged immediately to precede this time of reformation. This alſo will be confirmed, if we conſider that the ſounding of the ſeventh trumpet doth immediately ſucceed to that time, and that the vials which begin to be poured out upon the kingdom of the beaſt, do immediately follow this his height and begin the change; which doth alſo evidence, that this change muſt be reckoned from the begun fall of Antichriſt; and ſo conſequently his height and dominion, during theſe forty and two months, muſt be antecedent to this.

2. For its riſe, we will find it immediately to follow upon the back of the heatheniſh perſecution under the ſeals, and to be reckoned from the ſixth ſeal as immediately knit to it; for this trial of the church during theſe forty and two months under, and by, Antichriſt, doth begin with the trumpets, and immediately ſucceedeth to the former trial ſhe had by heatheniſh perſecution. Therefore during the ſixth ſeal, before the ſeventh be opened, chap. vii. proviſion is made againſt Antichriſt, by ſealing the elect, as it were, marking and ſetting apart ſome few to be keeped clean from his corruptions: which ſealing, being eſpecially againſt Antichriſt, and ſo ſolicitouſly to be gone about before the ſeventh ſeal be opened, or any of the trumpets ſound, it doth evince this, that we are to reckon the beaſt's riſe (and ſo the beginning of theſe forty and two months) from the cloſe of the ſixth ſeal, and the opening of the ſeventh, or a little before: it doth alſo confirm this, that the beaſt, and the number ſealed, chap. vii. in reference to him, are wholly cotemporary, but that ſealing cotemporateth with the beginning of the ſeventh ſeal, which ſucceedeth to the ſixth, and continueth with the beaſt to the end of the ſixth trumpet, as that learned author Mede, part 2. Synchron. 1. doth demonſtrate.

Again, the ſame thing is clear from chapter xii. for the church's flying to the wilderneſs and continuing there for 1260 days, is the very ſame trial, having the ſame riſe and cloſe with the beaſt's dominion, and the prophets propheſying in ſackcloth: now from verſe 6. and 14. being compared with what goeth before, we will find, that immediately this flying of the church to the wilderneſs is upon the back of the heatheniſh perſecution, and the dragon's waiting to devour her; and immediately ſhe getteth civil authority on her ſide. From which grounds we gather, 1. That the cloſe of theſe forty and two months of Antichriſt's abſolute tyranny will fall in anno 1559, or thereby, in which year by public authority in a diet of the empire at Auſburg, the liberty of reformation and religion was eſtabliſhed, and the free profeſſion thereof, without any prejudice to men's eſtates, or civil privileges was enacted: for, though before that time religion was practiſed in many places of the empire, and other kingdoms of the world; yet was there immediately before that ſo great an eclipſe in Germany, England, and other places, that we cannot reckon the witneſſes to have aſcended to heaven before this.

2. Neither before this time was their public authority for the profeſſion of religion; but profeſſion was a crime, men's liberties and privileges were reſtrained by it, the proteſtant prince's commiſſioners were not admitted to the council of the impe-

rial chamber; which, after that this pacification was concluded by Ferdinand, was remedied.

Again, it is moſt uſual to count the change of periods in the viſible church by the change of events in the empire, and alſo, to account theſe from its authoritative concluſions, as we will ſee in the cloſe of the firſt period of heatheniſh perſecution, and Satan's caſting from heaven, reckoned chap. xii. following. Beſide, it is not inconſiderable, that about this time religion was again eſtabliſhed in Britain by queen Elizabeth's coming to the crown, queen Mary having begun her reign, anno 2554. and continuing in it for five years and ſome odd months, died the ſame year. Alſo, it was revived in Scotland the year before, as it was in France at the entry of Charles the ninth's reign, anno 1560.

2. We gather that the riſe of this forty and two months reign, is to be reckoned from the year three hundred, or thereabout, when the heatheniſh perſecution ceaſed, and liberty was brought to Chriſtianity, as was formerly cleared, chap. vi. This, upon the former grounds, muſt be acquieſced in, for timing the riſe of the church's flight, and Antichriſt's under-hand working, whatever objection ariſe from the application itſelf, as being too ſoon, yet that *flight* of the church's being the ſecond period of her condition, and ſucceeding immediately to the firſt, muſt be cotemporated with the trumpets. And now, having thus fixed its riſe and cloſe, we may gather the duration thereof, which being ſuppoſed to be from anno 300, or thereabout, to anno 1560, or thereabout, it will extend, in whole to us, to 1260 years. And although, at firſt, we did not think it convincing to build the account of ſo many years upon the number of ſo many days, for the reaſons formerly mentioned; yet, conſidering that this definite number is five times mentioned under the ſame exact account, though in divers expreſſions, which ſeemeth purpoſely to point out one particular definite number beſide others; and conſidering that the event anſwereth this, or cometh near to it upon the former ſuppoſitions. We think, in this place, it is not unſafe to account days for years, ſeeing, by the former characters, of its riſe and cloſe, it is, indeed, found to comprehend ſo many years. And although, at firſt, as is ſaid, we durſt not lay the weight of this ſimply upon the number of days, yet, being expounded materially by theſe foreſaid characters, to ſignify ſo many years, as that is more plainly interpreted, Ezek. iv. We think it is not unſafe to yield to the light of the former reaſons in this, (beyond what at the entry we were convinced of) that the time is definite here, as alſo in any other place where the like grounds can be given from the text, for demonſtrating of the time, without laying the weight upon the particular number alone. There are two objections to be removed.

Object. 1. That this reckoning ſeemeth to begin the kingdom of Antichriſt too ſoon, while the church enjoyed great outward liberty, and much purity alſo. And, therefore, it cannot be ſaid, that ſhe was trode upon, or did flee, while ſhe continued to be in ſo good a condition. *Anſw.* This objection doth not ariſe from the text, but from the ſeeming difference of the event in the application; and, if it appear by the ſeries of this propheſy, that the church is no ſooner delivered from heatheniſh perſecution, but ſhe fleeth to the wilderneſs, and hath wings given her for that end, there is no ſeeming reaſon can have weight againſt that. 2. In the ſcripture, periods of time are counted from the main, or laſt part of them, as when it is ſaid to Abraham, Gen. xv. 13. four hundred years thy children ſhall be ſtrangers in the land that is not theirs, and ſhall be afflicted four hundred years; yet, being compared with other ſcriptures, we will find that the continuance of the children of Iſrael in Egypt was not ſo long; beſide, that for a time, while Joſeph lived, they were not afflicted, but well entertained. 3. It is often the manner of reckoning uſed, eſpecially in this book, to reckon a whole period of the church's eſtate from what is moſt predominant in it: as for inſtance, three great periods of the viſible church are reckoned ſucceſſively to each other in this book. The firſt, under the ſeals, is reckoned a time of perſecution under heathens; and the church, chap. xiii. is ſaid to travel all that time, although there were many and conſiderable long intervals of peace. Again, under the vials, Chriſt and his ſaints are ſaid to reign, although Antichriſt's kingdom and profanity continue long very high in the world, yet is it called the time of his reigning, and Antichriſt's down-coming, becauſe, from the beginning of that period, it tendeth to that ſcope: ſo here, the firſt ſix trumpets being accounted one period, and Antichriſt's tyranny being the moſt prevalent

event under them, and his riſe being long working under ground before it came to a height, even from the church's firſt outward peace, if not before; we conceive, upon theſe grounds, it is not unſuitable to ſcripture, or this book, to reckon Antichriſt's riſe from the beginning of that period wherein he riſeth, cometh to his height, and reigneth, which is during the propheſy of the trumpets. For this alſo, more may be ſeen, chap. xii. and xiii.

The ſecond *Object.* is, That even, according to this reckoning, there will not be found 1260 years, ſeeing Conſtantine's public peace will be about the year 310; and it would ſeem, that ſome years would be allowed for the witneſſes killing, that followeth after the 1260 days, and goeth before the ſettling of religion by authority, which is their lifting up to heaven. For anſwer, we ſay, 1. It will not be unſuitable to comprehend the witneſſes killing within the 1260 days; for, it being the loweſt ſtep of their ſackcloth, and the higheſt ſtep of the beaſt's tyranny, or at leaſt of his ſucceſs againſt them, it may well come in as the conſummating of their trial, and laſt act of his abſolute ſupreme tyranny; and it muſt be ſo, otherwiſe Antichriſt will reign longer than forty and two months, if he kill them not for that time. Therefore ſome render theſe words, *When they ſhall be about to finiſh their teſtimony*, and go off the ſtage, then he ſhall kill them; which agreeth well with the Greek. 2. If Antichriſt's riſe ſhould be reckoned during the ſixth ſeal, and ſo ſuppoſed to precede a little the firſt trumpet that giveth the alarm upon his approaching appearance, the odds will not be ſo conſiderable as to mar this calculation, though by the number of eight or ten years of ſo many, it doth not jump: eſpecially, if we conſider, that the ſcripture, in the reckoning of years, ſtriketh not ſo upon the particular time, but taketh ſome definite number near unto it, as if we will compare Gen. xv. 13. and Exod. xii. 41. Acts vii. 6. Gal. iii. 17. In ſome of theſe places, the reckoning is 400 years, in others 430. Beſide, however they be reckoned, the beginning of them muſt precede either the Iſraelites coming to Egypt, or their afflicted condition in it, ſeeing, Gal. iii. 17. theſe 430 years are reckoned to intervene between God's covenanting with Abraham long before his poſterity came to Egypt, and the giving of the law after their deliverance from it. However, if the periods of its riſe and cloſe hold, there is the leſs cauſe to differ in the particular account of the year.

For verifying the event, according to this expoſition given, theſe things are to be made out, that the Pope, whom we take to be Antichriſt, hath trode upon the church, and that his followers have poſſeſſed the title of the viſible church during that time, which we may the leſs inſiſt in, becauſe it is gloried in, and boaſted of by his followers; and, as Bellarm. alledgeth, lib. 3. de pontiff. cap. 2. Before the Pope was pointed at as Antichriſt by us, he univerſally flouriſhed; but ſince that time did never grow but decreaſe, and loſt many kingdoms, reckoned there by him. Beſides, it is evident from ſtory, that tho' Antichriſt's height be not reckoned ſo far up, yet that he came to tread all under his feet, during that period, experience through the world can bear witneſs thereof.

The ſecond thing will not need much clearing either, viz. that the true church was few, and in a great part latent, and where it was diſcerned, ever perſecuted: that which eſpecially is to be made out, is, 1. That though they were few, yet was there ever ſome church and witneſſes kept pure from Antichriſt's abominations until reformation was reſtored in the Chriſtian world. And, 2. That about that time of the reformation's ſpringing up, the profeſſors and witneſſes of this truth were brought exceeding low for a ſhort time, to their exceeding great contempt before the world, and to the exceeding great joy and inſulting of the Popiſh party; which yet continued not long, but ended with a more full authoritative ſettling of religion than formerly it had. The firſt, viz. that there was ſtill a church and witneſſes during Antichriſt's height, may appear from theſe conſiderations:

1. If we conſider the particular catalogue of witneſſes which God raiſed up one after another to witneſs againſt the corruptions of that time, whoſe names and teſtimonies are particularly recorded by ſeveral writers, particularly Illyricus, catalog. teſtium veritatis, Cent. Magdebar. Fox's book of martyrs; Alſtedii chronologia teſtium; Uſherus de ſucceſſione Eccleſiarum Chriſtianarum; and ſundry others. And if ſo much be known, we may gather much more indeed to be, conſidering the darkneſs of theſe times, and the great propenſion there was to ſuppreſs all that tended there away.

2. It is made out by Meſſrs. Fox, and White in his way to the true church, Jewel, Uſher, and

others, that Britain received not the goſpel from Rome, and that in England there hath been always ſome oppoſing his errors, until the time of reformation came. 3. This may appear by the confeſſion of adverſaries. They grant, that the Calviniſts now are the ſame called Waldenſes and Berengarians before; but theſe, they ſay, have been ever moſt dangerous to the church of Rome: 1. Becauſe it is of the longeſt continuance, being from the time of Sylveſter, who lived in Conſtantine the Great his time; yea, from the time of the apoſtles themſelves, ſay ſome of them. 2. Becauſe it was more univerſal, and almoſt in all the earth. 3. Becauſe it hath a great ſhew of piety, having a good life before men, and believing all things well concerning God, being only blaſphemers of the church of Rome, as Reinerius contra Haereticos, cap. 4. affirmeth. *Inter omnes ſectas quae ſunt aut fuerunt, non eſt periculoſior Eccleſiae Dei quam pauperum de Lugduno, tribus de cauſis, 1. Quia diuturnior; quidam dicunt quod diraverit a tempore Sylveſtri, quidam dicunt quod a tempore Apoſtolorum. 2. Quia generalior: fere enim nulla terra eſt qua haec ſecta non ſerpit. 3. Quia cum omnes aliae ſectae immanitate blaſphemiarum in Deum audientibus horrorem inducunt; haec, ſcilicit, Leoniſtatum, magnam habet ſpeciem pietatis, eo quod coram hominibus juſte vivunt, et bene de Deo omnia credunt, et omnes articulos qui in ſymbolo continentur, ſolummodo Romanam Eccleſiam blaſphemant ac oderunt, cui multitudo facilis eſt ad credendum.* This Reinerus, as Bellarmin aſſerteth, Praefat. ad libros de pontif. wrote above three hundred years before him.

If we look Bellarmin in that preface, Ad libros de pontif. and ſundry others of their writers, we will find them very near draw a ſeries of oppoſers of this uſurped authority of the Popes. It is true, ſometimes groſſer faults are imputed to theſe Waldenſes and Pauperes de Lugduno out of hatred, than they were guilty of; yet, if we will conſider Bernard's writings againſt them, Sermon. 65. and 66. in Cantica, and epiſt. 240. It is evident, that no manifeſt groſs crime is imputed to theſe, (beſide their oppoſing the errors of the church of Rome) but ſuch as they were calumniated with by the ignorance or iniquity of theſe times, as the great hiſtorian Thuanus doth vindicate them. 3. If we will look particularly to the church hiſtory, we will almoſt ever find ſome viſible party ſtand againſt the church of Rome: for the Eaſtern Greek churches did never fully ſubmit till the ſecond council of Nice, (which was anno 786, according to ſome, or 789, according to others.) Neither was that ſubmiſſion full without all contradiction, nor of long continuance; for Bellarmin, in the preface formerly cited, reckoneth their receſſion or ſchiſm, as he calleth it, to have begun about the 800 year, and to have continued long after. In the year 1436, the Greek churches being affrighted of the Turk, ſent ambaſſadors to treat with the Pope, and theſe in the Weſt, for ſupply; and theſe, to obtain it, condeſcended to ſome articles different from their churches, as acknowledging the Pope's ſupremacy, the doctrine of purgatory, and proceſſion of the Holy Ghoſt, and the practice of unleavened bread, for which they were excommunicated by their own churches, while the council of Baſil ſat. About the year 1170, the Waldenſes, or Pauperes de Lugduno, began, (before that cloſe of the Greek churches with the Pope) as Bellarmin, ibid. citeth out of Reinerius. The occaſion was this, one Waldus being ſtricken with fear, by the ſudden death of one walking in company with him, was put more ſeriouſly to ſeek God, and make for dying; whereby he came to diſcover the vanity of popery, as the badges of Antichriſtianity, and ſo to drink in the ſincere way of faith in Chriſt: theſe who followed him, though exceedingly perſecuted, yet continued in the Alpes, and other mountainous places, and in Province, at Merindol, and the parts about it, from the year 1200, till the year 1545. Theſe, after hearing of Luther's preaching and doctrine, ſent two of their miniſters to him, with whom, generally, in their doctrine they agreed. Theſe continue alſo, to this day, in the valleys of Piedmont, Angrongue, &c. under the duke of Savoy. After him followed the Albigenſes in France, anno 1190, according to ſome, who did, both in their diſputes and ſufferings, confirm that the Pope of Rome was the Antichriſt, and that Rome was Babylon; and alſo, ſometimes by arms, did defend themſelves, as in the memorable ſiege of Tholouſe, where God, wonderfully, protected many of them againſt great violence. After them aroſe John Wickliff, an Engliſhman, anno 1370 (Bellarmin calleth it 1390,) he revived the doctrine of the Waldenſes and Albigenſes; and it took ſuch rooting in many places, eſpecially in Bohemia, Hungary, Germany, &c. that they came to have great armies in the fields; and after that John Huſs, and Jerom of Prague, who came to the council of Conſtance, upon the emperor Si-

giſmond's ſafe conduct, were, contrary thereunto, burnt; they brought great armies to the fields, under the command of Ziſca, he would have had forty thouſand men under him; he defeated the Pope, emperor, and other Popiſh princes in eleven ſeveral battles, although he had loſt both his eyes: they continued alſo ſtrong after him under one Procopius Mangus, and were called Thaborites. At the council of Baſil they had granted unto them the ſcripture in their own language, prieſts, marriage, and communion in both elements, &c. All Bohemia were divided in three ſorts; one acknowledged the Pope fully; another ſeeking reformation in ſome points of doctrine; the third accounted him Antichriſt. They continued till after Luther's days, who wrote to them to confirm them, as Sleidan recordeth, lib. 3. p. 34. Neither was their former courage daunted, till diviſion fell firſt in among their own miniſters of the new and old city of Prague, and afterward among the ſoldiers.

Laſtly, Although we could deduce no ſuch thing by hiſtory; yet, being here aſſerted to be during that time, we are to believe that it was truth, even as there were ſeven thouſand during Jezebel's perſecution, who had not bowed their knee to Baal; who yet poſſibly might be unknown to others, as to Elias, till the Lord revealed it to him, in the general, without ſhewing their names, or where they dwelt.

It remaineth that we ſhould make ſome application of the witneſſes killing, and their reſurrection afterward, which, according to the former grounds, falleth immediately before the year 1558. In which time we will find theſe things to fall out:

1. Anno 1546, Began that war between the emperor and the duke of Saxon, Landgrave of Heſſe, and other Proteſtants in Germany. The year thereafter the duke is defeated, and taken priſoner; the Landgrave is ſhut up in priſon; the whole face of affairs is changed; proteſtant magiſtrates exauctorated; many hundreds of miniſters baniſhed; and others put in priſon, if they did not receive the *Interim*, which, with a ſafe conſcience, they could not do: ſo that the face of affairs was very ſad; the Proteſtants were made a prey; their caſtles demoliſhed; a great and incredible number of cannons and other arms taken from them, and they, and priſoners with them, ſent out through ſeveral corners of Europe, as trophies of the Pope's abſolute victory, and ſubduing of Lutheraniſm, whereupon great inſulting followed through the Popiſh world. At this time alſo, perſecution was at a great height in France, in the Netherlands, under the duke of Alba, and in England, during the reign of queen Mary, which began in the year 1554. It is marked by ſome, (viz. by Alſtedius, Chron. teſtium) that from the year 1540, and ſome years after, there were 900000 Chriſtians maſſacred for the cauſe of religion; ſo that the profeſſors of the goſpel had not ſuffered more than they did immediately before that year 1560, having ſtanding laws in all kingdoms againſt them, forfeitures, proſcriptions, baniſhments, death, &c. exerciſed for the deſtroying of them, and they, as infamous, made incapable of all privileges and dignities. We may add, that about the ſame time, anno 1545, fell out the great maſſacre of the poor Waldenſes, in Provence in France, the burning of Merindol, and other cities where they lived, and the total deſtroying of their country by the lord Odep's means: which, though it had been often formerly eſſayed, yet, till this time, could they never get effectuated. Beſides, at this time alſo was the perſecution by the duke of Savoy in the valleys of Piedmont. Conſidering, therefore, the great and univerſal perſecution riſing at one time, and with ſuch ſucceſs; conſidering alſo the perſons upon whom it eſpecially ſeized, being either theſe called Waldenſes, or Albigenſes, who being the ſtock of theſe who witneſſed againſt Antichriſt in much ſuffering and ſackcloth, while there were no other, may well be accounted eminently the witneſſes, conſidering alſo that this perſecution ſeized eſpecially upon miniſters, who by their office are witneſſes, the heat of it was againſt them; Bohemia, being of theſe Albigenſes, loſt two hundred alone; ſo that none were admitted to ſtay, but ſuch, as by receiving that *Interim*, gave ſubmiſſion; conſidering, alſo, the time that this is tryſted in, being immediately at the height and turn of Antichriſt's abſolute tyranny; and conſidering the great inſolency and joy expreſſed by the Popiſh world, with many indignities and reproaches againſt the poor witneſſes of Jeſus Chriſt, which were evidenced by their ſolemnities, and the reproaches that in writ were put on all that were called Proteſtants, and many otherwiſe, as hiſtory holdeth it out. And, *Laſtly*, Conſidering the great, univerſal and unexpected reviving that the work of God had, and the happy condition that his miniſters attained immediately after theſe overthrows, and that inſulting; partly, by the change which

Maritius, duke of Saxon, made in Germany, with the edicts and ſtatutes that followed thereupon, as was formerly hinted; partly, by Q. Mary of England her death, and other means tryſted by God together almoſt at the ſame time throughout the churches: I ſay, upon theſe conſiderations, it is not unſuitable to apply this killing of the witneſſes to theſe perſecutions; and their riſing again, and aſcenſion, to the happy eſtate which the church was immediately advanced to after that, and hath been ſince in ſome meaſure continued in, which, though it be not every way ſo glorious and proſperous as to be abſolutely free, yet being compared with the former ſtate thereof, may be well ſaid to be in heaven in reſpect of it, and we may warrantably conceive, that ſuch extraordinary events tryſted together, would not be paſſed by the Holy Ghoſt, and are not for no purpoſe timed ſo in this propheſy. Hence obſerve.

1. Neither the ſufferings of the godly, nor the joy and inſulting of the wicked are perpetual, but both have an end, and that ſpeedily. Three days and an half is here the term of the wicked's joy, it is not worth the having. 2. The joy of the wicked doth ever end in more ſhame and confuſion to them, and the low condition of the godly hath ever the more glorious outgate to them. 3. Oftentimes the wicked are ſurprized when they look leaſt for it, and God taketh opportunity from the loweſt condition of his people to work their deliverance, and to get himſelf glory in the doing of it. 4. When God hath any ſingular thing to do, he will not only ſingularly fit perſons for it, but extraordinarily or eminently call them, as it were, with a voice from heaven to it. 5. When God mindeth the promoving of the goſpel, no enmity or oppoſition of enemies can mar it, though they be onlookers upon it. 6. There will be great odds between the ſucceſs and reſpect that miniſters will get at one time, and at another: theſe preachers who were formerly in contempt, are now in credit; this floweth not from the efficacy of men's gifts, nor dexterity in managing things, but from the Lord's call, deſigning ſome for ſuffering at one time; and others, or poſſibly the ſame, for the active promoving of his work at another.

Concerning the Waldenſes.

HAving made mention of the Waldenſes, from the teſtimony of two authors, it may not be impertinent to inſert a little word more concerning them; partly, becauſe the books may not be at hand to every one, and partly, becauſe ſome Jeſuits, and particularly Gretſerus in his preface to Reinerius, imputeth, though unjuſtly, to Illyrius, *that he had mutilated this author in his edition of him:* and he doth alſo impute many abſurdities to them which we will not own, and therefore cannot claim them as witneſſes: he denieth alſo, that theſe who were perſecuted at Merindol, and the places beſide, were of that ſtock; we may therefore lay down more largely what the forecited authors ſay, whoſe teſtimonies they cannot refuſe. That Gretſerus, in the fourth tom. of the Bibliotheca Patrum, doth inſert ſeveral writers their writings againſt the Waldenſes; to this purpoſe, as he ſaith, that the latter heretics may be confuted, not only from new diſputes, but from old writings, (and if there were not a likeneſs between their tenets and ours, this end, by this, could not be expected) amongſt theſe are Reinerius, who, as he writeth himſelf, chap. iii. was often upon the inquiſition of theſe heretics, Petrus de Pilichdorf, Lucas Tudenſis, and ſome other writings, and catalogues of their errors, without the names of the authors. In the iv. chapter, Reinerius hath theſe words that were formerly cited, ſo that it may be a wonder how they could be charged with hereſy, and ſo perſecuted as they were. Again, chap. v. He draweth their errors to three heads, 1. *De blaſphemiis, quibus blaſphemant Romanam Eccleſiam.* 2. In their errors concerning the ſacraments and ſaints. 3. *Notat deteſtationes quibus omnes honeſtas et approbatas Eccleſiæ conſuetudines deteſtantur.* A taſte of all may be given ſhortly. 1. They ſay, the church of Rome is not the true church, but *Eccleſia malignantium;* and that it began to decline in Sylveſter's time, when poiſon was poured in the church; they ſay, that they were the church, becauſe they followed the doctrine of Chriſt, of the goſpel and apoſtles, both in word and deed; that the Roman church is the whore in the Revelation, and theſe who are in her ſcarce keepeth the doctrine of the goſpel; that they care not for the Pope and his

ſtatutes, but accounteth him the head of all errors; that none ought, in the church offices, to be above another; or, as the next catalogue hath it, that Pope or Biſhop had no dignity above the Prieſt by the word. For the ſecond ſort of errors, they overturn all ſacraments: *Firſt*, They ſay, *That the additionals profit not, the exorciſms and benedictions they reject; but never rejected the ſacrament itſelf.* 2. The ſacrament of the Euchariſt is denied by them, becauſe *tranſubſtantio not fit in manu indigne conficientis, ſed in ore digne ſumentis;* they reject the canon of the maſs, and repeat Chriſt's words in any language, the other five ſacraments they expunge. The third ſort of errors about the cuſtoms of the church, are, in general, *That what they read not in the goſpel, they reject;* as, *feſtum luminum, palmarum, &c. feſta ſanctorum*, the adoration of the croſs; and uſe to work quietly on the feaſt days. All conſecrations and benedictions of candles, fleſhes, palms, fire, wax, *agni paſchatis*, and ſuch numbered there, are derided by them; that prayers are not of more worth in a conſecrated church, than in another place; they called images and pictures idolatry, and many ſuch like; they reject indulgences, peregrinations; ſoul-maſſes of the dead, reliques, viſiting of ſepulchres, &c. are in nothing profitable for ſouls, but for gain to the clergy. When he hath laid down all theſe, he giveth this for the reaſon of them, *Becauſe*, ſaith he, *they deny purgatory, ſaying, there are but two ways; one, of the elect, to heaven; another, of the damned, to hell; and, where the tree falleth, there it will ly; and that all ſin is mortal.* He addeth, in the cloſe, theſe three errors to them: 1. *In that they would not ſwear, though ſome of them would do it when they were conſtrained.* 2. *That they condemned all magiſtrates and church judicatories, eſpecially which were for gain.* 3. *All puniſhment of malefactors.* But in theſe we will find them caluminated: for raſh ſwearing, only then in common uſe, they abhorred; the magiſtrates and clergy's practice of that time they condemned, but not their places; for, ſtill they were obedient; and that revenge which they did condemn, ſeemeth to be the rigour of churchmen's perſecution, otherwiſe it is known that themſelves uſed defenſive arms, and were in ſubjection.

Chap. vii. He characterizeth them how they may be known; *By their manners*, ſaith he, *and their words:* their manners are *compoſiti et modeſti;* they have no proud cloathing; they abſtain from merchandiſe, for eſchewing of lying, ſwearing, and deceits, and live on the work of their hands; and, therefore, their teachers work: they multiply not riches, but are contented with neceſſaries; they are chaſte, eſpecially, Leoniſtae; temperate alſo; they go not to taverns and dancings; and they reſtrain anger.

Their words are preciſe and modeſt; they eſchew ſcurrility and detraction, and lightneſs in word, and lying and ſwearing; they account *Vere* and *Certe* to be oaths, &c. Theſe ſeem not to be heretical characters; yet, chap. x. they are four ways to be puniſhed: 1. To be excommunicated. 2. To be depoſed from whatever dignity, civil or eccleſiaſtic. 3. *Militari perſecutione et manu armata*, all that they have are to be taken from them. If they turn, their goods are not to be reſtored, except on grace. And, *Laſtly*, If they have vaſſals, they are looſed from their obedience; if they be under ſuperiors, their ſuperiors are to perſecute them, under pain of excommunication, and having their ſubjects abſolved from their obedience to them, and their lands are to be given to, and may be occupied by the catholics; and for theſe he citeth many decrees of Popes; yea, the ſons and the children of their favourers, are not to be admitted to any office, as the decree that is at length ſet down there doth bear.

In the other treatiſes, the ſame things are inſiſted on, that they derived their original from the apoſtles, and ſaid, that the church had begun to make defection in the days of Sylveſter; and, in a word, that they diſclaimed the preſent church of Rome, and ſaid, they were few that would go to heaven; and though they mention community of goods, and impute that to them; yet hiſtory is clear, that they had their own diſtinction in their poſſeſſions and riches, &c.

Again, if we conſider what the famous Thuan (whoſe teſtimony cannot be refuſed, being a Popiſh preſident at Paris, of great eſteem) doth write of them in the ſixth book of his hiſtories; we will find, *Firſt*, That he deriveth theſe at Merindol, and other places formerly mentioned, from the old ſtock of theſe Waldenſes: to whom he attributeth out of old authors (particularly one Perpinianus, who was an inquiſitor in them) theſe tenets: 1. *That the church of Rome was the Babyloniſh whore; becauſe ſhe had forſaken the faith of Chriſt, that therefore the Pope and Biſhops, who ſuſtained her, were*

not to be obeyed; that the Monaſtic life was a corruption of the church; that the orders of their clergy, were marks of the beaſt mentioned in the Revelation; *that the fire of purgatory, worſhipping of ſaints, purgatory ſacrifices for the dead, and ſuch like, were inventions of the devil; to theſe*, ſaith he, *their certain doctrines, ſome others were, without ground, added and imputed to them, he* (meaning Waldus) *left his own country, and ſettled in Bohemia, where, to this day, theſe who embrace his doctrine, are called Picards; he had a companion, one Arnoldus, who, taking another way by Alba Auguſta, deſcended towards Tholouſe:* for which cauſe, theſe that followed him were called Albigenſes or Cathari: unto whom, ſaith he, theſe in England, who are called Puritans, are anſwerable: he doth alſo ſhew, how when Caſſianus minded to extirpate theſe at Merindol, Alentus a nobleman, who was alſo a good man and learned, did diſuade him from it, becauſe they were diligent worſhippers of God, obedient to magiſtrates, and no ways guilty of the groſs things imputed to them; whereupon ſtrict enquiry was made in their lives, that the king might be certified of the truth thereof, which he compriſeth in this ſum, that theſe who were called Waldenſes, 300 years before that, had gotten the poſſeſſion of ſome barren parts which by diligence they had made fruitful, they were patient to labour, abhorring ſtrifes, towards the poor liberal; in paying tribute to their princes, and giving their landlords what was due, exceeding faithful, aſſiduous in the worſhipping of God, by prayers and innocency of manners; again, that rarely they entered the temples of ſaints, except for their affairs of merchandize, or other buſineſs, they were out of their own bounds, and when they entered they did not fall down before the images, nor offer wax candles, nor any gifts to them, nor did intreat the prieſt to ſacrifice for them, nor did they ſign their foreheads with the croſs, as the manner of others is; when it thundereth they ſprinkle not themſelves with holy water, but direct prayers to God; they go not for religion's ſake to peregrinations, nor diſcover they themſelves before theſe images of the croſs as they go, they perform their holy things in another manner, and in the vulgar tongue; and *Laſtly*, they give no honour to the Pope nor biſhops, but do chuſe ſome of their own number for paſtors and teachers; this is the ſum of that which was ſent to Francis the I. after this, ſaith he, two commiſſioners were ſent from them to the parliament at Aixe, to whom they gave a confeſſion of their faith, agreeing almoſt with the doctrine of Luther. This was ſent to king Francis, who has given it to the cardinal Sadolet to be examined, the ſaid cardinal returned this report to the king, that he ingeniouſly confeſſed that what was imputed to them beſide theſe things, was merely done to make them odious without any juſt ground, as he by his enquiry had certainly found, and that though there were ſhortly ſome things ſet down in it, and other things more ſharply againſt the Pope and Prelates, yet could he not adviſe to any rigid courſe againſt them; he ſaith alſo, that the former commiſſioners deſired a hearing, and that they ſhould not be accounted heretics before it was diſputed and they convinced; and, ſaith he, though for a time this fiſted the perſecution, yet by the hatred of cardinal Turnou and others, and by a forged calumny that the Waldenſes had gathered 1600 men together, and were intending commotions, they procured letters from the king to proceed in the intended perſecutions, which Minerius king of Pedar (as this author calleth him, whom Sleidan, called Oped) did cruelly execute in the moſt hainous and abominable manner that hath been heard of; which afterward the ſaid king exceedingly repented of, leaving it in his laſt commands to his ſon Henry to enquire in that cruelty; which in part was done, eſpecially on a monk who had invented new torments for them; and altho', ſaith he, ſome by the prevalency of ſome courtiers, eſpecially the Guiſans, were keeped from condign puniſhment before men, yet were viſibly purſued by God, as this author doth obſerve, pag. 122. from which we may gather, 1. The conformity betwixt their doctrine and the truth which we do now profeſs. How malicioufly ſlanders are invented by Papiſts againſt theſe who maintain the truth, and how little weight is to be laid on their teſtimony in that reſpect. 3. That this opinion of the church's begun defection, in the days of Conſtantine, is no new thing. 4. The horrible cruelty and unreaſonableneſs of the Popiſh perſecutions againſt theſe innocents that are ſo well teſtified of, which can be no other thing but the cruelty of the beaſt here mentioned.

LECTURE V.

Verſe 15. *And the ſeventh angel ſounded, and there were great voices in heaven, ſaying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Chriſt, and he ſhall reign for ever and ever.*

16. *And the four and twenty elders which ſat before God on their ſeats, fell upon their faces and worſhipped God,*

17. *Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and waſt, and art to come; becauſe thou haſt taken to thee thy great power, and haſt reigned.*

18. *And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they ſhould be judged, and that thou ſhouldeſt give reward unto thy ſervants the prophets, and to the ſaints, and them that fear thy name, ſmall and great, and ſhouldeſt deſtroy them which deſtroy the earth.*

19. *And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was ſeen in his temple the ark of his teſtament; and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.*

THE Lord, having cleared and confirmed his people in reference to the fifth and ſixth trumpets, he now proceedeth to the blowing of the ſeventh, which bringeth the laſt great wo: for underſtanding of it, there are two things to be obſerved.

1. That it dependeth upon, and immediately ſucceedeth unto the ſecond wo, ſo that where the ſecond wo hath its accompliſhment, there this third taketh its beginning. Now, the ſecond wo, having its end at the earthquakes ſhaking of ſome of the Romiſh dominion, the ſame hour when the witneſſes are taken up to heaven, immediately after Antichriſt's abſolute domineering, this wo cometh quickly upon the back of that, ver. 13, 14. and ſo muſt cotemporate with the breaking forth of reformation and its eſtabliſhment in the empire: we conceive therefore Antichriſt's height to be the march between theſe two trumpets, the fifth leaving him in his laſt act of ſupremacy at the very turn, and the ſeventh carrying on his ruin; for, theſe events of the witneſſes aſcending to heaven, a part of Rome's falling, and this ſeventh trumpet, are not linked together as ſucceſſive one to another, but as cotemporary one with another, the ſame hour, there being an hint given of that under the ſixth trumpet, which is carried on and perfected by the ſeventh, to ſhew where the march is to be fixed. Beſide, the height of Antichriſt and ruin, being woes of a diſtinct and contrary nature, it is not like that any conſiderable part of both ſhould be comprehended under one trumpet which containeth but one wo; and therefore it is certain, that his dominion belongeth to the ſixth, and his ruin to the ſeventh: we think therefore it is ſafeſt to begin the ſeventh at the beginning of his ruin, eſpecially conſidering that by this trumpet cometh the news of the kingdoms of the earth their becoming the Lord's; which conſideration doth alſo confirm what formerly we laid down of the vials, their being cotemporary with the ſeventh trumpet, and none of them with the ſixth.

We would obſerve the ſibneſs and identity of this trumpet with the ſeven vials, chap. xv. and xvi. ſo that, as we conceive, theſe ſeven vials do more particularly in ſeveral ſteps declare the ſame events which are more generally here comprehended, which will be clear by conſidering. 1. The nature and titles of both: this ſeventh trumpet is called a wo, and the laſt wo; theſe ſeven vials are called plagues, and the laſt plagues of God; which is upon the matter, the ſame with the laſt wo. 2. They have one object and errand, and effects common to both, viz. the execution of God's vengeance upon Antichriſt and the kingdom of the beaſt, the deſtroying of them that formerly deſtroyed the earth, and the bringing religion to light from under Antichriſtian darkneſs. 3. The riſe will be found to be at one time, the ſeventh trumpet beginneth immediately after Antichriſt's begun ruin, as is ſaid; and chap. xvi. we will find the firſt vial to be poured on theſe that have the mark of the beaſt, whoſe kingdom is not yet fully overturned until the ſixth;

and therefore must be in strength when the first beginneth. Beside, chap. xv. ver. 2. and succeed immediately unto the victory of the sealed number, chap. vii. and there is, upon the matter, the same song as is here: whereof see more, chap. vi. preface. 4. By comparing this with chap. xv. which is as a preface to the seven vials, it will appear they are exceeding parallel, yet one and the same, as the exposition of particulars going through all the parts will manifest: which ground being laid, will be of great use to understand.

1. This seventh trumpet. 2. The prophesy of these seven vials: and, 3. The intervening prophesy, chap. xii. 13, 14.

By which the principal typical prophesies expressed in sevens are interrupted; which is again made up by the vials, which are to be knit in the series to this seventh trumpet, the Lord here giving a little hint of the coming events, by way of preface, and opening the temple, ver. 19. which formerly was shut: and what followeth upon that? chap. xv. 6. out of the temple, thus opened, come seven angels having the seven lasts plagues, which are the particular instruments of this last wo, expressed generally under the terms of lightnings, thundrings, earthquakes, in this chapter. We may add, that the whole prophesies of this book, and so that of the seven vials, is comprehended in that book which *the lion of the tribe of Judah opened*, chap. v. And seeing, chap. x. *the finishing of the mystery of God* is applied to the seventh trumpet, these vials then must cotemporate with, and belong unto that trumpet, seeing the event that is applied to it, is, chap. xvi. xvii. xviii. particularly described, and to be fulfilled by them; and if they belong not to this trumpet, it could not be said, that the event fulfilled by them, viz. the avenging of God's people on the Antichrist, and the whore, and their destruction, were also fulfilled by it.

A special weight of the whole series laid down, doth ly in the confirmation of this, viz. that the seventh trumpet, and the seventh vial, do cotemporate and belong to the same times and events: we therefore further add, that we must either say that this trumpet doth cotemporate only with the seventh vial, or with all the vials, or at least with some few of them, and not with all; but neither the first nor the last, can be said: not the first, viz. that the seventh trumpet and the seventh vial only do cotemporate; because, if so, then the first six vials immediately preceding, behoved to cotemporate with the six trumpets, or these which precede the seventh; but that cannot be.

1. Because the first six trumpets, and the seventh, are different prophesies, six of them continuing the height of the church's enemies, and her low condition, and the seventh contrarily; and all the seven vials continue matter of one kind, viz. the church's rising condition, and her enemy's down-bringing: they cannot therefore be said to cotemporate with prophesies of divers natures. 2. If the first six vials should belong to the sixth trumpet, and cotemporate with it; then it will follow, that the church's lowest condition, and most flourishing condition, did belong to one prophesy; yea, to one step of one prophesy, viz. one trumpet: and on the contrary, that the highest and lowest condition of the church's enemies. viz. Antichrist, did belong to one period; yea, to one step of the same period of the church's condition: for it is clear, that the church is never lower than under the sixth trumpet, as the exposition of it doth clear, and what precedeth in this chapter doth confirm, and enemies were never higher, treading all underfoot: on the contrary, during the first six vials, the church beginneth to flourish, the plagues are poured out upon his kingdom and seat, and himself taken and cast in the lake by the sixth vials; but this is absurd, that such contrary events, as Antichrist's height and ruin, should belong to one period: yea, to the sixth part of one period, and the like can be shewed in no other step of this prophesy, wherein two such contrary events are comprehended, either amongst the seals, trumpets or vials, they cannot then be comprehended under the sixth trumpet; they must therefore all belong to the seventh. 3. These vials, as they contain matter of one kind, so are they one principal prophesy; and therefore they are no more to be divided, so as to cotemporate some with the seventh trumpet, and others with the sixth, than we ought to divide the trumpets to cotemporate some of them with the seventh seal, and others with the seals preceding, considering that the spirit keepeth the same form, in expressing this principal prophesy by seven vials, as in the former by seven seals, and seven trumpets. 4. This doth confirm it also, that the cotemporating of the first six

vials with the ſixth trumpet, would certainly lengthen it to an exceeding diſproportionableneſs; for, Antichriſt's height and dominion, take up a long time; theſe ſix vials, alſo, take in a long continuance: it is ſafer therefore to cotemporate all the vials with the ſeventh trumpet, and ſo their beginning being at one time, as well as the cloſe, their duration muſt be the ſame alſo. 5. This ſeventh trumpet bloweth immediately on the back of the ſecond wo, (which is the matter of the ſixth trumpet) Now, the firſt ſix vials cannot belong to the ſecond wo: for it's called a wo, becauſe of the hurt and prejudice that cometh by it to the church. Now theſe ſix vials that deſtroy Antichriſt, contain a great and unſpeakable benefit to the church, and are plagues in reſpect of the judgment that cometh on Antichriſt by them, neither could well the ſeventh trumpet be called the third wo, as bringing a wo with it to Antichriſt and his kingdom, if ſo be the ſix firſt vials did proceed it, (for they deſtroy him) they muſt therefore begin together.

The great reaſon that maketh ſome preſs for the cotemporating of the firſt ſix vials with the ſixth trumpet, is, that thereby they may bear out the ſeventh trumpet to be yet fully to come: and ſo (altho' the vials be begun) there may be the freer acceſs to divine concerning ſuppoſed ſtrange events of that trumpet; but from what is formerly ſaid in the preceding lecture, and what further may be ſaid, chap. xx. it appeareth, that the ſeventh trumpet is blown already, which doth confirm the ſynchroniſm laid down.

There are two main objections here, 1. That the ſeventh trumpet ſupponeth an abſolute freedom from Antichriſt, and all enemies, becauſe of theſe expreſſions, *The Lord omnipotent reigneth, the kingdoms of the earth are become the Lords, &c.* which cannot be verified during the firſt ſix vials; in the laſt whereof, Antichriſt is high by his frogs, conveening kings and nations againſt the church, &c. Therefore this ſeventh trumpet muſt cotemporate with the ſeventh vial only. *Anſw.* This argument doth proceed from the miſunderſtanding of the meaning of this text: for this doth not ſhew events preceding the blowing of this trumpet, or what caſe the church and world ſhall be in when it ſhall blow; but by anticipation, theſe phraſes do expreſs what was to follow upon the blowing thereof, and what a wonderful change might be expected by it: and this agreeth with the manner uſed in all the other types of this propheſy, whereby the church's eſtate is painted out, according as by the effects typified it was to be. It doth therefore rather infer the contrary thus, if by the ſounding of the ſeventh trumpet, *nations become the Lord's, &c.* Then the ſeventh trumpet doth not follow Antichriſt's final overthrow, but is to carry it on, becauſe by it nations are to be gained from him: but the firſt is true from the words, therefore it is not to be poſterior to his final overthrow, but is immediately to follow that time, when *all nations worſhip him.* See further, chap. vi. lect. 1.

The ſecond objection is, that before the ſeventh trumpet blow, the beaſt's kingdom is ſaid to be ſhaken with a conſiderable ruin; which ſay ſome, muſt belong to the vials, ſome whereof therefore muſt cotemporate with the ſixth trumpet. *Anſw.* What we have ſaid in the expoſition, will abundantly clear this: in a word, the ſixth trumpet hinteth the turn which the ſeventh doth conſummate; and it ſheweth, that immediately upon the back of the witneſſes killing, there ſucceeded a glorious face of the church, in compariſon of what was; which being compared with the application formerly given, will bear out this, that the Lord turned Antichriſt's higheſt fury againſt his church and witneſſes, to be the occaſion and mean of furthering his own ruin, and bringing of his church to ſome footing; which we acknowledge to belong to the ſixth trumpet, and maketh way for the opening of the temple in heaven, which was before ſhut, out of which the angels with the ſeven vials do proceed: which ſheweth, that there is ſome ſhaking of Antichriſt's kingdom antecedent to the vials, (as well as to the ſeventh trumpet) even as much as belongeth to the ſixth trumpet; for, the firſt of them ſupponeth a viſible church ſtate, and ſome victory over Antichriſt to be begun. From all which, the cotemporating of this ſeventh trumpet, with theſe ſeven vials, doth the more evidently appear: which we have inſiſted the more upon, becauſe it is a main pillar that ſupporteth the ſeries laid down, chap. vi. and doth make the connection clear here, altho' we profeſſedly ſpoke of it before.

To come particularly to the words then: the ſum and ſcope of theſe following verſes, is, by anticipation, to give a little view what the vials expreſs more fully from Antichriſt's begun ruin to its cloſe: and this is brought in here for the

confirmation and conſolation of God's people, that before he inſiſt in the particular explicatory propheſy of the church's trials from the beaſt in the chapters following, they may have a hint of the happy outgate following it, and it doth lay open a full view of the church's militant condition to her cloſe, before he again begin to deduce it from its beginning.

This happy outgate is three ways expreſſed, 1. By a heavenly proclamation of good news, verſe 15. 2. By an excellent ſong of thankſgiving, verſes 16, 17, 18. 3. By a type or viſion, verſe 19. All which are but generally hinted, without mentioning any particular, becauſe that is reſerved to be done by the propheſy of the vials. The general proclamation is, *There were great voices in heaven, ſaying, The kingdoms of this world are become the Lords, and his Chriſts, and he ſhall reign for ever:* where we have to conſider, 1. The news. 2. Whence they come. The news have two branches, one is concerning the preſent happy change, *The kingdoms are become the Lords;* and the other is concerning the continuance thereof, *He ſhall reign for ever.*

By *kingdoms of this world*, we underſtand not all kingdoms, but ſome, or many; called kingdoms, in oppoſition to perſons or families, or parts of nations. Now, the body of kingdoms and nations are brought in, as is expreſly ſaid, chap. xv. 4. Parallel to this, *All nations ſhall come and worſhip before thee.* They are called *kingdoms of this world*, to ſhew, that ſuch nations as formerly did not acknowlegde God, ſhould now ſubmit to him. The ſcope is to ſhew the increaſe of the goſpel after Antichriſt's begun ruin, in oppoſition to the former paucity that was in the true church.

They are ſaid to *become the Lord's and his Chriſt's*, in oppoſition to what formerly they were, they were his by creation, but were not of his church, nor did not acknowledge his Chriſt as head, but owned another maſter; now they become the Lord's by ſpecial acknowledging of him, and they become his Chriſt's by the profeſſion of faith in him alone. In a word, this their becoming his now, is to be a pure church to him, ſuch as no nation formerly were, and as once the Jews were his in a peculiar manner.

Beſide, this is expounded, chap. xv. 4. *All nations ſhall come and worſhip before him*, by giving their profeſſed ſubjection to him. It is ſaid, *He ſhall reign for ever;* this is not only to ſhew the perpetuity and eternity of Chriſt's kingdom in itſelf, as it is expreſſed, Dan. ii. *That of his kingdom there ſhall be no end:* for, even under Antichriſt's height of tyranny this was true, our Lord Jeſus had a kingdom then; but this reigning relateth to his viſible continuing of a kingdom in the world, ſuch as he ſeemed not to have immediately before this, as may be gathered from verſe 17. In a word, Chriſt hath now taken on him to have a viſible kingdom in the world, and that ſhall continue without ſuch an univerſal eclipſe by Antichriſt or any other, to the end.

Theſe news are proclaimed by great voices from heaven: which may be underſtood either properly of the joy in heaven, and praiſe which God getteth there for the converſion of one ſinner, much more for the converſion of nations, or, (which eſpecially we reſt in) figuratively of the viſible church, which is juſt now conſtituted, and the witneſſes ſet therein; they, before this, ſpoke ſilently; now, with confidence and boldneſs they cry and praiſe: the rather we conceive this to be the voice of the witneſſes and faithful miniſters, becauſe in the ſong following, we find only mention made of the elders, and yet it is not like, that the miniſters or beaſts were ſilent, who, chap. iv. and v. uſe, in their thankſgiving, to go before the elders; this therefore is like to be from them, it being one of the delightſomeſt meſſages of the miniſters of the goſpel, Iſa. lii. 7. to ſay unto Sion, *Thy God reigneth.* 2. The event of this trumpet is ſet forth in the thankſgiving ſong of *the four and twenty elders:* where, 1. Their poſture is ſet down; next, their praiſe.

By elders, as on chap. iv. was ſhown, are repreſented the believers, who now alſo having got to ſeats again, and a viſible profeſſion, (which was not heard of during Antichriſt's reign, and the temple's meaſuring, and the woman's being in the wilderneſs) they do alſo publicly acknowledge this mercy, and praiſe for it; and, by falling down before him, acknowledging their having that ſettled condition from him; and that humility and reverence is no leſs requiſite for praiſe in a proſperous condition, than it is for prayer under adverſity. The ſubject of this ſong pointeth at two particulars in the event of this trumpet; 1. God's taking to himſelf a kingdom for his people's good. 2.

His pleading againſt his enemies, and executing juſtice upon them.

In the firſt, ver. 17. They begin with God's title, *Lord God Almighty, which art, and waſt, and art to come:* it was ſpoken of before, and is here applied, to ſhew, 1. That God rightly taken up, is the ground of praiſe for deliverance, as well as the ground of faith and prayer under ſtraits. And, 2. To ſhew a ſuitableneſs in God's work to himſelf, this being a proof that he was indeed God Almighty, &c. And, 3. This ſheweth the right way of thankſgiving, which is to be led in by the conſideration of God's works, to have right impreſſions of his own excellency, and alſo ſuitable expreſſions of theſe. This word, *We give thee thanks*, implieth not only the duty of a people for ſpiritual mercies; but, 1. It ſupponeth an excellency in the work. 2. A majeſty in the worker. 3. An acknowledgment of his hand and grace in the performing of it. 4. A reckoning of themſelves obliged to him for it. 5. A heartineſs and cheerfulneſs in the expreſſion of this.

The firſt ground of their praiſe is, *Becauſe thou haſt taken to thee thy great power, and haſt reigned:* Which doth imply, 1. That in the time of Antichriſt's full domineering, the Lord ſeemed not to reign, having had his power obſcured by that tyranny. 2. That the Lord's having a church in the world, eſpecially in any flouriſhing condition, is the great evidence of his power and government in the world, and a notable effect thereof; and that it ought to be exceeding refreſhful to God's people, when he exerciſeth his power for having of a church in the days wherein they live, that they may ſee him glorified in the flouriſhing of his ordinances.

The ſecond part of their praiſe relateth to the work of juſtice againſt enemies, verſe 18. This work of juſtice is five ways amplified and ſet forth, 1. In the nature and height of it, *and thy wrath is come.* God ſometimes ſeemeth to overſee wrongs, but he hath a time of calling to a reckoning, when wrath will not be delayed, as is threatened by the angel, chapter x. 2. It is amplified, in reſpect of theſe on whom it came, *and the nations were angry:* the world was in tops with Chriſt's church, having hatred againſt his people; even then ſeaſonably God tryſteth the vengeance, and that not on particular perſons, but on nations. 3. The greatneſs of this work is ſet forth by the low condition of theſe that were to be delivered, they are called dead, as being appointed to death, and ſo accounted amongſt the men of the world; which looketh to the reviving of the prophets formerly ſpoken of, and to that reſurrection of the profeſſors, chap. xx. as impoſſible and improbable, it being no leſs power to bring the church through that deſperate-like condition ſhe was under, than to raiſe the dead.

The laſt two amplifications of this judgment are the univerſality and equity of it. Its univerſality is expreſſed, in that it is called the time of judgment wherein ſmall and great ſhall be called to a reckoning. It is ſaid the time is come, to ſhew God's appointing of times and periods even before they come, and that every event is beautiful in its ſeaſon, and ought to be welcomed by God's people in his time. The equity and juſtice of his proceeding is two ways expreſſed, 1. His keeping promiſe to his own, *That thou ſhouldeſt give reward to thy ſervants the prophets, and to the ſaints, and to them that fear thy name, ſmall and great.* This recompenſe of grace is called a reward. 1. Becauſe God hath knit it to his promiſe, and tied himſelf by grace to the performing of it. 2. Becauſe he accounteth himſelf bound by the right he hath given them to it. 3. Becauſe he alloweth it in lieu of the former ſufferings and afflictions which they lay under: the prophets are firſt named to be recompenſed, becauſe both their work and ſufferings is greateſt: then all his ſaints follow, even ſmall and great; there are none who endeavour faithfully to keep their garments clean, how mean ſoever their parts be, and obſcure their place, that ſhall miſs of the recompenſe when God's time of rewarding cometh, and this looketh particularly to the ſuffering prophets, formerly mentioned, ver. 4, 5, &c. who are now vindicated, when God maketh it appear there is a reward for the righteous, and a God that judgeth in the earth, as, Pſal. lviii. and it is this judgment which principally is related unto. 2. It is expreſſed in the equity of his proceeding toward his enemies, they deſtroyed, or corrupted the earth; here God meeteth them in their own meaſure: which is particularly marked in the pouring out of the vials, chap. xvi. 5, 6.

This work of juſtice doth not principally relate to the laſt judgment, as the ſcope doth clear; but to the Lord's vindicating his people from Antichriſt's tyranny, thus expreſſed for the reaſons given,

chap. vi. where his vengeance on the heatheniſh perſecutors is ſet down. In ſum, it is as if they had ſaid, we thank thee for this diſpenſation whereby thy wrath is manifeſted upon Antichriſt, and thy goodneſs to thy people; and, as Moſes ſang to the praiſe of God, Exod. xv. after the delivery from Egypt, ſo now do we for thy deliverance from ſpiritual Egypt, ver. 8. on which conſideration, chap. xv. their ſong is called the ſong of Moſes, and of the Lamb alſo: which doth confirm the coincidency of this trumpet with theſe vials.

The third way whereby this event is expreſſed, is by ſigns, ver. 19. pointing at the ſame ſcope, viz. the ſpreading of reformation, increaſe of knowledge, and wrath againſt enemies. The firſt is expreſſed in two, one of them being the effect of the other: 1. *And the temple of God was opened in heaven:* there is no temple, properly, in heaven, chap. xxi. 22. But here is meant the viſible church: the alluſion is to the manner under the Old Teſtament in times of univerſal corruption and defection; ſuch as that of Ahaz was, (to whom in ſeveral things Antichriſt may well be paralelled) then the temple was ſhut, and the ark was not ſeen. Again, in the time of reformation, ſuch as the days of Hezekiah were, the firſt ſtep was the opening of the temple, 2 Chron. xxix. 3. and the people had again acceſs to the public ſervice. So here, in Antichriſt's time, the temple is ſhut, the ſervice of God is diſhaunted, and in God's ſecret way the temple is meaſured by for a few, and the teſtimony is ſealed up to the diſciples: now, the days, after the witneſſes reviving, ſhall be as the days of Hezekiah, the temple ſhall be opened, and there ſhall be a public pure profeſſion of the goſpel. The ſecond expreſſion is, *And there were ſeen in his temple the ark of his teſtament:* the ark was in the moſt holy, and the ſeeing of it, importeth a greater increaſe of knowledge. We may conſider it two ways, which will agree in one; either, 1. As it was typical of Chriſt; ſo it ſignifieth that Jeſus Chriſt, who, under Popery, was obſcured by ſuperſtitions, multitude of mediators, merit of works, and was ſcarce diſcernible to people, now, not only is the temple door opened, but, as it is, Iſa. xxv. 6. the vail is drawn by, and Chriſt Jeſus, the true ark, becometh diſcernible and viſible in the efficacy of his offices; or, we may conſider the ark, as it included the law; therefore it is here called the *ark of his teſtament;* ſo it implieth, that the word of God formerly vailed to the people, ſo as they durſt not read it, nor have it in their own tongue: now, by this reformation, it is become familiar to them, they hear it in their own language, may read it in their family, carry it about with them. The vengeance of God againſt enemies is ſet forth in theſe words, *and there were lightnings, voices, thundrings, and an earthquake, and great hail;* expreſſions that are uſed, chap. vi. when the great temporal judgment of God againſt heatheniſh perſecutors is conſummated; it is alſo mentioned, chap. xvi. We take this to be the general hint of what the ſeven vials afterwards expreſs, as is ſaid: for, chap. xv. 5, 6. immediately after the opening of the temple, the ſeven angels, with the vials, come forth, as being formerly kept up, now they appear.

By this ſimilitude of *opening the temple*, this is ſet forth, that as, in the Jewiſh times, during their greateſt defections, there was ſtill ſome temple and church; and, at the time of reformation, there was no new temple built, nor new circumciſion inſtituted, nor prieſts appointed; but corruptions were removed, and the temple and prieſts put again to their own proper uſe and duty; ſo, during the defection of Antichriſt, there ſhould ſtill be a church, temple, ordinances, and miniſters; and that the bringing of the goſpel again to public in the world after that, ſhould not be by erecting a new church, and new ordinances, or appointing new officers, but ſhould be by the purging away of the former corruptions, and applying of the ordinances and officers to their own former uſe: for, it is the ſame temple after reformation which was before, but now it is opened; the woman, chap. xii. is the ſame under perſecution, while ſhe is in the wilderneſs during the 1260 days, that ſhe was before her fleeing, and continueth to be the ſame after her return from the wilderneſs; only that which by Antichriſt's additions was vailed and corrupted, now, by the removal, becometh more viſible and pure.

Upon this very ground it is, that the reviving again of religion is commonly called reformation, not as bringing in any thing new, but as purging what formerly was corrupted. Upon this ground, baptiſm continueth to be baptiſm, though tranſmitted through them, and a miniſtry continueth to be a miniſtry, except we ſay there were no ordinances and miniſters before the time of reformation,

and so no church, which is expresly contrary to the scope and letter of this and the following chapters. From this also it appeareth, there needeth no new constitution of a church that is brought from Popery, such as might be called for from heathens who are not Christians, but the purging away the dross of Antichristianism, and the practical adhering to the purity and power of the gospel, even as there was great odds amongst the Jews, in the recovering of them from their grosest defection, and the admission of Pagans into the church.

Neither can it be inferred from this, either that then the church of Rome was, and so is now, a true church, or that we have our ordination from it, and are beholden to Antichrist for that. This first is much urged by Papists in this dilemma, either the church of Rome was the true church, and so there ought not to have been a separation from it; or she was not the true church, and so there was none for many years, except she be acknowledged for such. To this we answer, 1. By distinguishing the church from Antichrist, and his worship brought into the church, and added to the ordinances thereof for obscuring the worship of Christ. There is a true church that is the subject, that is not denied, on which Antichrist usurpeth, and as an extrinsic accident, setting himself down in that temple; yet is the temple and church now different from his additions, as the temple of the Jews was from the corruptions that were accidentally brought in upon it in the times of corruption. Thus, the word of God, sacraments, prayer, ordination, &c. are continued, which are as the material worship of God, and, as such, are not Antichristian. The adding of traditions to that word, putting of false glosses on it, corrupting of the sacraments by superstitious and idolatrous additions, praying to saints and images, erecting an Antichristian hierarchy in the place of ordination, and these who should be officers in Christ's house, and many such like things, these are Antichristian indeed, and may, as we see, be separated from the former. Again, 2. We may distinguish professors, who are either such as receive the complete worship of the Popish church, receiving indeed the scriptures, but with such traditions and glosses, as do, upon the matter, make the commands of God of none effect, that pray but to angels, saints, images, &c. that use sacraments, but withal their superstitious and idolatrous additions, and so in all other things. Or, they are such who close with the materials, to say so, that are abused in Popery, and do abandon all these destructive additions, that is, who acknowledge the truth of the gospel, and the way of free grace, and hate their merit of works, satisfactions, penances, &c. who receive the sacraments, but abominate their transubstantiation, mass, and all that dependeth on these, that pray to the true God in the name of Jesus Christ, and abhor their idolatries, &c. so in other things. Now, in the application, we say, 1. That if we consider the Popish church in the large extent thereof, properly, and its worshippers or members, that without choice drink in their doctrine complexly, as it is holden out by them, and worship according to these principles; in that sense, the Popish church is no church of Christ, but is truly Antichristian; and these two cannot stand together, to be Antichrist's church, and Christ's spouse, at one time; but, if we consider the church materially, as distinguished from these additions of Antichrist in her ministers and members, concurring in the faith of the true doctrine, and in practice and worship, accordingly hating and abominating these superstitions, and idolatrous corruptions and inventions; we say, that was the true church of Christ, which did not receive these, but kept the former principle materially both in faith and practice: and, therefore, it will follow only on the former objection, that that church on which Popery obtruded herself, and which yet did abhor it, that was the true church; which we grant: but that as distinctly considered, as pure from their Antichristian inventions, at least so far as Antichristian. Now, from the church which retained the foundation, and did adhere to the doctrine and worship that is in the word, we did never separate, nor from those that continued so; but did separate from the Antichristian church, that did obscure and corrupt these, and would neither amend them themselves, nor suffer others to do so: and this separation is necessary, and called for by that command, *Come out of her my people*, chap. xviii. and, without this, there had been no communion kept with that which was the true church of God, who, although for a time she did live in that Babylonish captivity, was yet never of that communion: and both these, viz. that there were ever some such who kept the foundation, and did reject the Popish inventions, and that they in so far joined not with

them, and ſo had not fellowſhip with Antichriſt and his works of darkneſs, but did reprove them, we ſuppoſe is clear from what is already ſaid. Neither ought the Papiſts to think this ſtrange, that we apply ſuch diſtinctions to the church under the true Antichriſt, conſidering that they uſe the ſame in reference to the time of their forged Antichriſt, who, ſay they, ſhall over-run the church, and by idolatries and violence cover the face thereof; yet ſhall there be a true church who ſhall not be locally ſeparated from him and his followers, but in reſpect of their adhering to the former purity: and ſo by them the queſtion, where the true church, during that time, is to be, is anſwered, thus, it is under Antichriſt but not of that defection; his church is the company of theſe that ſhall decline from their former purity; the true church are the few here and there that ſhall retain it. And thus generally they expound the woman fleeing, chap. xii. (which local mutation of the church, is but a decay of her conſpicuouſneſs and beauty; by the defection of the great part, and the overſpreading of Antichriſtianiſm;) and the remiſts do illuſtrate it thus, that as now in England the church may be ſaid to be fled in reſpect of what it was, and the public face of things; yet, as there are in it many true profeſſors who are not of that church, but adhere to Romiſh; ſo, ſay they, will it be in Antichriſt's time; and may not now that ſame be more rationally ſaid of the true church even in theſe times and places where Popery hath covered the public face of all.

The ſecond objection may be cleared alſo from what is ſaid, that we have not our miniſtry and ordination from Antichriſt, more than we have the word and ſacraments from him, although through their hands the Lord did convey them to us; but we have theſe from the Lord, whoſe ordinances they are, and to whom we are obliged for purging them from Antichriſtian corruptions, and tranſmitting them pure to us, which Antichriſt would never have done. Neither can it be thought ſtrange that we ſhould have ordination and ordinances tranſmitted to us through Antichriſt's reign, conſidering that there were ſuch, even in his time. Now, we muſt either deny that any ſuch were during the long time, which is abſurd and contrary to the ſcope here; or, we muſt ſay, that it is more impoſſible for us to continue ordination and ordinances of a diſtinct ſeparate way from Antichriſt, (as we thro' God's goodneſs have them now) and not to be obliged to him for them, or not to have them derived from him, than it was to the miniſters and church that lived while he was in his height. For, if we ſay that their ordination and ordinances were Antichriſtian, then ſhall we have no Chriſtian church; if we ſay they were Chriſtian, though ſometime coming through impure hands, becauſe they ſeparated what was Antichriſtian from them; ſo that may be ſaid here alſo, and ſo it is. We therefore apply theſe diſtinctions here, and ſay, that we may conſider our ordination materially in itſelf, or complexly in reſpect of its additionals, and the former church in reſpect of the multitude who declined, or the few that keeped their garments, and were not Antichriſtian. If we conſider ordination and ordinances materially, ſo we have them from the true church and prophets that were during Antichriſt's reign, and our church ſucceedeth them: and although it deſcend by the church under Antichriſt, yet is not Antichriſtian, more than ſhe was Antichriſtian, as is ſaid. Again, if we conſider, ordination complexly, in which ſenſe only it is Antichriſtian, ſo we have not ordination derived to us from her, becauſe we have none ſuch at all. It is not enough to make ordination and ordinances Antichriſtian, that they be ſo, or by ſuch tranſmitted, as the former inſtance of the church in that time, and what is formerly ſaid doth clear, but that they be tranſmitted as ſuch complexly: now, theſe are not as ſuch tranſmitted to us, therefore cannot be called Antichriſtian.

Beſide this, we may draw ſome concluſions from this ſong, the firſt whereof is this, that a national church is not only inconſiſtent with the flouriſhing eſtate of the goſpel in the world, but concomitant with it; yea, is a manifeſt proof of it, and a great ground of rejoicing to God's people, and of praiſe to him. For clearing and confirming whereof, we may conſider, 1. That by nations and kingdoms here, is meaned the generality and body of ſuch kingdoms and nations. 2. That being the Lord's here, is meaned a ſpecial church ſtate and relation: which two being made out, it will conſequently appear, that what we call a national church (which is the combination of a nation as one unto God) doth well ſuit the time of Antichriſt's fall, and of the goſpel's flouriſhing.

The first, viz. that by kingdoms here, or nations, chap. xv. 4. are not to be understood some few of a kingdom or nation, but the generality and body of them, may appear, 1. From the scope, which clearly is this, to set out the largeness of the extent of the flourishing of the gospel, or the inlargement or wonderful extent of the church after Antichrist's begun ruin. If it were but some few, there would be no such ground of praise, nor no such difference from what was before, even then, some of nations and kingdoms were the Lord's.

2. Kingdoms, becoming his, is to be understood as the like phrases used of cities and families, their becoming his; but that doth import not only some of such a family or city, but the whole or generality of them, as instances will clear. See what is said of Lydda and Saron, Acts ix. 35. which certainly is more than can be said of other cities, where yet he might have many; therefore it must be so here. 3. These kingdoms become his, as once the kingdom and nation of the Jews were his in a peculiar manner; for, this seemeth to relate to the Lord's manner of calling the Jewish nation; and as they were his, so shall these nations be his, seeing no other so clear parallel can be given of expounding here a kingdom becoming the Lord's; so Israel is called his nations, Isa. li. 4. it is true, this will not hold in typical and ceremonial things, but in things common, and essential to a national church, it will, as we may conclude the relation of a particular person to God now, by paralleling it with the particular relation between God and one of the Jews, though it could not be extended to what is typical and ceremonial in that respect. 4. The opposition maketh it clear, nations now become the Lord's as formerly they were Antichrist's, that is, they give now the profession of purity by a public acknowledgement, as formerly they gave it to the beast; now they reject him, and take Christ in his room, but the first was done nationally. 5. Nations become now the Lord's as they were not his before; for, thus the opposition is to be understood also, but that was in respect of the complex body, the generality of them; and if now the phrase be, such a nation is not the Lord's, because the generality and complex body do not publicly acknowledge him, then on the contrary, all nations becoming his, must import his having his public worship nationally among them. 6. Nations now are to become his, and to be admitted to the church under the gospel, as they were formerly secluded before Christ came in the flesh, Psal. cxlvii. *Thou hast not dealt so with every nation, &c.* but that which was peculiar to the Jews then, from which other nations were excluded, was not in respect of particular persons of nations; for, even many Gentiles were admitted with Israel to the church, but the difference was in respect of the collective body of other nations, none whereof were so admitted. 7. We may consider this phrase of nations and kingdoms their becoming of Christ's here, as it clearly respecteth the many promises and propheſies that went before of calling nations to him; this is marked as the fulfilling of these promises, whereby great things have been expected by the people of God, and they cannot be looked on but as holding forth more ground of joy than can be gathered from the conversation of parts of kingdoms. Consider these two places, the first is, Rom. x. 19. cited out of Deut. xxxii. 21. *I will provoke them to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation will I anger you.* Where two things are observable. 1. That this provoking of Israel by a nation, is somewhat penal, punishing them for their contempt, when, as it is, Matth. xxi. 43. they shall see the kingdom of God, and their national church state translated from them to another people, and given unto a nation who shall nationally be invested with their privileges, as ingrafted in their room. 2. That the end thereof is to provoke them to jealousy, when they shall see a whole nation, nationally owned of God (which they esteemed to be their peculiar privilege) and acknowledged by him in their room; the calling of particular persons of nations could not be so effectual either to anger or provoke them, seeing that hath been common to all times. The second place, is, Isa. xix. verse 18, 19, 23, 24, 25. where Egypt and Assyria are called the Lord's people, even as Israel is; and that must be nationally considered.

8. Take this place as including the re-ingrafting again of the Jews (as no question it doth, seeing their incoming belongeth to the same time) it is most profitable like, that their church will be national in the former respect, 1. If we consider these expressions, Rom. xi. 26. *All Israel shall be saved;* which is certainly in opposition to the parcels of them, and singular persons whom God called, and continued in his church, even when the body of

them is broken off. 2. They may be expected to be ingrafted into that eſtate they fell from; for, ſaith he, Rom. xi. *They ſhall be grafted in again*, but that eſtate was their national church ſtate relation, and apparently had they received the goſpel, they had continued a national church to God, and not loſt their former privilege, though it had not continued to be typical, or peculiar to them. Now, this which they fell from, was not from being privileged with particular churches; for we may ſee by the epiſtle to the Hebrews and hiſtory of the Acts, that after their rejection, there were particular churches among them. It would ſeem therefore that their ingrafting muſt be as broad as, (and of the ſame nature with) their breaking off.

9. This phraſe, *the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord's*, is to be underſtood with reſpect to the commiſſion given to the apoſtles for calling in nations and kingdoms, ſo that this is marked as the fruit and ſucceſs of that: but that commiſſion, Matth. xxviii. *Go, diſciple all nations, &c.* looketh to the body and generality of nations, it being a warrant to invite, diſciple, and gather in a whole nation: and although ſometimes in the event, but ſome of kingdoms and nations are gathered in: yet it cannot be ſaid that, upon ſuppoſition, a whole kingdom or nation ſhould yield, but they might be by this warrant received and admitted; even as by this warrant indefinitely the call and offer is made to all the nation in common. And although not one ſhould yield, yet this commiſſion and warrant ſheweth it is neither inconſiſtent with the goſpel to call a nation, nor to admit them upon the former ſuppoſition.

10. This phraſe, *kingdoms or nations are the Lord's* muſt differ, and ſeemeth expreſly to be contradiſtinguiſhed from that, chap. v. *Thou haſt redeemed us out of all nations, tongues, kindreds*, and yet that will take in ſome of nations diſtributively; this therefore muſt include more: and conſidering that this ſpeaketh of a viſible church ſtate, and that of the elect and redeemed only, there is reaſon that the expreſſion ſhould be more broad, and apparently it relateth to that, ſo that as our Lord will have his redeemed gathered out of nations, and will take none univerſally for ſuch, yet to be a church in which he will erect his ordinances, he will call nations, collectively conſidered.

For the ſecond, that by being the Lord's here, is meaned a ſpecial church ſtate and relation to him by viſible profeſſion, and conſequently that which we call a national church doth belong to this time of the goſpel's riſing and Antichriſt's fall, will be clear, if we conſider theſe particulars, 1. That to be the Lord's here is not to be his as all the world is; for, ſo were they alway, this is ſome peculiar thing. Nor, 2. To be the Lord's here, is it to be his by ſaving faith, that will not agree to a whole nation, neither to the ſcope, which is to ſhew a viſible and public church ſtate and condition. It is then to be his, 1. By viſible profeſſion of faith in him, and a public church relation between Chriſt and them, as Iſrael is often called his nation, Iſa. li. 4. though all in it were not converts. Now, it is not only Iſrael, but other nations alſo that are ingrafted and come in their place, Rom. xi. 24. Again, 2. To be the Lord's, it is to be his, as once they were not his, but Antichriſt's, bearing his mark, worſhipping him, as chap. xiii. The oppoſition is clear, they that were under the whore are now turned to Chriſt. 3. They are the Lord's as families and cities in the Acts are ſaid to be his; but that is to be churches, as the Lord ſpeaketh to Paul at Epheſus, *I have much people in this place*, that is, a flouriſhing, numerous church to be converted here by thy miniſtry, who being gathered, become a church, Rev. ii. 1. and ſo a people being the Lord's, is their becoming a church; and therefore when a nation is ſaid to be the Lord's, it is equivalent as to ſay, that nation is a church to the Lord, as theſe in Epheſus are written unto, Rev. ii. 1.

Out of all which may be concluded, if it be all one to ſay, that nations ſhall be the Lord's, and nations ſhall be churches, then the ſcripture doth aſſert national churches in the days of the goſpel, not only as conſiſtent with the goſpel's adminiſtration, but as an evident commendation of it; but the firſt is true from this place: and therefore the laſt alſo; for, a ſong is given to God for it.

There are ſome objections to be removed, the firſt whereof, is, that there is no mention made of any national church in the New Teſtament; yea, where ſundry families and churches of one nation are converted, they are ſtiled churches, and not one church, ſo may it be here. *Anſw.* 1. It will not be ſafe in ſome things to ſtick literally to words, ſo as none other may be admitted but what is expreſly in the letter, if the thing be written; for,

the church being then in its infancy, it is no marvel that no whole nations or kingdoms were converted, and ſo could not be called by that name, ſeeing that magiſtrates, who are prime parts, were long after that the church's enemies: and though a minor part be called by churches, and not by the name of the nation, it is no marvel, ſeeing the nation and church were not of equal extent; and, in that reſpect, the church was not national. *Anſ.* 2. Yet the equivalent is in the New Teſtament, two ways: 1. When many churches in one city are called the church of that city, as Jeruſalem, Antioch, Epheſus, Corinth, which were more than one congregation: and may it not, by the ſame reaſon, be given to many churches of a nation as well; compare 1 Corinth. i. 2. with xiv. 34. it will be found that one church had more in it. 2. It is equivalent, when many churches of one people, are, upon the matter, counted as one, and called one in the New Teſtament, ſo the Hebrews are all, when they are written to, called one houſe, Heb. iii. 6. yet had many officers, Heb. xiii. 17. and the viſible church only is the object of writing, and by Peter, one flock, 1 Peter v. 1, 2, 3. and the churches of Galatia are called one lump, chap. v. and written unto in common, to cut off them that troubled them, and to prevent the growing of a rent amongſt them: which certainly ſheweth us, that churches in one nation have dangers common to them all, which are not ſo to others, and duties lying on them reſpectively, and rents and ſtrivings wherewith they peculiarly are bitten and devoured. It ſheweth alſo, there was ſome peculiar unity to be rent, ſome greater tie and union that made them as one lump to be in hazard; and ſome ground giving them acceſs to go untiedly about theſe duties, which otherwiſe were impoſſible to them, ſome way peculiar to them in that one nation more than with others that were not of it. *Anſw.* 3. The ſcripture expreſly calleth the churches of Judea by one church, which apparently was that ſame with the church of Jeruſalem, and having the ſame officers; for, it is not like, that all the believers reckoned in Jeruſalem, dwelt in the town.

But, it is clear, 1. That the churches which Paul perſecuted was one church, Acts viii. 3. But that was eſpecially the church of the Jews, not a particular congregation of them, but all that called on Chriſt's name, Acts ix. 1, 2, 14. whatever they were all of that way, ix. 21. eſpecially Jews; wherefore he hath letters and authority from the high-prieſt, which reached not to Gentiles (for the high-prieſt had not authority over them) and he entered in ſynagogues to perſecute, yet that church, which he perſecuted, was the churches in Judea, who, upon his converſion from perſecution, are ſaid immediately to have reſt, chap. ix. 31. compare with it, Acts xxvi. 9, 10, 11, &c. Yea, from that we may argue.

That the church which Paul did perſecute, was one church, chap. viii. 3. But that comprehended all the Jews of that way, and the churches of all Judea, Samaria and Galilee, as appeareth, ver. 1, 2, 31, chap. ix. Therefore they are one church. Or thus, if the churches of Judea may be one, there may be a national church; but they are one. Theſe who had reſt by his converſion, are the ſame who were troubled by his perſecution; for that, chap. ix. 31. is mentioned as a fruit of Paul's converſion; but theſe who had reſt, are many churches; and theſe who are perſecuted, are but one. *Ergo* theſe many are one, and that one is many.

Take one other place, Gal. i. compare ver. 13, 22, 23, 25. There is one church ſpoken of verſe 13. there are churches of Judea ſpoken of ver. 22. and yet both are one; therefore it muſt mean as much as the church of Judea. Theſe churches of Judea are many churches, to whom Paul was unknown; but theſe churches were theſe whom Paul perſecuted, ſay they, ver. 23. *He that perſecuted us*, that is, Us, the churches. *Ergo* that one church whom he perſecuted, ver. 13. was the church of the Jews, including the churches of Judea.

Neither will it be of force to ſay, this maketh the church national, as it was proper to the Jews, becauſe for a nation to be a church, differeth from making the church national, or proper and peculiar to that nation, which was the Jews privilege beyond all nations: neither is it good reaſoning, perſons are of ſuch a nation and ſtock, therefore of the church, as if it followed that ſeed, be what they will, it may be doubted, if Iſrael was ſo; but this is good reaſoning, ſuch a nation have given and engaged themſelves to Chriſt; therefore they are a church. Again, in that reſpect, a city or family is not more conſiſtent with the goſpel to be a church than a whole nation; for, no particular city, or family, have promiſes beyond others, under the goſpel, yet any city or family becoming Chriſti-

ans, becometh a church, and all their members are church members; and what more is pleaded for, or can be denied unto nations? Neither can it be excepted, that a nation are many, for many profeſſors are promiſed to Chriſt, and is an evidence of his reign by their multitude, as their purity of holineſs is another, when joined together.

Hence alſo, *Secondly*, We may from the former grounds argue, for the baptizing of children, thus, If whole kingdoms and nations may, in a peculiar manner, be churches to Chriſt under the goſpel, and it be Chriſt's glory to have it ſo, then are many children to be baptized; but the former is true. *Ergo*, &c. The conſequence will appear by conſidering theſe two, 1. That under *nations becoming the Lord's*, children muſt be comprehended and be his alſo. 2. That by becoming his viſibly in a church ſtate and relation, there is an actual right to the ſacrament of baptiſm, as a viſible badge of that relation.

For the 1. we ſay, If nations be Chriſt's, then children muſt be his; they are a great part of every nation, and are included under all the former acceptations; yea, although it were but ſome of all ſorts in a nation, yet even in that ſenſe children could not be excluded; no nation will be his if children be not his. 2. Theſe nations come in the room of the Jews, but their children were a great part of that church. 3. Nations there take in the Jews ingrafting in what they fell from, but they and their children were broken off. Beſide, if the Jews had not their children reſtored to covenant with them, it might ſeem that in that reſpect, their privileges were leſs by Chriſt's coming than formerly. 4. Nations here are to be underſtood in reference to the promiſe, Gen. xii. *in thy ſeed ſhall all nations be bleſſed:* and if children cannot be ſecluded there, but that bleſſing muſt be underſtood to reach them, why ſhould they be excluded here, or in that commiſſion, Matth. xxviii. to go and baptize nations, ſeeing that is the proclamation of the fulfilling of the former promiſe, and muſt be expounded by it? 5. When judgments are threatened on nations, or when it is ſaid, that nations ſhall be brought to judgment, it doth ever comprehend the children with the reſt, and by what reaſon then can they be excluded here in this privilege?

And if this be granted, then will their baptiſm be eaſily evinced; for, to be the Lord's here, is not to be reſtricted to being his by faith ſavingly, as is ſaid, but looketh mainly to being his by a viſible profeſſion, diſcriminating them from others who are not his: and how can that be without baptiſm? Or, is there any other diſcriminating ſeal for children? Or can they be his as members of his viſible church, and neither be baptized, nor have right to it?

Again, we may thus argue. If nations be to be diſcipled and baptized, then are children to be baptized, and that by virtue of that command and commiſſion, Matth. xxviii. But the former is true, nations are to be baptized. *Ergo*, That which needeth to be made out here, is, that under nations, children are to be included, and that in that commiſſion; which may be thus evinced, if under every conſideration of a nation children are to be included, then they muſt be included here alſo: for, we cannot conceive of a nation, as conſidered either collectively *in ſingulis generum*, or diſtributively, *in generebus ſingulorum*, but children muſt be conſidered as a prime conſtituent part, as may be ſeen in former acceptions of nations that are mentioned, children are included in them all, and we may ſay muſt be included in this very commiſſion, *go, teach all nations, and baptize them*, 1. Becauſe this commiſſion reſpecteth particularly God's promiſe to Abraham, Gen. xii. 3. That in his ſeed, that is in Chriſt, not only the nation of the Jews that ſhould come of him ſhould be bleſſed, but all nations; and this commiſſion is, as if the apoſtles were told now, that that is to be fulfilled, and the partition is taken down, as was ſaid to Abraham, when the goſpel was preached to him, Gal. iii. 8. and ſo was promiſed then, that the bleſſing that was to come by Chriſt, ſhould not be confined to one nation, but ſhould be extended to many, now accordingly it is fulfilled: we muſt therefore expound nations here, as it is in the firſt promiſe; but in that promiſe, under all nations, muſt be underſtood children: otherwiſe we muſt ſay, that children have no right to the bleſſing by Chriſt, and that his purchaſe hath no influence on making any of them bleſſed: which is abſurd. And if the bleſſing be derived to them by Chriſt, it muſt be derived to them as they are contained in that promiſe, and ſo as they are included under that collective expreſſion, nation, that being the great charter of their title: and if under that title the inward bleſſing be derived, why may not the external initiating ſeal and privilege? And cer-

tainly by this collective, it would seem that many more are to be admitted to baptism, than to the Lord's supper, there being no such warrant given in such expressions for that as for this, children then must be concluded in it. 2. By this commission all nations are to be taken in, as the Jews were formerly, for by this the Jewish privilege is not lessened, but the partition is declared to be removed, and other nations with them to be admitted to share of these privileges, which the Jewish nation formerly did peculiarly enjoy; but that extended to children. This therefore must also do so. 3. If by this commission one might baptize a whole nation, and enchurch them, then must the children be so also; for, the nation were not a baptized nation, if children were not so; but the former hath been formerly cleared, that this doth warrant ministers, as they are called, to preach to any nation, and, upon their submission to the gospel, to baptize them also; and although the effect followed not alway, yet upon supposition that it do, this is a warrant, as hath been said.

Lastly, If all disciples ought to be baptized, and if such who are capable to be church members ought to be sealed, and that by virtue of this commission, then ought children to be sealed: these two are knit together, disciple them, as the word is, and baptize them: and none can deny this consequence, but children of believing parents are disciples, and are capable to be church members. This ariseth from what hath been said, thus, if a nation may be enchurched to God, then children are capable to be church members, children being a prime part of a nation, as hath been said; but a nation may be the Lord's, and a church and disciples to him, therefore may children be so also; and therefore ought to be baptized.

Concerning the constituting of true churches by reformation out of such as have been corrupt.

THirdly, from this it followeth, that a people, or persons, renouncing the abomination of Antichrist, and accepting of, and submitting to the truth and ordinances of the gospel, doth *ipso facto* constitute them churches of Christ, or members thereof, and is sufficient, as to essentials, to make them to be accounted so. This is clear here; for, that these nations do become the Lord's, doth say, that they are churches to him, yet is there no other way conceivable how they become his, but that the witnesses are taken up to heaven, and public preaching is again restored, the temple is opened, and the ark of the testimony is made visible; all which, doth suppone a people's quitting of Antichrist's way, and betaking them to Christ's, upon which they are so accounted, as is said. It is a great question to men, how they can be true churches that have arisen, as it were, out of Antichrist's dominion, without any accurate constituting of them, as to the members thereof? also some are ready to think all the reformed churches to be as no churches, because to them, they and the ordinances which they possess, have been derived from Antichrist: whereupon they are brought to look upon the world as having no church in it, and to be put to wait and seek for some new manifestation, as we may gather from Saltmarsh his description of the *seekers* smoke of the temple. And indeed if we begin to dispute this principle, whether the reformed churches be true churches, there can be no guard against this: for, if they be not churches, there are none indeed in the world; and if there be none in the world, we cannot expect that a new church shall be begotten, except it be by some extraordinary mean, whereof yet there is no warrant, in the least, from the word; beside, that the church of Christ is to endure here on earth to the end of the world, and the gates of hell is not to prevail against her. Now, this is the very place where that event is foretold of constituting new churches out of Antichrist's dominions; and therefore it cannot be unfit to enquire how this same is accomplished.

Concerning this, we premit, *First*, That there is a threefold way of entering, or being admitted to the church, 1. By conversion, that is, when one simply, without the church, is, by the power of God accompanying ordinances, made to submit to the gospel. Of such we have many examples in the history of the Acts of the apostles. A *second*, is, by birth-right: this is the privilege which church members' children have. *Thirdly*, There is an admission of members for constituting of a church, not simply of these that are without, but of corrupt members, who pretend

to be within: ſuch was the re-eſtabliſhing of the church of Iſrael often after their defections, when indeed the people had fallen to heatheniſh idolatry, and, it may be, for ſundry years continued in it, yet was their re-admiſſion to the uſe of ordinances and privileges of viſible members, far otherwiſe gone about, than the admiſſion of heathens, ſuppoſing them to have renounced their idolatry. The ſecond of theſe we have nothing to do with, therefore we lay it aſide.

Secondly, We premit, that there is great odds between the manner of conſtituting (to ſay ſo) a church, or a church member, out of a corrupt declined church, and the conſtituting of a church or member of ſuch as are ſimply without. Neither is there ſuch exactneſs to be required in the ſearch of theſe particular members, nor ſo many things to be performed for the accompliſhing of their memberſhip in the former caſe, as in the latter. This is clear, by conſidering, *Firſt*, The example of the Jews formerly mentioned: that was a very different thing to them, to admit declined members in reſpect of others that were without. *Secondly*, The one was under the initiating ſacrament; for their circumciſion was never queſtioned, which the other cannot plead. *Thirdly*, There is this reaſon alſo, becauſe God having ſtill a viſible church as a mother, though not conſpicuous, that in every time, or in every place, there can no Chriſtian be conceived to be pure in eſſentials, but muſt be ſuppoſed to be of her ſeed.

Thirdly, In ſum, we ſay, that for conſtituting a church or perſons to be true churches, or to be true members of churches out of Antichriſt's kingdom, there needeth no more but a public diſowning of his abominations, and erecting of the ordinances of Chriſt, with a profeſſed ſubjection thereto, according to the goſpel, and that as to the eſſentials of a church, this is ſufficient, though it may be there may be ſtill ſome defects which yet do not mar the truth of the being of ſuch a church. For making out of which we offer theſe conſiderations.

The firſt is, What might conſtitute a true church, or a member thereof, after defection and corruption in the church of Iſrael, or after Antiochus his abominations, that may be ſufficient to conſtitute a true church after the defections and corruptions of Antichriſt; but renouncing of former errors, erecting again of the ordinances, and profeſſed ſubjection to them, was enough then. Therefore it ought to be ſo now. There can be no queſtion of the minor, but that this was ſufficient amongſt the Jews, any who readeth the reformation that followed the defections under Ahaz, Manaſſeh, and others, will be abundantly convinced of this. For Hezekiah opened the temple which his father had ſhut, erected again the public ordinances to which the people ſubmitted. If it be doubted, if that will follow in our caſe, theſe things will confirm the conſequence; *Firſt*, The unity of the church-catholic viſible, they and we being one church, it may well therefore be argued from the example of the one to the other, as what made them no church, will make us no church; and ſo what doth make them a church, muſt alſo have that ſame weight with us. *Secondly*, The alluſion to the manner of the Old Teſtament is ſo plain in this place, that it doth both confirm and illuſtrate the ſame. It doth confirm it, that it expreſſeth how *the kingdoms of the earth become the Lord's* in the laſt verſe, and it ſaith, *The temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was ſeen in his temple the ark of his teſtament, &c.* Which words allude to that defection of Ahaz, 2 Chron. xxx. where the temple was ſhut, the ark of the teſtimony was not ſeen until the days of Hezekiah, who opened the temple, and made the ark in due manner to be viſible, and the word to be brought to public, whereby the face of the viſible church was recovered; and ſo this remarkable event is illuſtrated by this, that ſo the ordinances ſhall be obſcured amongſt many nations during Antichriſt's height, as the temple was ſhut in Ahaz time, yet ſhall theſe clouds be blown away, and light be brought forth to nations by a public profeſſion of the goſpel, whereby they ſhall become viſible churches to the Lord. This argument is from the very ſcope of the place.

Secondly, Conſider if renouncing of Antichriſt's groſs abominations, and a ſeparate adhering to the truth of the goſpel, with a ſubjection thereto, was enough to conſtitute a true member of the viſible church, while Antichriſtian darkneſs was at its full height, then after reformation that is ſufficient to conſtitute a true church, or a true member thereof; but the former is undoubtedly true, viz. there was no more to conſtitute a true member of the viſible church, during Antichriſt's height. Therefore, &c. the

firſt cannot be denied; for, what muſt be ſufficient then, muſt be ſufficient now, ſeeing it is ſtill this ſame church, this ſame woman, and the ſame door of entering: and, to deny this, would ſay, that Chriſt's viſible church, during that time, was not conſtituted rightly as to her eſſentials; and ſo, upon the matter, was none at all. Neither can the ſecond propoſition be denied; for, the woman, the church, but fleeth from his abomination, and, *de facto*, what more can be alledged during that time? Beſides, this is certain, that any, born and bred in Popery, who did afterward receive the goſpel, and renounce theſe former errors, ſuch were to be accounted members of the viſible church of Chriſt, and not of Antichriſt.

Thirdly, Conſider ſuch nations and churches as having renounced Antichriſt in profeſſion, and having ſubmitted to the goſpel, muſt either be churches of Chriſt, or they muſt belong to Antichriſt, or to be accounted without as heathens; but neither of theſe laſt two can be ſaid. *Ergo*, &c. To ſay that they are fit matter or materials for building of a church, will not ſatisfy: for, 1. The ſcripture doth not ſpeak of fit materials among baptized perſons, ſo as to contradiſtinguiſh them from the viſible church. 2. This propheſy ſaith, that ſuch as in this manner ſeparate from Antichriſt, ſhall not only be fit materials to make a church to the Lord, but they ſhall be his churches *de facto*. 3. If they have had ordinances and officers for many years, and have begotten children to the Lord by them, then there muſt be more than matter of a church: for theſe are the privileges and bleſſings wherewith his true church is privileged; and none can bring forth ſeed to him but ſhe. And, 4. If theſe churches be but matter, and that as contradiſtinct from churches, then it will, at once, ſtrike at all the churches of Chriſt theſe many years, and put us to join with the *Seekers*, in their hopeleſs expectation of a new church.

Fourthly, Conſider, that all nations and perſons ſo reforming after that defection, do actually become members of the viſible church, which formerly was more latent: for, they become one in hating the whore, one in acknowledging the truth, one ſubmitting to the ſame ordinances. And therefore what reaſon can there be to account them no churches, ſeeing ſhe, by theſe characters, hath been juſtly accounted the church of Chriſt?

Fifthly, The conſideration of this propheſy to be fulfilled in the reformation that hath been theſe hundred years paſt, will ſtrongly conclude, that theſe reformed churches muſt be true churches, tho' it may be, that ſeveral of them be in many things defective; for, if by this propheſy, it be clear, that the event that followeth Antichriſt's height muſt conſtitute true churches, and a kingdom to Chriſt after a more conſpicuous and viſible manner than formerly; and, if it be true, that this reformation, which hath come unto all the world in the generation laſt paſt, is the very fulfilling of this propheſy, and the very event foretold here; then it cannot but follow, that this reformation muſt be acknowledged to have brought the true viſible churches unto the world: otherwiſe the truth of this propheſy will be put in queſtion. Now, we ſuppoſe, that by what hath been ſaid of this in the former *lectures*, that both the former will be ſeen to be true. Therefore this muſt neceſſarily follow: for, this reformation is either what is propheſied of here, or it is ſome other thing; but it can be applicable to no other thing. And, if it can be applicable to no other thing, then theſe great events muſt be underſtood to carry alongſt with them the viſible kingdom of Chriſt; and the event muſt be anſwerable to what is foretold: and, if it were not ſo, there were no ſuch ground of a ſong, as is here inſiſted upon. This argument, from the event of a propheſy, being fulfilled, even as the Jews that lived under the ſecond temple, were to account that diſpenſation to be the fulfilling of the many propheſies that went before, although many were not fully ſatisfied in their expectations; and, no queſtion, ſeveral things were defective, though the eſſentials were there.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. XII.

Verſe 1. *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the ſun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve ſtars.*

2. *And ſhe being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.*

3. *And there appeared another wonder in heaven, and behold, a great red dragon, having ſeven heads, and ten horns, and ſeven crowns upon his heads.*

4. *And his tail drew the third part of the ſtars of heaven, and did caſt them to the earth: and the dragon ſtood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as ſoon as it was born.*

5. *And ſhe brought forth a man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.*

6. *And the woman fled into the wilderneſs, where ſhe hath a place prepared of God, that they ſhould feed her there a thouſand two hundred and threeſcore days.*

THE ſeventh trumpet, in the former chapter, gave a little touch of the events that are to be expected by it; now, before he come particularly to inſiſt on them, in theſe three, chap. xii, xiii, and xiv. the firſt explicatory viſion, cotemporary with what went before, is wiſely and ſeaſonably inſerted, and he returneth them to the third principal viſion in the ſeven vials, chap. xv. and xvi.

Before we ſpeak particularly to the words, we ſhall lay down ſome general obſervations conducing to the clearing of this viſion, and the ſcope thereof, and more particularly of this chapter.

1. The principal matter handled in this viſion, is not different from, or belonging to, any other time, but in the matter for ſubſtance, and in the time it doth agree with the former propheſies of the ſeals and trumpets. It is added now, and not before, for explication of ſome things in them, becauſe the thread and ſeries of the hiſtory is deduced in a little view from Chriſt's days, to the end of the world: and it is leſs violent now to begin, than if between the ſeals and trumpets ſome part of this had been inſerted. Beſide, neither would the matter have been ſo clear, if it had been divided: neither is it leſs conſiſtent with the ſeries of the propheſy to interpoſe ſomething for clearing bypaſt viſions here, than it was to inſert ſomething for clearing what was coming, chap. vii. That it treateth, I ſay, of the ſame things, and belongeth to the ſame time, appeareth; for, the matter of this belongeth either to heatheniſh perſecution, and the church's travailing, or to Antichriſt, the beaſt, mentioned, chap. xi. in his riſe, reign, and begun ruin: all which are the very matter of the former propheſies. And the riſe and cloſe of this viſion will be found cotemporary with the former two viſions, therefore it muſt belong to the ſame time.

2. Obſerve, That in this viſion, the principal ſcope is to point out Antichriſt in theſe chief periods of his riſe, reign, and ruin, but eſpecially the former two: wherefore theſe are moſt inſiſted on as the ſcope of the whole book, and almoſt all the explicatory propheſies, as this here, and that other, chap. xvii, xviii, xix. are ſpent upon that; God thereby minding to rid marches between his ſpouſe and the whore, therefore other events are leſs touched, and not ſo to be purſued in the expoſition.

3. If it be queſtioned, why theſe things are repeated? *Anſw.* It is not unuſual for prophetical viſions to be ſo delivered, as in Pharaoh's dreams, Gen. xli. 23. and Daniel's viſions, and Joſeph's dreams: and there are two reaſons of it, 1. For confirmation of the truth of the thing, as Joſeph ſaith to Pharaoh, verſe 32. 2. For further explication and clearing the ſame thing; both which agree well here.

4. The reaſon of the inſerting of the explication here, would alſo be obſerved, 1. That it cometh in well on the back of the xi. chapter, where two things were ſhortly hinted.

1. Concerning the beaſt which was to deſtroy the witneſſes. And, 2. Their perſecution

and prophesy, 1260 days: both which were but named there; here they are much cleared in their forerunners, and other circumstances. 2. It is seasonably premitted to the vision of the seven vials, which bringeth the overthrow of the beast, which certainly could not be well understood, did not this express description of the beast precede. 3. It insinuateth, that now, at the seventh *trumpet's* blowing, this prophesy, that concerneth Antichrist, will become more clear to the church in that time, wherefore it is subjoined here, as also to give a general view of the church, and of the beast, in two distinct representations, the one more general, which is past; the other more particular, which followeth.

5. The altering the manner of expressing this vision, which differeth from the two visions that go before, and that which followeth in the seven vials, is not to be passed. It is expresly done, not only for clearing of that which in other types is expressed, but that also the series of *seals*, *trumpets*, and *vials* may be kept unconfounded. Therefore, here, when he breaketh off the series which he had formerly continued, he doth change his ordinary way of expressing by *sevens*, and *types* of that kind, till he come again to take up the series where he left, which is done by the vials, chap. xv. and xvi. where he doth again proceed as formerly he had done, till he carry the matter to the end; and then altereth again, chap. xvii. 1, &c. when he explicateth that vision of the vials, as he had done in this.

For understanding of this chapter, *Observe*, 1. That it setteth forth the church's first trials from the beginning till Antichrist's public appearing, and so cotemporateth with the prophesy of the seals, and the first four trumpets; and therefore it is to be divided again in two main battles of the church, suitably to the matter and time thereof, as will after appear.

Observe, 2. That which is spoken of the dragon's watching the woman and the child, ver. 4. and his war, ver. 7. and the woman's flight, ver. 6. which is again repeated, verse 14. doth not point out two several battles of the church, but the same one trial and event: which is, *First*, Summarily, and by anticipation, set down, and thereafter more particularly resumed and described, so that that war of the dragon's with Michael, is the same with his watching of the woman, and his seeking to destroy the man-child; and that flight, ver. 6. is that same with what is set down, ver. 14. otherwise it would be inextricably difficult to shew two successive flights of the same continuance, how she returned, or when, and how she did flee, verse 6. when yet wings are but given her, ver. 14. &c. These are all obviated, by saying, that what is but shortly, and, in the general, hinted at first, is afterward more fully explicated: and, considering the time of the continuance of both, and other circumstances, it doth make this unquestionable, as the exposition will clear.

3. Concerning the scope of the first part of the chapter, which is to ver. 13. we are to *Observe*, that this is to shew the first sufferings of the Christian church, and the devil's seeking to destroy her seed, which is Christ mystical, with her deliverance therefrom; and we are not to understand it of Christ personal, his being brought into the world, and the persecutions that followed him; and that neither, considered as having Mary for his natural mother, or the church of the Jews for his mystical; neither of which can be understood here by the *woman* thus described, as he personally, considered, is not to be understood by the child: for, 1. That which is here, is prophetical and revealing some new thing to come to the church. Now, both these applications were before this time already passed, and plainly and historically set down in the gospel; and therefore it is not to be thought that these are here again under such dark expressions repeated. 2. This war is of the same parties, and to the same scope, with that which followeth, viz. the devil's casting of a flood out of his mouth, &c. The *woman* here and there is one, and considered as such: and seeing these events, afterward mentioned, and what is spoken of the woman her fleeing to the wilderness, &c. can neither be applied to Mary, nor to the church of the Jews, but must be applied to the gospel church, and her troubles, that cotemporate with Antichrist's dominion, that falleth within the same time; therefore this first part must be understood of the same church, and her trials, which precede that time.

Beside, that this glorious description, holding forth a church, in opposition to the former Jewish typical ceremonies, cannot well be otherwise applied to any of the other two. 3. This child here is not to be understood of Christ personally, because they are expresly said to be *brethren*,

verſe 10. and ſuch as *overcome by the blood of the Lamb*, verſe 11. and the *woman's ſeed that have the teſtimony of Jeſus*, verſe 17. and are ſo expreſly diſtinguiſhed from Jeſus the Lamb, and from Michael, verſe 7. who is their captain. Beſide, the bringing forth of this man-child hath outward peace following thereupon in the church, which Chriſt's birth had not. Therefore the many declarations concerning the bleſſed virgin Mary, which are heaped up by ſome Popiſh writers upon this place, are moſt impertinent, groundleſs and ridiculous. Yet, 4. This deſcription of the church's infancy, is ſet down with ſpecial alluſion to the manner of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt the head, his coming into the world. 1. As he was a child, born of a woman, in many outward wants; ſo are his people brought forth in many ſtraits. 2. As Herod watched to deſtroy him, as ſoon as he was born; ſo doth the devil, by other perſecuting inſtruments, watch the church to cruſh her ſeed, immediately after their birth, as it were, and in their very infancy, even as Pharaoh fought to deſtroy the Jews male children, Exod. i. 23. 3. As Chriſt was born, and preſerved till he had finiſhed the work committed to him, notwithſtanding of all the enemies malice and craft; ſo ſhall it be with the church's ſeed. 4. As he immediately after his birth, was purſued, made to flee, and carried to Egypt; ſo ſhall it be with the goſpel-church, who ſhould be made to flee immediately after the firſt delivery. This alluſion is the more profitable, if we conſider that the time of Chriſt's being in Egypt will be found to be about three years and an half: (which is here the time of the church's wilderneſs condition) for he was born in the thirty year of Herod's reign; he did not flee immediately, as appeareth by Mary's continuing till her purification, Luke ii. and by Herod's killing the young children of about two years old, Matth. ii. and he returned from Egypt immediately after Herod's death, who reigned full thirty years, whereby the ſuitableneſs of this time may be gathered: and laſtly, as Herod vented his malice upon the children of Bethlehem, where Chriſt was born, after his eſcape, ſo doth the devil here vent his malice upon the church's ſeed after his deliverance.

We come to ſpeak of the firſt part of this chapter, which containeth the church's firſt war with the dragon, (not but the dragon fighteth alſo under Antichriſt, but more covertly, and, in another ſhape here, more palpably) which is firſt ſummarily propoſed to verſe 7. Then, 2. Proſecuted more particularly.

Verſe 1. In this firſt part, the parties are deſcribed, 1. The defender in ſet out in three things, 1. She is a woman, that is, the church, as ſhe is ordinarily called; partly, 1. For infirmity, and being obnoxious to wrongs. 2. As in ſubordination to Chriſt as her huſband. 3. As the mother of believers; and ſhe is one woman, (tho' here the goſpel church be repreſented) to ſhew an unity in the catholic viſible church, which is the only object of perſecution; and that ſhe is but one church, woman, mother, or wife: and there cannot be more.

2. She is deſcribed by her adorning or ſtateline ſs, in three things, 1. She *is clothed with the ſun*, ſetting out the pure doctrine that ſhe profeſſed, and the ſhining converſation of believers in that primitive time, who had put on the Lord, Rom. xiii. 14. and owned his word and teſtimony, which is called the ſun in the eight chapter, eſpecially what concerned his imputed righteouſneſs and ſatisfaction. 2. The *moon is under her feet:* whether by the moon here we underſtand earthly temporal things, which are mutable and ſpotted like the moon; or, Jewiſh feaſts, new moons, &c. called the rudiments of the world, Col. ii. 8. it cometh to one, viz. to ſet out the deniedneſs and mortifiedneſs of the church at that time, deſpiſing wordly things, and adhering to Chriſt, and having a converſation heavenly, which the apoſtle exhorteth unto, Col. iii. 1. in oppoſition directly to the reſting on theſe new moons, and other elements of the world, as well as in oppoſition to wordly things. 3. She hath *a crown of twelve ſtars*, that is, faithful miniſters, carrying the doctrine of the twelve apoſtles, and following it; ſo the church is builded upon that, Eph. ii. 20, 22. and Rev. xxi. 14. the names of the Lamb's twelve apoſtles are written on the twelve foundations; this is a crown, that is, it is her glory and credit to have faithful miniſters, and to be following and avowing their doctrine, as Paul calleth the Theſſalonians his crown. This is a well adorned church in a ſuffering time: we take theſe three more particularly to be expreſſed, verſe 11. the firſt, by *the blood of the Lamb*, that is, the garment. The ſecond, the *word of the teſtimony*, that is, the crown. Thirdly, They cared not for their lives, and *loved them not to death*, that is, the trampling of the moon under their feet, or undervaluing temporal things; for, the life is moſt cared for, as Job ii. 4.

ſkin for ſkin, yea, all that a man hath, will he give for his life.

The third part of the deſcription, is, ver. 2. in her travailing and crying, expreſſing two things, 1. A fruitful condition of the church in this beauty; ſo travailing and bringing forth doth ſignify in ſcripture, and is well applied to the goſpel church, which is a mother, Iſa. liv. 1. Gal. iv. 19. with 26, 27. 2. And although it doth ſignify a fruitful condition, yet alſo it is a ſorrowful and afflicted condition, as ye know the travailing of a woman ordinarily holdeth forth, and Chriſt calleth it, John xvi. 21. *ſorrow* or *pain* till the child be brought forth. In a word, this primitive church is pure, fruitful and afflicted, as her crying importeth: with great pains do miniſters beget, Gal. iv. 19. and with great hazard is the profeſſion of Chriſtianity owned, and great wreſtling hath ſhe in prayer to God and ſufferings from men, to be rid of this ſorrowful condition, ere ſhe get free of it.

The enemy purſuing, is deſcribed, ver. 3. and 4. in four or five particulars; and it is called, as the former, *a great ſign or wonder*, repreſented to John in heaven, becauſe great things were ſignified by theſe; here the parties are exceeding unequal, ſhe a woman, the enemy is a dragon: ſome ſay, there is an utter antipathy between men and dragons, whereas other ravenous creatures for meat deſtroy men, theſe for delight do it, and whereas men can endure to look on other creatures, yet not ſo well on the dragons and ſerpents; however, it is a moſt ravenous beaſt, by which is repreſented, in ſcripture, ſometimes the devil, ſometimes ſome great perſecutor actuated by the devil, the ſupreme commander, ſo was Pharaoh called; and as he was the firſt oppreſſor of the Jewiſh church, ſo this repreſenteth the firſt oppreſſors of the Chriſtian church; both come in here, the devil firſt, that is clear, ver. 9. when the Roman empire primely inſtrumental in perſecuting Chriſtians, that appeareth by the deſcription of the dragon's ſhape, he hath *ſeven heads and ten horns;* which *ſeven heads*, chap. xvii. are clearly to be expounded ſeven hills and ſeven kings, or ſorts of governments: and theſe ten horns to be ten kings, which were to ariſe out of the ruins of the empire; (they had not then received power, chap. xvii. Therefore they have not here crowns, as chap. xiii.) and expreſly ſhe is, ver. 18. of that chapter, called the *city which reigneth over the kings of the earth*, at that time, the devil is chief, and the Roman empire, or emperor his depute in this; for, the devil acteth not immediately, yet what he doth by inſtruments, is attributed to him, as chap. ii. 10. This is a great dragon, to ſhew his power; red, to expreſs his cruelty; and *having ſeven heads and ten horns*, to expreſs him who eſpecially is inſtrumental in exerciſing that cruelty, the Roman emperor, like Pharaoh, who is called a dragon, Pſal. lxxiv. 15. Iſa. xxvii. 1. Ezek. xxix. 3.

Verſe 4. His carriage is ſet out in two things, 1. *He hath a tail*, that is, power, and flatteries to perſwade with temporal allurements; and by theſe two he prevaileth to draw miniſters and others, who ought to be lights from their heavenly poſture, to an earthly ſubjection. This alludeth alſo to Dan. viii. 10. where the caſting down of the ſaints is expreſſed ſo. 2. His other practice, is, *to wait for the child to devour it:* in a word, he leaveth no mean uneſſayed to deſtroy all profeſſing Chriſtians that bear Chriſt's name, and to keep them that they ſhould never win to any outgate or comfortable condition, as Pharaoh did to the children of Iſrael, and Herod to Chriſt, ſeeking to deſtroy them immediately at their birth, ſo that none ſhould ſooner be a profeſſed Chriſtian, but he was liable to the hazard of the dragon's laws. This now is an unequal encounter; yet, behold the event is happy, the child is born and keeped ſafe, and the woman fleeth: how this came to paſs, that a weak woman and a child, are keeped from a watching cruel dragon, is afterwards cleared, viz. by Michael's fighting and taking her part.

Verſe 5. The event hath three ſteps. 1. The woman's delivery and the child's deſcription. 2. The child's exaltation. 3. The woman's fleeing, verſe 6. By this delivery, in general is ſet out not only her bringing forth of believers or profeſſors, but ſuch a delivery as one bringing forth a man-child is ſaid to have, John vi. 21. a comfortable delivery, and which, in place of crying, giveth her a ſong afterward, as verſe 10. for, ſhe had children before but had not her pains taken from her, and was not at freedom to bring forth without the enemies watching. The child is deſcribed moſt for her comfort, and with reſpect to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. It is myſtical Chriſt, 1 Cor. xii. verſe 12. who in his members is brought to a flouriſhing condition, and his church ſet at liberty from perſecution, and ſome of her ſons exalted to heaven to an honourable condition, from which Lucifer is ſaid to fall, Iſa. xiv.

verſe 12. This ſhortly is fulfilled, when after heatheniſh perſecution for three hundred years had prevailed, Chriſtians were advanced, Conſtantine being made emperor, and Chriſtianity was eſtabliſhed by a law. That thus the delivery, child, and heaven to which he is taken, are to be underſtood, will appear in theſe, 1. This is the delivery which is the ground and ſubject of this ſong, verſe 18. *Now is ſalvation and the kingdom of our God, &c.* That is, a full evidence of God's reigning, delivering them from theſe perſecutions and giving them liberty, but that is this delivery. 2. Such is the child's taking to heaven, as is the devil's caſting from heaven, for theſe are oppoſed, but that is the ſpoiling of him of the authority of the emperor's which he abuſed before; now he hath not the throne, as in the church of Pergamos, chap. ii. ver. 13. but laws and authority are for Chriſtians. 3. It is as the witneſſes were taken to heaven, chap. 11, 12. That was by a public authorized church condition and ſtate after Antichriſt's perſecution; ſo here, religion authoritatively is eſtabliſhed, which never was before: and Chriſtians countenanced, after heathen perſecution is over; and ſeeing it is uſual to the ſcripture to call magiſtrates gods, it is not unſuitable to expreſs their ſtation and ſtate above others by heaven.

The property of the male-child, his ruling, &c. We ſhew how it is to be underſtood, chap. ii. 27. of Chriſt in his members, and it may be, here to ſhew the great dominion that our Lord Jeſus ſhould have in the world in Conſtantine's time, when his members ſhould be exalted to an honourable condition, called, verſe 10. *the kingdom of our God and the power of his Chriſt*, in oppoſition to the uſurpation of Satan in the ſeven headed beaſt before, and as was chap. xi. 15. in oppoſition to Antichriſt's dominion: for, when the church is up, Chriſt exerciſeth and manifeſteth his power in them; ſo by this child, is not meant Chriſt perſonally, but ſuch as keeped his teſtimony, verſe 11. and *ult.* nor particularly Conſtantine, but Chriſt myſtical, whereof Conſtantine was but a member; and that outward government of his but a little ſhadow, type, evidence, and effect of this great dominion of the Lord's, and made uſe of by God to be the external mean and cauſe of his church's peace. However, this ſheweth the caſe to be exceeding joyful, and different from what it was, which being before the church's flight to the wilderneſs, can be applied to no other time but that delivery aforeſaid from under heatheniſh perſecution, and ſhe being brought now to a glorious, ſettled and quiet condition, like a heaven in compariſon of the former.

The laſt part of the event, the woman's fight, is ſet down, ver. 6. by way of anticipation, as is clear, the place of it being properly verſe 14. It is ſo ſoon ſubjoined, for theſe reaſons. 1. To let ſee how ſoon one ſtrait is on the back of another to the church; and eſpecially, to ſhew that Antichriſt's riſe, and the church's decay, in their beginning, are cotemporary with the outgate from the former trials, and is, as it were, marked as a conſequent of the former delivery: for then, (as Platina writeth of a voice) was poiſon ſown in the church, and proſperity, being abuſed to pride, ſooner defaced the church than perſecution. 3. It is ſubjoined to give a little view of the caſe of mother and child together, that the children of the church readily are no ſooner promoted, but ſhe is in a wilderneſs condition, as it were, decaying and declining much from that beauty and pure glory and viſibility ſhe was into before; a ſad thing that the childrens proſperity often baniſheth the mother, and obſcureth her beauty; ſeldom hath greatneſs, and temporal proſperity, zeal and ſelf-denying ſingleneſs dwelt long together; and it is the laſt, and not the firſt, wherein her native beauty doth conſiſt.

This conſideration of this verſe we leave till ver. 14. only now by fleeing we are not to underſtand a local mutation of this church from one place to another, but from this forth a decay of the former beauty of it, that whereas in Rome, and other places, glorious churches before, and the biſhops were martyrs, as all in Rome were before Sylveſter and Conſtantine's time: now that is by degrees vailed by pride, pomp, hypocriſy, heatheniſt and Antichriſtian dreſſings, that the few that remained the true church, are, as it were, chap. xi. 1. cloſed up in a ſecret corner of the temple, while the multitude poſſeſſed the court; that, viz. the temple is called the *place prepared of God*, and there is ſhe fed by the witneſſes with the true word of God, while the world are ſwollen with pride, traditions and ſuperſtitious inventions. And ſo the prophets propheſying, and the churches ſtaying in the wilderneſs to be fed, are of equal duration, 1260 days: which verſe being ſo near ſub-

joined to the former, give a clear hint at the ſum of the ſecond ſtate of the church, viz. that which was latent, and when it beginneth, even when the other endeth.

Two things remain to be cleared: 1. Why this beaſt here, under the dragon, hath the crowns on his heads, and on his horns, and that beaſt, chap. xiii. ver. 1. hath the crowns on his horns, not on the heads. The reaſon is, becauſe when the Roman empire was heathen, and, under that notion, perſecuted the church, the ſeat of the beaſt, Rome had the royal emperial dignity; and theſe ten kingdoms were then provinces ſubject to her; as appeareth, chap. xvii. Theſe ten, then, were but to get royal independent dignity, but when the empire turned ſlaves to Antichriſt, about the year 606. And after, the caſe is altered; Rome is denuded of the royal authority which ſhe had, and theſe provinces are now, by the empires decay, turned to be kingdoms, though in this condition depending ſtill on Antichriſt, as formerly they were united under the dragon. 2. Why doth the dragon now but purſue the woman's ſeed, and after, in the ſecond onſet, he ſetteth on the woman, the mother, to drown her. *Anſw.* In theſe three wars of the dragon, ye will find a difference: 1. He ſeeketh to deſtroy all the ſeed. 2. He ſendeth out a flood againſt the mother, and his anger is turned againſt her when the child eſcapeth. 3. When the woman eſcapeth, (though ſhe cede, which the child did not; which maketh it appear, that this flying rather holdeth out a change upon the church's qualifications, than of her local reſidence) then, ver. ult. he ſetteth himſelf not againſt the mother ſimply, nor againſt all the ſeed indifferently, as in the firſt; but againſt ſuch as kept the commandments of God. The reaſons are: 1. Becauſe open perſecutors look to all ſorts of profeſſors indifferently, and do vent cruelty on them. Hence Arians would ſometimes be put to ſuffer with orthodox Chriſtians; and by Arians, the Novations, as well as others, they know not to make difference, they ſo hated the very name. 2. Becauſe the heathen perſecutors thought that the readieſt way of deſtroying the church, was, to deſtroy her members in whom ſhe ſubſiſted, and, that they being undone, conſequently, ſo would ſhe. Therefore, 1. The devil beginneth with murdering bodies, to undo the church in her members; and, when that faileth, he ſetteth on the mother to poiſon the members or children by corrupting her, as one, intending the deſtruction of a child, would poiſon the nurſe. This is done not by direct hatred at the name and profeſſion of Chriſtianity now in requeſt, but by counterfeiting and corrupting Chriſtianity, that he may once alter the face, beauty and wholeſomeneſs of the ordinances of the church, which is the mother, and he is ſure the children which ſuck theſe breaſts will not be lively. To effectuate this, he maketh uſe not of open heathens, but corrupt teachers that he ſpueth out, not to taint this or that perſon, but the fountains, as was ſeen in the firſt four trumpets, in which he ſpareth particular children of the church, poſſibly alluring them with rich benefits, ſumptuous buildings, honours, and preferments; but, in the mean while, carrying on his deſign againſt the church, as a church, even under, and by theſe, which, by the former voice in Sylveſter's time, if it be true, is hinted at, and that word of Jerom's, *In vita Malchi*, when emperors became Chriſtians, the church indeed increaſed in worldly pomp, but decreaſed in ſpiritual beauty, *Eccleſiam Chriſtianam, poſtquam ad Chriſtianos venit principatus, potentia quidem, et divitiis majorem eſſe factam, ſed virtutibus minorem.*

Laſtly, In the third battle, he putteth at ſome of the ſeed only, becauſe here he maketh uſe of Antichriſt, a counterfeit enemy, who will not purpoſely and down-right ſet on all Chriſtians, as ſuch; for, his quarrel, and the devil's, is but with theſe that are faithful, and hate his pride and hypocriſy. 2. In this laſt, he joineth violence and deceit together, and, by deceit, he overcometh many, they have drunken up the flood; but theſe that will not drink of theſe fornications, he purſueth them with violence, by the following beaſt, and not all Chriſtians ſimply, but theſe who kept themſelves from theſe growing corruptions; and theſe are called the woman's ſeed.

LECTURE II.

Verſe 7. *And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought againſt the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels:*

8. *And prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven.*

9. *And the great dragon was caſt out, that old ſerpent, called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was caſt out unto the earth, and his angels were caſt out with him.*

10. *And I heard a loud voice, ſaying in heaven, Now is come ſalvation, and ſtrength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Chriſt: for the accuſer of our brethren is caſt down, which accuſed them before our God day and night.*

11. *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their teſtimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.*

12. *Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them: Wo to the inhabiters of the earth, and of the ſea: for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, becauſe he knoweth that he hath but a ſhort time.*

HAVING given a little touch of the church's firſt battle, and the event thereof, until her flying to the wilderneſs, he returneth from this 7th verſe unto the 13th, more fully to explicate that war, that the ſtrangeneſs of the event of a woman's victory, and her child, againſt a dragon, may appear not to be from her ſtrength, but from a good captain who ſideth with her, and fighteth for her. The ſtory is reſumed in theſe words, *There was war in heaven:* by *heaven*, we underſtand the church; not as if one part of it were divided againſt the other, but that the church was the ſeat, and object of it, the devil invading her by open proclaimed war againſt all Chriſtians. He over-runneth her by maſſacres and perſecutions, as invaders over-run invaded kingdoms. She again, by Michael and her members, reſiſteth that fury; ſo the war is here. By *war*, we underſtand not ſecret enmity, as always there is, nor peculiar incurſions, ſuch as come now and then by ſtarts, as in Julian his time, and ſome others, but open profeſſed and avowed univerſal war, ſuch as the heatheniſh perſecutors maintained. Both in their decrees, and in the execution of them for 300 years, ſuch war as, profeſſedly, the church did not meet with ſince.

The parties are more inſiſted on than formerly, 1. In their leaders. 2. In their followers or ſoldiers. Michael is general on the woman's ſide; we take it to be Chriſt, who is commander and leader, Iſa. lv. 4. and captain, Heb. ii. It is like he is alſo intended, Dan. xii. to which this alludeth. His ſoldiers are both his *angels*, properly taken, (for, Heb. i. they are *miniſtring ſpirits for the good of the heirs of ſalvation*, and are alſo at our Lord his command,) and alſo his members in the church militant, eſpecially his miniſters who did fight on *Michael's ſide:* for, verſe 11. they are ſuch who overcome by the *Lamb's blood*, their *own ſufferings*, and his *word*, which agreeth not to angels, properly ſo called. Thus Chriſt, and his followers, make one ſide; for all the armies in heaven follow him, Rev. xix. On the other ſide are the *dragon* and his *angels*, he wanteth not ſuch as take orders from him. We underſtand here alſo not only ſpirits, but wicked men, emperors, judges, ſoldiers, &c. who are afterward ſaid to be, with him, caſt out of authority and reſpect; this is in alluſion to the devil's caſting out of heaven. Here is inſinuated ſome order among the devils, whereof there are many legions, to proſecute their deſign: and though all be ſpirits and devils; yet may there be amongſt them an order, ſome higher, ſome lower; ſome leading, others given obedience, all concurring, for ſupporting their work and kingdom of darkneſs, without which, Chriſt ſaith, their kingdom would not ſtand; which order, if it may be called ſo, may ſtand till the laſt judgment, when there ſhall be no more work for devils of this kind, and, it may be, continue, in ſome reſpect, as it ſerveth to promote God's deſign of puniſhing the reprobates, in which they are, ſome way, God's executioners.

If any aſk how theſe parties, ſo different, did fight? *Anſw.* The dragon, their purſuer, he fought, 1. By edicts, condemning and inhibiting Chriſtia-

nity. 2. By violence, fire, ſword, and all ſorts of tortures purſuing them that profeſſed it. 3. By degrading them from places of reſpect, ſpoiling them of their goods, baniſhing them, and leaving them obnoxious to all wrong, and injuſtice without protection. 4. By cruel calumnies, lies, and aſperſions, made, and put upon Chriſtians, and on their meetings and religion, as the moſt vile creatures, for adulteries, gluttonies, ſeditions, &c. as may be ſeen in the apologies written for Chriſtian defence, and many other ways he purſueth his old enmity.

Michael again, and his angels, fought, 1. By the clear and powerful preaching of the goſpel, that two-edged ſword that goeth out of his mouth, whereby Satan's kingdom was exceedingly ſhaken, 2. By public apologies and defences written for Chriſtianity and Chriſtians, by Ariſtides Quadratus, Juſtin Martyr, Tertullian, Cyprian, Melito, &c. whereby the enmity of many emperors, and hot perſecution, was ſomewhat abated, as is to be ſeen in the third ſeal. 3. By patient and chearful ſufferings, ver. 11. thereby giving a great defeat to him, when God furniſhed his ſervants, ſo that onlookers would be forced to yield to that way, 4. They fought by their prayers, whereby notable effects, for help, were obtained; and by their holy converſations, whereby the enemies were often convinced of their innocency: and, beſide theſe, Michael, he fought, by filling their hands with other wars, ſometime ſtirring up ſome within, ſometime ſome without, that diverted them, as the Philiſtines did Saul from David; ſometime Michael fought alſo by viſible terrors, when Aurelianus had ſubſcribed the decree, by a terrible thunder, he was ſo ſtricken with terror, as preſently to revoke it, and ſtay the perſecution ere it began; he fought evidently alſo, by taking vengeance almoſt on all the bloody perſecutors, as Nero, Domitian, Diocleſian, &c. At laſt alſo, by raiſing and ſtirring up Chriſtian emperors, and ſo putting arms in Chriſtian's hands, whereby they were employed by him to execute vengeance on heathen worſhippers, and their gods, as in Conſtantine's time, where this firſt battle was ended, and the child taken up to heaven.

Thus have we heard the battle in its parties, now ſee it further explained in its event; which is ſet forth. 1. By narration, verſe 8. and 9. 2. By way of ſong and congratulation, ver. 10, 11, and 12.

The narration is in more dark and figurative expreſſions, the ſong or poetical congratulations is more plain; for, praiſe ought to be clear, and the ſongs in this book help much to the underſtanding of it, therefore, by it, we are to expound the former.

The narration of the event aimeth at one thing, viz. to ſet out Michael's victory, which was hinted at ver. 5. and the devil's defeat, which is more expreſly named, and inſiſted on here, in four ſteps: *Firſt*, The *dragon prevailed not;* more is implied, that is, not only he gained not ground, but he was alſo always the further behind, and ſo will all be that have Michael for their party; and ſo will all the church's trials end in her advantage and victory; for, ſo ſpeaking the firſt indiction of this war, Gen. iii. betwixt two ſeeds. This is a ſure ſide to fight on.

The ſecond is, *neither was their place found any more in heaven; their place*, that is, the devil's place, and theſe great mens rooms which they filled, their grandeur and authority was overturned exceedingly; (for, the ſcripture uſeth to expreſs folks total overthrow by this, that their place is not diſcernible, they are ſo clean ſwept away, Pſal. xxxvii. 10. Job. vii. 10. xx. 9.) for here all was quite altered, and they were caſten out of *heaven*, that is from authority, and reſpect, and alſo from public heatheniſh worſhip, when Chriſtianity became to be approven, as it was more fully explained in the ſixth ſeal, chap. vi. Their temples were deſtroyed, idols defaced; and whereas, the devil before was openly worſhipped by them now, he wanteth the eſtimation of a Godhead and divinity, when the goſpel diſcovereth him. It is like Chriſt's word, *I ſaw Satan fall from heaven like lightning*, that is, from that eſtimation, and reſpect or rule, that he had amongſt the people, while in darkneſs he ſat on the throne, from which he was caſt by the preached goſpel, ſo as he was never ſo openly and ſettledly admitted to ſuch rule and reſpect again. This alluſion is to Satan's firſt caſting out of heaven, and Lucifer's, Iſa. xiv. when God, as it is Exod. xii. took vengeance on their gods.

3. This is more fully ſet forth, verſe 9. in two ſteps: firſt, the place whereto he was caſt; and who he is. It is to *the earth*, as oppoſite to heaven, 1. In reſpect of his throne in idolatry, and temples, he is caſt down, and put to contempt, as

the earth is ſometimes taken. 2. In reſpect of civil authority, he is caſt from that, to be among the common ſort, the ſupreme magiſtracy being pulled out of his hand, whereby he was ſaid to have the throne. 3. As the earth is oppoſed to the church of Chriſt, as well as to a church-ſtate, he was put from treading on her, and making her the ſeat of his war profeſſedly as before, he was now reſtrained from raging at his pleaſure there, though not altogether; he doth not now openly on the throne reign, but is caſt down, as it were, amongſt commons, to endeavour by ſubtilty what before he eſſayed openly; like a ſerpent, now he is put to creep with his wiles which follows after; for his ſpewing out hereſies after the woman, and his reigning, as it were, by his lieutenant, ſaith, he was not caſt out of the church ſimply, but in reſpect of what he was formerly, after this he is neceſſitated to take a more indirect under-hand way.

4. The dragon is deſcribed by ſome properties, expreſſed in his names, 1. That old ſerpent, for ſubtilty a ſerpent, Gen. iii. yea, *old*, as not having begun to deceive then, but now of great experience in that trade; he is an old deceiver. 2. Devil, a calumniator, tearing folks with reproaches and ſlanders, whereof that time was full; thus he ſlandereth Chriſtians before others. 3. Satan, that is, an adverſary or accuſer: this looketh mainly to him as an accuſer and traducer of the godly before God's bar and juſtice, as he did, Job, chap. i. This expreſſeth his ſerpentine nature, who is in himſelf deceitful, and the miſerable effect of it to them who truſt him, as our firſt parents did, they are deceived.

This is the devil deſcribed as a ſerpent, to tempt and beguile the world, a devil to ſlander and pierce through innocents with wicked calumnies, and Satan, to traduce men to God, and God to men, Zech. iii. all agree well to him. Again, his *angels were caſt out with him:* wo to them that ſtand and fall with the devil. In a word, his ſpecial inſtruments, idolatrous prieſts, and cruel heathen perſecutors, all they are caſt down together; as he wanteth the ſupreme honour in civil and eccleſiaſtic dignity, ſo as he formerly enjoyed it, ſo do they want their inferior dignities and places: when wicked great men are caſt down, many under-inſtruments ruin with them. The alluſion is, as we ſaid, to Satan's caſting from heaven, that keeped not his firſt habitation, Jude ver. 6. and to Lucifer, Iſa. xiv. holding forth, that now by this victory not only the great agent the devil, the ſupreme commander, but his under officers were alſo pinced and brought low.

The ſong followeth in a congratulatory way expreſſing the ſame thing in plain terms without figures, 1. The victory is laid down, verſe 10. 2. The mean or way whereby they attained it, or their weapons, verſe 11. 3. The uſe or effects of it, both to heaven and earth.

This delivery is ſo notable, that it is and ſhall be the ground of a ſong in the church, whereby both the greatneſs of it, and the certainty of it is expreſſed, and the church's duty alſo. The former events are two ways expreſſed; the firſt, ver. 5. The child's exalting is expounded to be the *coming of ſalvation*, that is, deliverance from that perſecuted condition, which they had been ſo long praying for. 2. *Strength*, that is, the evidencing of God's ſtrength in bringing the church through, and giving her who was weak, ſtrength to bring forth. 3. *The kingdom of our God*, as chap. xi. 15. It is the magnifying of his kingdom, and declaring him to be a king; which though it really was alway, yet was it not ſo known in the world before. 4. *The power of his Chriſt*, that is, his taking to himſelf power, and reigning, as chap. xi. 15, 17. which is called, chap. vi. *the day of his wrath.* Chriſt who in the world's eye was thought little of, and weak before this, now his power kytheth, and enemies are made to ſay, he is a great God, as was cleared on chap. vi. *ult.*

The ſecond effect of the devil's caſting to the earth from heaven, is expreſſed in that he is caſt down, that is, dethroned, put from the viſible kingdom and authority which he had when the world's authority countenanced him. Now theſe are upon the Lord's ſide, and the kingdom is his, when this accuſer, (whereof formerly we ſpoke, verſe ix.) who inceſſantly purſued the godly, is put quite out of reſpect by what he was in, and Chriſtianity brought in requeſt, Pſal. xxii. 28. Theſe words being plain, and the ſcope being to reſume the further delivery in a ground of praiſe, there is a clear key here to open all this viſion; for what was caſting from heaven, is here caſting down or degrading.

This 11th verſe holdeth forth the weapons, 1. Faith in Chriſt's blood, whereby all theſe ac-

cuſations were repelled as with a ſhield, Eph. vi. and ſeeing he died, who can lay any thing to their charge? Rom. viii. 34. They are ſaved before God through his righteouſneſs, that is the ground of their victory: he is called the Lamb in reference to the ſacrifices, and ſo it pointeth out this to be the effect of his own offering up of himſelf; all the ſaints victories flow from this. 2. The *word of their teſtimony*, is their ſtedfaſt adherence to their profeſſion, and their confeſſion of that truth, as chap. vi. 9. called, Rom. x. Confeſſion unto righteouſneſs with the mouth; which teſtimony, in deſpite of torments, exceedingly defeateth the devil. A clear and full teſtimony, is an excellent ornament to Chriſtianity, and giveth a ſpecial charge and defeat to the devil. What a teſtimony is, we ſhew in the fifth ſeal, chapter vi. which is cotemporary with this; this is not only really to be found within, but in appearance and profeſſion to be ſo alſo before men. The third weapon is *ſuffering*. *They loved not their lives*, that is, when a teſtimony was called for they cared not for their lifes, as Paul ſaith, Acts xxi. It was not dear to them, and they were not ſwayed with the conſideration of ſuffering. This may appear, 1. By their joyful ſuffering of the moſt cruel death. 2. By their refuſing deliverance at the moſt ſeeming eaſy rate, as was marked before, chap. vi. under the 5th ſeal: ſo that as it is in Plinius ſecundus, they thought it needleſs to ſeek to puniſh theſe who more willingly offered themſelves, and more chearfully ſuffered than any could purſue them.

The laſt part of the ſong, verſe 12. hath two things in it, poetically ſetting out, 1. The happy condition of the godly, who are called *dwellers in heaven*, becauſe their converſation is their. 2. The miſerable condition of earthly-minded profeſſors, or theſe who were without the church; the one might rejoice, for they had a preſent delivery, the other had a wo coming to them, or a lamentation, or alas, pronounced for them, becauſe this ſucceeding trial would deſtroy more ſouls than the other did bodies, from two reaſons, 1. The devil was *come down to them;* having no hopes of ſucceſs againſt the ſtedfaſt ſeed, he was now to take another way that would prevail againſt many rotten profeſſors; or, being driven from the authority of the empire, he would rage more amongſt and againſt other heatheniſh people, both within and without the empire. 2. He *hath great wrath:* though his power was broken, yet his enmity was no whit abated, but rather irritated and ſtirred up; and the reaſon is added, becauſe he ſaw his kingdom in the world, wherein for a long time he had kept preeminence, was begun to fall, which would by this party be brought to nought. He took this for an alarm of his final ruin and reſtraint within the pit, which he knoweth is abiding him, and e'er long (in reſpect of eternity, or that time he had before) he was to get that ſentence executed on him, ſo that the world had no ground to be ſecure: and, it may be, that what is ſpoken of the earth's drinking up the flood, which was by him intended to deſtroy the woman, is the accidental effect or conſequent wherein this wo conſiſteth. It is like that word, Matth. xviii. 7. *Wo unto the world, becauſe of offences;* for, the great weight of all theſe ills which he now multiplieth, falleth upon the poor earthly profeſſors that make no conſcience of watching againſt them; for the church's flying which followeth hath ſafety with it to theſe who are her true ſeed, but it is a wo to the earth, from whom ſhe fleeth, becauſe then the devil hath all left to him without that public oppoſition that a ſtanding church made to him. It is no little mercy when there is a public church ſtate, and no little curſe when ſhe is not ſo diſcernible. Hence obſerve,

1. When the church ſeemeth weakeſt, like a poor woman travailing, and enemies ſeem ſtrongeſt, like a great red dragon, even then the church is ſtrong, and hath more for her than againſt her, if ſhe ſaw them, as the prophet ſaid to his ſervant, 2 Kings vi. 16. 2. In the church's weakeſt time, ſhe loſeth no battle, and the devil in his ſtrongeſt time never prevaileth; nay, when his inſtruments are taking the blood of Chriſtians, they are but pulling down their own throne and eſtabliſhing Chriſt's.

Better be a ſingle ſoldier on Chriſt's ſide, than a commander of a whole army againſt him. 3. See what ſort of enemy the church hath to do with, and what cauſe ſhe hath to watch. 4. From the ſong, obſerve, the ſaddeſt conflicts of the people of God, have joyfulleſt outgates; there is an excellent ſong here, on the ſtaying of the dragon's perſecution, as chap. xi. before: and it is ſo in all the difficulties of believers, there is a delivery attending every one of them, a day after the darkeſt night, a fair ſunſhine after every ſhower, a long eternity of joy after a temporary affliction. Bear your trials

the better, and wait for an outgate when God ſhall be pleaſed to give it; and if he delay, think it not long, it is coming, when, or how he knoweth, in whoſe hands are times and ſeaſons, which is not for us to know.

LECTURE III.

Verſe 13. *And when the dragon ſaw that he was caſt unto the earth, he perſecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child.*

14. *And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that ſhe might fly into the wilderneſs, into her place: where ſhe is nouriſhed for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the ſerpent.*

15. *And the ſerpent caſt out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman; that he might cauſe her to be carried away of the flood.*

16. *And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and ſwallowed up the flood which the dragon caſt out of his mouth.*

17. *And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her ſeed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt.*

THIS part of the chapter containeth a new trial of the church: which though it be obſcure, yet theſe things are clear, 1. That as to the time thereof it doth ſucceed, and that immediately, to her firſt trial, and her travailing under heatheniſh perſecution is over, and doth precede the open appearing of Antichriſt, which followeth in the beginning of the next chapter: and therefore it muſt continue the hiſtory of the church's condition from Conſtantine's coming to the empire, about the year 310, until the year 606, or thereby: which in the fifth trumpet, chap. ix. was cleared to be the time of the diſcovery of Antichriſt. 2. It is from this clear, that it muſt cotemporate with the firſt four trumpets, chap. viii. and ſo muſt in the event be the ſame. It is more ſhortly and generally ſet down here, becauſe it was more largely inſiſted on in theſe, and becauſe the ſcope of this viſion is eſpecially to deſcribe Antichriſt's kingdom, which was more obſcurely and ſhortly pointed at by the fifth trumpet, chap. ix. and what followed thereon, chap. xi. And ſo the ſcope of this part, is to continue the ſeries of the church's condition between her open ſufferings under the dragon and heathen perſecutors, and the open appearing of the beaſt, or Antichriſt: for, though that be the main ſcope of this viſion, to ſet forth the beaſt's kingdom; yet becauſe that did not immediately ſucceed the former; and the church's declining was not inſtantly at its height, and the devil was never idle; therefore here is ſhown an intervening exerciſe whereby the devil aſſayeth either utterly to undo her, or at leaſt to make way for the beaſt's advancement, which could not, without foregoing preparation, be expected to have ſuch univerſal welcome in the world: and as John is the more ſhort in ſetting down this, ſo may we be in explicating of it, having already ſpoken to it on chap. viii.

In the words, 1. The devil's deſign is laid down, verſe 13. 2. The church's ſafety is expreſſed, ver. 14. 3. A new mean uſed by him to purſue his deſign, is foretold, verſe 15. 4. The church's preſervation from that, and the mean thereof followeth, verſe 16. And, *Laſtly*, The devil's grand deſign, which he, in a great meaſure, accompliſheth, in the following chapter, is hinted, ver. 17. ſo that every verſe hath a new material ſtep of the church's exerciſe, wherein the devil's inceſſant malice on the one ſide, and the Lord's gracious care and ſovereignty on the other, do in this conteſt, eminently appear.

The firſt is ſet forth, verſe 13. in two, 1. The devil's deſign and work, *he perſecuted the woman which had brought forth the man-child:* this differeth from what is ſpoken of, ver. 4. (although that be perſecution alſo) in theſe three, 1. In the object whom he perſecuteth; it is the *woman which brought forth the man-child*, whereas before it was the man-child itſelf, ver. 4. The parties are, upon the matter, the ſame: but the church, conſidered in her complex nature, as an aſſociated body, with ordinances, of word, ſacraments, diſcipline or government, is called the woman, becauſe, as ſuch, ſhe bringeth forth, and is a mother. Again, as ſhe is

conſidered in her particular members and profeſſors, theſe are ſaid to be her children; ſo that the difference in this reſpect is, that formerly the devil endeavoured immediately to cut off all profeſſors that bear the name of Chriſtianity, by heatheniſh perſecution, ſeeking to deſtroy the church in her members; for, if there be no profeſſors, there can be no church: here again, ſeeing that failed him, and he could no longer command men to take the lives of particular Chriſtians on that account, he doth not now war directly againſt them, but he ſeeketh to corrupt the church indirectly, that, by overturning the ordinances in her, he might mar her former beauty that ſhe appeared in, ver. 1. *As a woman clothed with the ſun:* that ſo ſhe being no woman, might be no mother, whereby, indirectly, he might gain his point, in poiſoning the ſeed: this is done, by the awakening and ſpreading of ſchiſms and hereſies in the church, which, though they do not directly ſtrike againſt the being of Chriſtians, or particular profeſſors; yet do they no leſs ſtrike againſt the life of Chriſtianity, in the purity and power of its ordinances, without which there can be no church, although men, as men, continue to live. Hence we may gather the ſecond and third difference, viz. in the inſtruments that he maketh uſe of, and in the manner of his purſuing this new deſign, which is not violently and openly, by heathen men who were without, as formerly he had done, but, more ſubtilly and covertly, by profeſſing Chriſtians, he endeavoureth this. He is now ſaid to *perſecute:* not as if he had not formerly perſecuted; but to ſhew, that although he had altered his way in the former reſpects, yet was his deſign no leſs malicious in reſpect of himſelf, nor hurtful in reſpect of the church, than the former was.

2. The occaſion of this heat againſt the church, and the change of his former way, is ſet down, *And when the dragon ſaw that he was caſt unto the earth:* which importeth, 1. The ground of his irritation, viz. the former foil which he had gotten; he is ſo indefatigable an enemy, that having gotten one defeat, he doth, and that the more inceſſantly, endeavour to recover what was loſt, which ought to make men moſt vigilant, even then when they ſeem to have moſt advantage. 2. It ſheweth the reaſon why now he ſeeketh the corrupting of the church, the mother in this new ſubtil way, and doth not directly purſue the child as he had done, becauſe now, by his former overthrow, he found himſelf caſt unto the earth, ſo that he could not have men directly to own his deſigns, and to give him obedience, as formerly, when the ſupreme magiſtrates were for him. 3. It ſheweth the immediate connection of this his deſign, and what followed thereupon, with the church's former deliverance; ſo that no ſooner doth he find himſelf diſappointed of one mean, but doth he eſſay another. If it be aſked, how the former deliverance could be ſuch ground of joy to the church, ſeeing this doth immediately follow upon it? *Anſw.* 1. It was certainly great ground of praiſe and honour to God, and great ground of joy and rejoicing to the ſaints, in itſelf, whatever effect accidentally, through Satan's malice, and mens corruption, might follow upon it; for, by it, the Lord eminently vindicated his name, truth, and ſervants, from former reproaches and oppreſſions, and gave unto his church great freedom, if it had been well improven. 2. Although the devil inſtantly began this new deſign, yet it was not at once brought to a height; and, therefore, it might be matter of rejoicing to the church, to have that interval which followed between the height of heatheniſh perſecution, and that of Antichriſt's, which was to come, beſide other reaſons given in the cloſe of the former lecture.

Verſe 14. The church's ſafety is ſet forth in theſe circumſtances: 1. In the mean by which ſhe was preſerved, *To the woman were given two wings of a great eagle*: this alludeth to the manner of God's bringing Iſrael out of Egypt, which is ſaid to be as upon eagles wings, Exod. xix. 4. that is, a wonderful and ſpeedy *delivery*, ſo that the means uſed by the devil to hurt, were not able to reach his end. We take it to be that ſame which is mentioned, chap. vii. 1, 2, &c. of the Lord's ſealing his elect againſt that coming ſtorm, and that ſame, chap. xi. 1. of his commanding to *meaſure the temple:* becauſe, 1. Both theſe relate to the ſame perſons, viz. the true church. And, 2. To the ſame time, viz. immediately after heatheniſh perſecution. And, 3. To the ſame ſcope, viz. the preſervation of the Lord's own from theſe tempeſtuous ſtorms or floods which by the *trumpets* were to come upon the viſible church.

2. The place whereto the woman is to flee, is mentioned, *that ſhe might flee into the wilderneſs,*

It is called *her place*, becauſe, verſe 6. it was prepared of God for her, and doth ſet forth the Lord's ſovereignty in ordering her ſafety, and by ſpecial providences carrying out the place of her ſecurity, as having appointed it for her long before the trial came. By *wilderneſs* we are not to conceive any ſuch particular place in any *deſart*, but hereby is meant, that the Lord ſeeth to the ſafety of his church in the midſt of the confuſions of the world, as if ſhe were locally removed from all fellowſhip with them to a *deſart*. More particularly, it alludeth to the Lord's way of bringing the people of Iſrael out of Egypt, who immediately after their great and joyful delivery from Pharaoh out of Egypt, were not brought unto the land of Cannan, but for a long time lived in the *wilderneſs*, where though they were freed from their former oppreſſion, and had much liberty to worſhip God publicly, which they had not in Egypt, yet wanted they not many trials, and through their corruptions many ſins; ſo here is holden forth a *wilderneſs* ſtate of the church, cotemporary with, and ſuitable unto the prophets propheſying in ſackcloth: which we may take up, particularly, to conſiſt in theſe, 1. In a condition that is ſafe, as being now out of the way of hazard. 2. As in a great part latent, and not diſcernible to the men of the world, as if ſhe had been removed to ſome *deſart*. 3. A comfortleſs and ſolitary outward condition, with which, although the true church was not immediately pinched after heatheniſh perſecution, yet were the moſt faithful ever liable thereto in all the church's trials; and it came to an height under Antichriſt, with whom this *wilderneſs* ſtate doth cotemporate. 4. It holdeth forth an eclipſe of the viſible and ſpiritual luſtre and beauty of the church, which doth not now ſhine amongſt men as formerly it did, no more than if ſhe were removed to a *wilderneſs*.

3. In this verſe, we have the Lord's care of her, and proviſion for her, during this time, ſhe is not to ſtarve there, and though now the world about her become a *wilderneſs*; yet *ſhe is nouriſhed*, that is, 1. Hath ſpiritual food provided for her, and bleſſed of God to her; ſo that when tradition, ſuperſtition, idolatry, and that which cannot nouriſh, do abound amongſt the generality of them who are called Chriſtians, even when ſhe hath the ſincere milk of the word appointed for her, and that in ſuch a way as the world knew not whence it came: in which there is an alluſion to God's way of feeding the Iſraelites extraordinarily in the *wilderneſs*, and to his providing for Elias by the ravens, when he durſt not be ſeen in Iſrael. 2. This, that *ſhe is nouriſhed*, holdeth forth the Lord's kind manner of communicating his proviſion to his church in her ſtrait, ſo that although ſhe be not feaſted as ſometimes a ſtranger will do another, yet doth he nouriſh her as a mother, or nurſe, do their ſucking child. 3. It implieth the Lord's continuing of miniſters with her during that time, who ſhould be for number and qualifications fitted for feeding of her: therefore, ver. 6. it is ſaid, *that ſhe hath a place prepared of God, where they ſhould feed her, &c.* that is, the prophets mentioned in the former chapter.

4. The time of her ſtay is, *For a time, and times, and half a time*, that is, the ſame with what was mentioned, ver. 6. and chap. xi. and in the following chapter. It is here repeated, 1. To ſhew the certainty of this event. 2. To ſhew that it is the ſame with that, mentioned ver. 6. and cotemporary with theſe of the ſame extent, chapter xi. and 13. And, 3. It is mentioned in theſe words, with alluſion to that of Dan. vii. 25. wherein the tyranny of Antiochus over the church of the Jews is expreſſed almoſt in the ſame terms; *a time*, that is one year; *times*, that is, two years; and *the dividing of a time* there, ſheweth ſome odd number of days; but here being *half a time*, it is to make it agreeable with the other reckonings of forty-two months, three years and an half, &c. In ſum, it is to ſhew, that while her prophets propheſy in ſackcloth, and Antichriſt poſſeſſeth the outer court, ſhe is to be in the *wilderneſs*.

5. The end of this fleeing, is, *From the face of the ſerpent*, that is, to be preſerved from his fury and rage, as if ſhe had been conveyed out of ſight.

To apply this of the church's fleeing more particularly: 1. We will find it the ſame thing, and belonging to the ſame time with that ſealing, mentioned chap. vii. and that meaſuring that is deſcribed in the former chapter: both which ſhew a low condition of the church, in reſpect of the paucity of profeſſors, her latentneſs, and inconſpicuouſneſs, as to the former beauty and viſible protection, and the reſpect, protection and carefulneſs that is upon the Lord's ſide, in reference to

theſe few. Therefore, 2. By this fleeing of the woman's, we are not to underſtand any local mutation of the church, but a diſappearing of the true church, in reſpect of what ſhe was; for, the ſealed ones continue under the ſtorm with the reſt, and are preſerved from that hurt, chap. ix. 4. not by any local tranſmigration from one place to another, but by God's ſecret protection and ſealing; and the temple ſtandeth where it was, even when it was meaſured by for the Lord, chap. xi. 1. altho' by the addition of human inventions, ſuperſtitions and ceremonies, and eſpecially by the ſwarmes of locuſts, mentioned chap. ix. who were ſo numerous in the outer-court, that the temple and theſe few in it who yet retained the true altar, were ſcarce diſcernible, and that field of the church, which was pleaſant before, by their corruption, is made like unto a wilderneſs, as to the ſpiritual beauty which formerly ſhe enjoyed: and thus the church is ſaid to flee, when by Antichriſt's ſitting down on her, and overſpreading her, ſhe doth not appear as formerly, but he and his followers who tread the outer-court, are ſeen to fill the room where ſhe was. And thus, even Papiſts expound and apply this place, (as we hinted at in the former chapter) illuſtrating it thus, that as now in England the church, ſay they, may be ſaid to be fled to the wilderneſs becauſe that conſpicuous catholic church, which was once in her, it is obſcured by the overſpreading of heretics as they called them, although there be yet within the ſame bounds a number of true catholics who remain a part of the true church: ſo, ſay they, the church's general flight under Antichriſt, is to be conceived to be her general obſcuring by the numerouſneſs of his followers, while as there ſhall be ſtill, even in theſe ſeveral bounds over which he governeth, ſuch a number of true catholics as ſhall ſtill make up a true church. And this we conceive, being rightly applied to the corruption of the true Antichriſt, is the very ſame thing mentioned here. 3. This inconſpicuouſneſs and latency, is not any change on the perſons who continue profeſſors of the true church, as Papiſts abſurdly impute to us; but here the devil's deſign being againſt the purity of ordinances and the church, as conſidered complexly as a woman and mother, it is in that reſpect that ſhe is ſaid eſpecially to flee; becauſe, that altho' the perſons continue ſtill viſible, yet the former purity of ordinances, truths of the goſpel, and ſimple way of church-communion, which formerly made her conſpicuous, is now made exceeding undiſcernible, and ſhe in that reſpect is made as it were to flee; ſo that now, partly, through the multitude of corruptions, ſuperſtitions, &c. that infect the church; and partly, through the fear of profeſſors, and hazard that there is openly to diſown theſe, it becometh exceeding difficult to diſcern purity of doctrine, and the ſimple way of worſhip, and theſe who ſincerely adhere thereto, altho' ſuch indeed continue ſtill to be free from the corruptions of doctrine, ſuperſtitiouſneſs of worſhip, and theſe who were infected therewith, but theſe laſt become ſo predominant over the face of the Chriſtian world, that the former is conceived to be removed, and all are accounted to be of this one corrupt way, the harmony therein is ſo general. And what the Papiſts plead for in the pretended univerſality of the Romiſh catholic religion, is from this found to be in a great part truth, and to be acknowledged ſo, it being the very fulfilling of this propheſy. 4. We are not to conceive, that theſe who obſcure the beauty of the church, and are ſaid to poſſeſs the outer court, are indeed perſons ſimply extrinſic to the viſible church, but extrinſic as to the corruptions, ſtealing in and infecting the generality of the members of the viſible church, by whom the ordinances of doctrine, worſhip and government, are corrupted; which again have influence upon the corrupting of her members: this fleeing then of the woman's is an inward infection, whereby her former church ſtate is quite altered and turned to be another thing, as if ſhe were not in the ſame place where ſhe was, even as, under the law, it is ſaid of the Jews, that by their whoring from God and defections, *the holy fleſh paſſed from them*, Jer. xi. 15. when they were, and appeared to be, unſuitable to their federal relation to God, altho' they keeped ſtill the pretext thereof; ſo here the church is ſaid to flee from the generality of theſe that profeſs Chriſtianity, when they become, by their corruptions, unſuitable to it, even altho' they pretend ſtill to a profeſſion thereof, it being as inconſiſtent with the being of a pure church to alter and corrupt the purity of ordinances, as for one to continue in one place, and to flee from it, at the ſame time. 5. This diſtinction between the woman, or pure profeſſion and profeſſors from theſe ſuperadded corruptions and declining profeſſors, is

not ſo much, or only to be gathered from a ſtated diviſion and ſeparation ſuppoſed to be between them, in reſpect of place, or diſtinct profeſſion, as if the true worſhippers were in one place, and the declined church in another, without any external communion in any part of worſhip together, during this time; but in this eſpecially, that theſe true worſhippers, though living amongſt the others, did yet keep themſelves from theſe corruptions, and from communicating in them with theſe who were corrupted, at leaſt in ſuch things as were inconſiſtent with the foundation, although in many accidental and circumſtantial things, they might be enſnared in the common courſe of the time, yet keeping ſtill the foundation of eſſential truths and worſhip, whereby they continue to be true members of the church, and to have the reality and power of ordinances amongſt them, altho' much obſcured by the building of hay, ſtubble, &c. and ſuch like thereupon; which may yet be conſiſtent with their ſalvation, as we may gather from the inſtancing of many worthy men, who wanted not their acceſſion to many ſuperſtitions, ceremonies and practices, who yet, by retaining the foundation of goſpel-truths, cannot be denied to be true members of the true church; and this failing of ſuch, hath no little influence on the church's fleeing and bringing of her, in reſpect of her church-ſtate, into this wilderneſs and latent condition, even as in the times of the Jews defections, and particularly, of that in the days of Elijah, we will find many thouſands continuing really to be true worſhippers of the true God in things ſimply fundamental, and not to bow the knee to Baal, or totally to partake of the common apoſtaſy, although they might continue public communion in many things with the reſt, and it is like, in every thing not keep ſuch diſtance with theſe defections, and profeſs the truth ſo as became them, as by their continuance in that kingdom, where the public pure worſhip of God was ſo diſcountenanced, and by their being undiſcernible even to Elijah, ſeemeth to be manifeſt; and in this caſe the Lord might feed and nouriſh them, by continuing ſome faithful miniſters for their cauſe, as he had done ſome prophets even in Iſrael, although they knew not who were benefited by them; or, ſo much ſolid truth of his gopel in the midſt of much ſuperſtition and human invention, which being choſen by them, and ſeparated from the poiſonous additions, might prove ſolid food by God's bleſſing to them, whereas others of that ſame ſociety might ſtarve, or poiſon themſelves by their forbearing of the truth that was continued, and their drinking in of the errors and ſuperſtitions that were added: and according to this, we will find in the writings of many, where theſe corruptions are moſt frequent, yet ſometimes ſo much ſolid truth, that if it be cleanly ſeparated, and wailed out from that infectious leaven, may prove uſeful and nouriſhing to ſouls. And hence it is, that even amongſt theſe who had no viſible ſtated ſeparation from Popery, there may be ſaid to be continued a true church, in as far as the Lord continued theſe truths, and, no queſtion, had ſome amongſt them for whoſe behove he did continue them, as a church to him, although the Popiſh church as ſuch, was not the true church, but contradiſtinguiſhed from it; and in this reſpect, the viſible church at that time, at leaſt in part, and the Antichriſtian church, are to be diſtinguiſhed in reſpect of this different conſideration of profeſſors, viz. that general declined church, is Antichriſtian, as conſidered in her adherence to him, and owning of all his corruptions, whereby ſhe carrieth his mark; but, as conſidered in reſpect of theſe who retain the foundation, and own the fundamental truths of Chriſt, and truly adhere to him, theſe are the church of Chriſt, although in reſpect of their declining and partial defection they be an impure and obſcure church, whereof ſomething is ſaid, chap. xi. *lecture ult.* and more may be ſaid (God willing) afterward.

6. This *fleeing* of the *woman*, and defection of the church, is not to be conceived as inſtantly at an height, or, during this whole time, to be accounted of equal groſſneſs; for although it begin immediately after heatheniſh perſecution, as is ſaid, and before the beaſt's public appearing; yea, before the flood be caſt out of the dragon's mouth; yet is ſhe, for a time, in ſight, therefore it is ſaid, *that he caſt out the flood after her.* And therefore we are not to account the church, during the firſt four trumpets, to be no church, but a *declining* or *fleeing church*, as being in her way to this wilderneſs-condition. It would not therefore be thought, that that ſtate of the church, during the firſt four famous general councils, wherein the truths of God were vindicated, is to be paralelled with that corrupt ſtate which ſucceeded to theſe; yet, conſidering the beginning

of the decay of purity of doctrine, and ſimplicity of worſhip in the church, and the way that was then accidently made for Antichriſt's public appearing, as we cleared on the firſt four trumpets; and conſidering the way how periods are reckoned in this propheſy, (whereof more was ſaid on chap. xi. lecture iv.) We conceive it is ſafe therefore, and only agreeable to the nature of theſe periods, to fix the time as is ſaid.

In the 15th. ver. we have the ſerpent's malicious craft againſt the woman ſet down, 1. In the mean he maketh uſe of; it is water as a flood. 2. There is the fountain this ſpringeth from: *he caſt it out of his mouth.* 3. There is, to ſay ſo, the object, in reference to which he directeth this flood; it is after the woman. *Laſtly*, There is his deſign, that is, *that he might cauſe her to be carried away of the flood.* By this *water as a flood*, we underſtand errors, and that in a moſt abundant meaſure and violent manner. Sometimes they are compared to winds, as chap. vii. Sometimes again to water that is very tumultuous, as Jude ver. 13. The maintainers of them are called raging winds of the ſea. They are compared to a flood, to hold forth, 1. The abounding of them. 2. The ſudden riſe of them. 3. Their impetuouſneſs. 4. The hurtfulneſs of them, which do drown ſouls, and overturn the face of the viſible church, as floods do fields. That errors muſt be underſtood here, theſe things will clear, 1. That this flood proceedeth out of the devil's mouth, who is a liar, and the father thereof, and ſendeth lying ſpirits out into the mouths of others. 2. It is clear from the cotemporary propheſy of the firſt four trumpets; for, this holdeth forth the troubles of the church immediately after heathenish perſecution; the event alſo being exactly conform, as was clear in the viii. chapter doth confirm this. The ſerpent is ſaid *to caſt this flood out of his mouth*: which importeth, 1. That the original of all error is from the devil, the father of lies. And what kind of waters can theſe be that proceed out of ſuch a mouth? This is to make men loath all declinings from truth; for, the devil hath, as it were, diſgorged himſelf by ſending abroad ſuch a thing. 2. It importeth a ſuddenneſs in the riſe, and a vehemency in the driving on of ſuch errors, that he did not only ſpew theſe out of his mouth, but he did caſt them with a kind of violence and force. *Laſtly*, It ſheweth alſo his malice that throweth ſuch floods after the fleeing woman. This agreeth well alſo (according to the former application under the firſt four trumpets) unto the primitive errors, which indeed were like a flood, and were moſt violently carried on to the great hurt of the church. This letteth us ſee how impetuous error will be for a time, and what height in the juſtice of God it may come unto. 3. It is ſaid to be caſten after the woman: which doth not only import his levelling it at her, and his ſeeking thereby to infect the ordinances, and the mother that bringeth forth, and the true ſpouſe of Jeſus Chriſt; (for, the reſt of the world he doth not value them) but alſo it doth import, 1. That the woman was moving. And, 2. That he took the advantage of her moving, as it were, to carry her the more eaſily away before ſhe could ſettle: this is clear from the fourth thing, which is his deſign, viz. *that he might cauſe her to be carried away with the flood.* It is not ſaid, that he might drown her with the flood, but that with ſuch errors he might drive her from truth and ſtedfaſtneſs therein, and carry her away in that flood with the reſt of the unſtable world; and ſo, in a word, that he might undo her, that ſhe ſhould be no woman and no church. We conceive the event to be anſwerable in theſe two, 1. The church by temporal pomp and grandeur, and multiplying of ceremonies, and ſuch like, did begin the flight of the true church, and did ſomeway by that declining obſcure her. 2. When ſpirits were grown ſomewhat carnal, and had fallen from their former ſimplicity, then the devil took advantage to raiſe up abominable errors, and did drive them on impetuouſly, intending thereby to deſtroy all, and involve the few that keep their garments clean in theſe abominations: which two are clear in hiſtory, as hath been formerly ſaid.

In the 16th verſe we have the remedy and covert provided againſt this ſtorm, whereby the devil's deſign is diſappointed, it is ſaid, *and the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and ſwallowed up the flood which the dragon caſt out of his mouth.* In the general this ſeemeth hard to be expounded or applied, yet we muſt follow the ſimple ſcope and ſtrain of the allegory, which is this, that as the devil caſteth out errors like floods to carry away the church, as proper floods of water do carry things before them, ſo the Lord doth provide means to drain and dry up theſe floods of errors, as effectually as the earth's opening of

its mouth will ſoon dry up a flood. And it being ſomewhat certain what the floods are, it will be ſafeſt to look to the means, which, in the event, were made uſe of for the reſtraining of theſe abominations.

The verſe hath two things, 1. The mean or inſtrument of the woman's help, *and the earth helped the woman.* 2. There is the manner how the earth adminiſtreth this help, *ſhe openeth her mouth, and ſwalloweth up the flood which the ſerpent had caſt out of his mouth.* By earth here, we cannot underſtand the world, as contradiſtinguiſhed from the viſible church, becauſe there is no way conceivable of their helping the woman againſt errors; neither in the event will any thing of that be found truth; for theſe Goths and Vandals that invaded the empire, did altogether befriend the Arians, and were enemies to the pure church. We muſt then by *earth* underſtand the viſible church at that time which was declining from the ſimplicity of the goſpel, and becoming earthly in her ſervices and adminiſtrations, as we heard, chap. vii. ſhe is called the *earth*, which the wind was to blow upon. That it muſt be ſo underſtood here, viz. of the declining viſible church, as contradiſtinguiſhed from the pure members therein, theſe things will clear, 1. Becauſe it muſt neceſſarily be underſtood of the viſible church, and yet it is expreſsly contradiſtinguiſhed from the woman and her ſeed that comprehendeth the pure members. Therefore by earth here muſt be underſtood that part of the viſible church which was declining faſt from its purity. 2. There is no way of applying of the earth opening its mouth, and drinking up of that flood, but to underſtand it of that declining church, as is ſaid. 3. The event alſo will clear it, as ſomewhat was ſaid, chap. viii. and what we may now hint, will further evidence. *Laſtly*, There is no other thing will ſuit the allegory, as the application will make appear.

If it be aſked how the viſible church can be called the earth during the firſt four trumpets? *Anſw.* 1. We muſt not have reſpect only to the firſt four trumpets, but to the whole period of all the ſix; and therefore as the woman is contradiſtinguiſhed from the viſible church, and ſaid to be hid for the ſpace of 1260 days, becauſe her low condition came to an height in that time, though for a time ſhe wanted not liberty, even ſo in oppoſition to that, the declining part of the viſible church, during that time, is called earth, becauſe in that period her earthlineſs came to an height, although for a time it was but advancing. And upon this ground, Antichriſt and his followers are ſaid to tread the outer court, chap. xi. 2, 3. During all that whole period, though for a conſiderable time he came not to a height. And this anſwer muſt be admitted, otherwiſe there is no agreeing of theſe propheſies which ſpeak of the whole period as at its height, when notwithſtanding, they have many degrees to paſs before they come to that. 2. That viſible church may be called the earth, becauſe of its earthly pomp and grandeur, having great titles, conteſts for precedency, ample temporal governments in her officers, and ſuch like; whereby ſhe looketh more earthly-like in her carriage and proceedings, than the firſt primitive church which appeared clothed with the ſun, and in a heavenly frame in the beginning of the chapter. 3. She may be called the earth that helped the woman, becauſe of the countenance that oftentimes ſhe had of civil magiſtrates, and the concurrence that was between the then viſible church and the magiſtrates at that time for the ſuppreſſing of errors. 4. It may be ſaid the earth helped the woman, becauſe of the general concurrence of multitudes of nations within the viſible church, which being compared with the few ſingle ones, might be called by this name. It is here to be adverted, that when we ſpeak of the earth's concurring to help the woman during that time, that it is not to be ſuppoſed that many of the good emperors and ancient fathers are to be accounted of this declining church, as it is contradiſtinguiſhed from the woman: for tho' they be diſtinguiſhed, yet they are not ſeparated in place, but, as hath often been ſaid, they might be in one council, and yet fall under this contradiſtinction. Beſide, the viſible church at that time is not denominated from any honeſt perſons that were in her, but from her general tendency to earthlineſs in worſhip during this period, as is ſaid. Alſo we will find this neceſſity of diſtinguiſhing many of the woman's ſeed that lived under Antichriſt from being a part of his church, even in the darkeſt time.

The ſecond thing in the verſe, is, the manner how this part of the viſible church helpeth the true church, *The earth opened her mouth, and ſwallowed up the flood which the dragon caſt out of his mouth.* By earth we underſtand, as is ſaid, the declining part of the viſible church, which in the

end became Antichriſtian. And among other reaſons why ſhe is called the earth here, we conceive this is one, becauſe that declining church was to preſerve the truth in reference to theſe four primitive errors, even in its moſt earthly temper, and in its loweſt degree of declining, by which the doctrine of the God-head, and of the perſon of our bleſſed Lord Jeſus, hath been preſerved for the benefit of the woman's ſeed, even amongſt their corrupt writers. Alſo this expoſition of earth, will anſwer the allegory well; for, as the earth's drinking up of floods, is the ordinary way whereby they are aſſwaged, ſo the viſible church, her opening of her mouth, that is, by ſerious exhortations in preachings, diſputes in writings, determinations in ſynods and councils, and ſuch like, is the ordinary and approven mean of reſtraining error and preſerving truth. It is ſaid, *the earth opened her mouth and ſwallowed up the flood, which the dragon caſt out of his mouth.* This ſwallowing doth not imply any affection and love to that flood, for ſhe doth not kindly drink it; but it importeth, 1. An indignation at it. 2. A haſte and ſpeedineſs in concurring for drying up the ſame. 3. A ridding of marches in ſome full and eminent manner for the vindicating of theſe truths. In the former verſe the devil is called the ſerpent, becauſe he was carrying his deſign cloſely; here he is called the dragon, becauſe his deſign cometh to be diſcovered. It is not ſaid that the earth did ſwallow up the flood which the dragon did caſt after the woman, but ſimply the flood that he caſt out of his mouth: the reaſon of this is, becauſe the earth (that is, the declining church) when indeed materially ſhe was helping the woman the pure church, yet had ſhe no diſcerning of that diſtinction, but was only provoked with indignation againſt theſe abominable errors, though as to the event the Lord made good help to his true church out of the ſame.

Now, to conſider the application of this in the event, we will find it fully agreeable to this propheſy, 1. When the devil raiſed up four groſs abominable errors immediately after the church's obtaining of peace, there was a general concurrence of the plurality of the viſible church, and officers thereof, for diſcovering, confuting and condemning the ſame, and cenſuring the abettors thereof; thus they are, the firſt hereſy, viz. that of Arius, which denied the eternity of the Godhead of the Son, was condemned by the firſt famous council at Nice, during the reign of Conſtantine the Great, and by his concurrence. The ſecond error of the Macedonians, who denied the perſonality of the Holy Ghoſt, was condemned by the ſecond general council, which was the firſt at Conſtantinople: this was convocated by Theodoſius the Great. The third error of Neſtorius, who divided Chriſt's natures, and aſſerted him to have two perſons as well as two natures, was condemned by the third famous general council at Epheſus under Theodoſius the II. A fourth principal fundamental error, was that of Eutyches, who on the contrary of Neſtorius, did confound the natures of Chriſt and aſſert him to have but one nature, as he is but one perſon: this was under Martianus the emperor. Now, conſidering that in the event there is ſuch a general concurrence of the whole church, even when there were failings, and a decay in many things: this may well look like the earth's drying up of the flood, and be a part of the fulfilling of this propheſy; eſpecially if we conſider, in the ſecond place, that theſe truths were not only maintained during the firſt four trumpets, while the church was not altogether out of ſight, (for, the laſt error, is caſt out after the woman, as well as the firſt, which importeth her to have had ſome viſibility all that time) but, in her moſt declining times, ſhe hath keeped theſe truths concerning the Godhead of the Son, the perſonality of the Holy Ghoſt, the perſonal natures of our bleſſed Lord Jeſus were ſtill keeped pure in the time of the greateſt darkneſs of Popery. In God's providence the Antichriſtian church being conſtrained to acknowledge theſe four general councils, and theſe particular truths maintained in them, in oppoſition to the former errors: yea, (laying aſide their curioſity) many of their corrupt ſchoolmen have done well to this purpoſe: wherefore here we would advert, 1. That their keeping pure theſe fundamental truths in that church, is a thing eſpecially deſigned of God, and cometh to paſs by his providence; and being foretold, as to him, it could not be otherwiſe. 2. We may advert and gather here, that the Antichriſtian church is not in every fundamental point of Chriſtianity to be corrupt: for, in particular it is propheſied of her, that ſhe ſhall keep theſe doctrines pure, and not receive the flood of the firſt impetuous errors; for, the earth here, that ſame earth upon which the wind bloweth, chap. vii. and hurteth with Antichriſt's deluſions, and the

ſame earth or world, which, in the chapter following is ſaid to worſhip the beaſt. 3. We may enquire after the reaſons why the Lord thinketh good to make uſe of that church for preſerving of theſe truths, *Firſt*, One reaſon is clear in the text, that thereby the woman, that is, the pure church, not only during the firſt four trumpets, when things were not altogether corrupt, as was ſaid; but alſo under the fifth and ſixth, might be fed, and theſe moſt neceſſary and fundamental truths might be preſerved for that end, and for preventing her being overmaſtered or enſnared by theſe errors: for, it is like, had not theſe truths been generally acknowledged as determined by the church, many more, even of the elect, had been in hazard by the ſubtilty of theſe heretics: and conſidering, that oftentimes the ſincere number are few in the viſible church, and there is no attaining of a public determination for truth, without the concurrence of many otherwiſe unſound; therefore, when the Lord, in an extraordinary manner, ſtirreth up ſuch to concur for ſuch an end, it is a great help to the church. And, indeed, we ſee in theſe primitive times, even when truth had been confirmed, that afterward error got the advantage of the plurality upon its ſide, and pretended determinations for it, as in the hiſtory of the councils may be ſeen. Sometimes the Arians, in numerous councils, had but few oppoſers, as Hilarius, Oſius, and Paulinus, &c. who therefore were baniſhed, becauſe they ceded not. By which we may ſee, that the Lord made uſe of many men for concurring in the former determinations, who, at other times, when the face of authority changed, did quiet alter: yet, to conclude this, we may ſee the truth of this propheſy is fulfilled, that is, that though there be many oppoſite councils unto theſe former, yet have theſe alway been acknowledged, even in the popiſh church, and many have gotten good thereof, which hath been a great help unto them. Alſo this may give an hint of one reaſon why the viſible church is ſo ſoon diſtinguiſhed from the fleeing woman. And it is wonderful, that when Conſtantine appeareth againſt Arius, there is ſuch a general concurrence of all ſorts againſt him, eſpecially of biſhops and church officers, and that ſome few years thereafter, during the time of the ſame emperor, there are ſo few countenancers of the truth, and ſo many favourers of that error, who, it is like, had ſometime condemned the ſame. A ſecond reaſon is, the Lord would have us loving truth wherever it may be found, if it were even among the writings of Antichriſt's vaſſals, he will not have us to meaſure truth or error by mens piety or profanity, who maintain the ſame, neither will he have determinations of councils to be caſten or accepted, becauſe the plurality of the diſcerners are profane or holy, but he will have both ſquared according to the ſupreme rule. And ſo we are to welcome truth, preſerved and brought down through the Antichriſtian church, as if it were immediately revealed. A third reaſon why the Lord will have theſe truths preſerved in Antichriſt's church, is, that he may be the more vailed, and the ſnare the greater unto the world, while he looketh like a lamb, as is ſaid in the next chapter; for, it cannot be thought, that if he ſhould deny any of theſe clear truths, ſo fully confirmed by antient councils and fathers, that he could prevail ſo ſuddenly and univerſally to bring almoſt the whole viſible church to give him adoration. A fourth reaſon may be the Lord's juſt purpoſe to harden ſuch as are wholly given up to Antichriſt's deluſions, who, becauſe of their owning of theſe truths, and their agreeing with the primitive church in that, are the more ready to conceit, that they are ſucceſſors to the firſt pure primitive church; and therefore are the hardlier brought to renounce their other abominations. Fifthly, It is to ſhew alſo the Lord's ſovereignty over corrupt men, and his care of his church, who can make even ſuch to be helpful to her, when they intend no ſuch thing. And thus while generally they own theſe truths, and while particular writers now and then fall to propoſe and defend other fundamental truths, ſome one, ſome another, out of all the Lord provideth a ſummary of fundamentals, with which, by one providence or other he feedeth and eſtabliſheth theſe that are his, in the moſt ſecure and corrupt time.

We come now to the 17th verſe, wherein the devil's laſt grand deſign is generally inſinuated, but is more expreſly followed in the chapter immediately ſucceeding, when he getteth ſome diſappointment in the firſt four trumpets; it is ſaid, *and the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her ſeed, &c.* In which verſe we have theſe three: 1. The increaſe of the devil's malice, he *was wroth with the woman.* The woman, or church, had done him no wrong, yet is he wroth, that he getteth not his own malice

vented againſt her. It is a moſt deviliſh diſpoſition, when men are wroth with others, becauſe they cannot hurt them, and undo them, eſpecially the woman, or her ſeed: and yet men being naturally of this father, want not this devliſh malignity, till, by grace, it be ſubdued, though in ſome it appear leſs, in others more. Again, it will ſeem to import here, that though the devil was wroth before, and is always wroth with the woman and her ſeed, yet that ſpecial diſappointments of his deſigns, and her particular and extraordinary preſervation, do eſpecially gall him. This, we conceive, is not unſuitable to the curſe that he is under, nor to the Lord's glorious ſovereignty over him, even to bring about his own deſigns upon his own head. 2. His deſign, as the fruit of this anger, is ſet down, *he went to make war with the remnant of her ſeed.* Where advert, 1. That now his deſign is not againſt the woman immediately, but againſt her ſeed, that is, not againſt a viſible church, and the conſtitution and frame of ordinances in general, but againſt particular members that kept themſelves pure from the corruptions of the time. The reaſon of the change, we conceive to be this, that during the firſt four general councils, and before Antichriſt came to a height, he had ſtill ſome ſight of a viſible church and pure ordinances as to eſſentials (therefore the laſt part of the flood is caſt out after the woman, as well as the firſt.) But, when the fifth trumpet ſounded, which darkeneth the ſun and the air, and when Antichriſt ariſeth, whom now he intendeth to bring to a height, there is not ſuch a face of a viſible church, or pure ordinances, to be ſeen, as was formerly; for ſhe is obſcured with a multitude of corrupt worſhippers. The devil knoweth there is a church; but ſeeing he cannot come at her, he is wroth, and turneth to her ſeed, that is, to particular perſons here or there, who preſerved themſelves pure. 2. It is called the *Remnant* of her ſeed, becauſe, during that time, they were to be exceeding few, even as a very ſmall remnant. 3. It is ſaid, that *the dragon went to make war with that* pure *remnant:* they are not a party for him; yet, now, when he miſſeth the mother, he purſueth the ſeed, who were much more diſcernible than any combined pure viſible church: this, of *making war*, importeth his ſtretching himſelf to the utmoſt to undo them. The third thing in the verſe is, the deſcription of the woman's ſeed, that it may be known what are the characters whereby he doth diſcern them, and whereby we may diſcern ourſelves; they are two, 1. *They keep the commandments of God:* which is to be underſtood, 1. Simply, as the word is, Pſal. cxix. 6. they have reſpect in their walk to all God's commandments, though they attain not to perfection therein; *Holineſs becometh God's houſe for ever*, Pſal. xciii. 5. and is a good character of a child of God. 2. We may underſtand it in oppoſition to the Antichriſtain church, who, during this time, ſpend their devotions in obedience to traditions and commandments of men, whereby, as Chriſt ſaith of the Phariſees, *they did make void the commandments of God.* By this we may ſee, that vows, faſtings, peregrinations, adoration of croſſes, and the like, though never ſo many, with never ſo much devotion and ſeeming piety, will never prove one to be of the ſeed of the church; whereas the ſimple ſincere practice of clear commanded duties, will ſufficiently evidence the ſame. The ſecond character is, and *they have the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt*, that is, they are not only legal in their practice, but the Mediator, in all his offices, is acknowledged by them: this is alſo to be underſtood, 1. Simply, that they bear teſtimony to Chriſt, by believing in him, as it is, 1 John v. and have his approbation in the ſame. 2. It is alſo to be underſtood in oppoſition to the corrupt multitude, who, in effect, deny Chriſt to be come in the fleſh by their meats, purgatory, reſting upon good works, and the like of theſe; whereby they give not their teſtimony to Chriſt, nor have it in the profeſſion that is proper and ſuitable to true profeſſors, nor will be found therein approven, as having the ſame before God: in a word, they are ſuch as have reſpect both to law and goſpel, giving each of them their own due. This was fulfilled when the devil ſet himſelf, by the bringing forth of Antichriſt to public view, to make havock of the church; the hiſtory whereof followeth in the next chapter more particularly.

Concerning the Unity of the Catholic viſible Church.

THIS woman being the church, and frequently mentioned, we may conſider her a little, and we will ſee that there is a catholic viſible church in the days of the goſpel alſo: that the church is here intended, is certain; that it is the church viſible in this, and in the former chap-

ter, is alſo undeniable; it is her purity and defection that is deſcribed; it is ſhe that fleeth; it is ſhe that hath prophets; it is ſhe that is more or leſs viſible; it is ſhe that is perſecuted by the dragon, and by Antichriſt; it is ſhe that is ſet on by the flood of error; it is ſhe that travaileth, and bringeth forth ſeed that will lay down their lives for the teſtimony of Chriſt: the whole ſcope and ſtrain runneth on this, to ſet forth the ſtate and condition of the viſible church, as we may gather from this, and the cloſe of the former chapter.

That this church is one, we may make it out in theſe three conſiderations: 1. The Jewiſh church, and the goſpel church, materially, and in eſſential things, are one: it is that ſame ſtock from which they were broken off, into which the Gentile goſpel church was ingrafted; it is that root, ſap, and fatneſs which we now partake of, that they fell from, as Rome xi. Yea, when the Jews came to be grafted in again, the ſtock and church is the ſame; it is to their old church ſtate that they are again reſtored. If then the Jewiſh church ſtate, and the Gentiles be one, yea, the Jewiſh church ſtate before their fall, and after their recovery, be eſſentially the ſame on this ground, then the kingdoms, or nations, becoming the Lord's, doth take in the Jews re-ingrafting, who now have had the vail long on their faces, and the temple ſhut upon them; for then the temple ſhall be opened, and materially they ſhall be entered to the ſubſtance of their antient privileges and covenant, although the adminiſtration thereof be changed. This is here clear; for this woman, ver. 1. is grafted in the Jewiſh ſtock, Rom. xi. and becometh Chriſt's bride, and continueth ſo to the end the ſame woman. This conſideration doth ſhew, how warrantably we may make uſe of the experience of theſe antient believers, plead their general and eſſential privileges to us and ours, and build on the moral grounds of their policy, and the adminiſtration of this covenant, and ordinances amongſt them, ſeeing we are one church, with the ſame eſſential covenant and privileges, altho' ſome things ceremonial were adjoined to them.

2. The goſpel church before Antichriſt, during his reign, and what followeth, is ſtill one church: this followeth on the former, and is clear in that inſtance of the Jews, who are to be ingrafted in that ſame root that the believing Gentiles ſucceeded unto, before Antichriſt aroſe; ſo the temple's the ſame, when it is ſhut, chap. xi. verſe 1. and ſome few cloſed up in it, with the temple that is open, verſe 19. out of which many do come, chap. xv. The woman alſo that travaileth, ver. 1, 2. and bringeth forth, and fleeth to the wilderneſs, is ſtill the ſame woman, ſpouſe to Chriſt, and mother to his ſeed, during that time, and after the expiring of theſe days.

This conſideration ſheweth the continuance of the church and ordinances, and how that ſeries is not interrupted by Antichriſt's ſitting down in the temple, 2 Theſſ. ii. but it continueth to be the church notwithſtanding, and, after his removal, is to be acknowledged for the ſame church that it was before he did ſet himſelf down therein.

3. There is an unity amongſt all profeſſors in all parts of the world that live in the ſame time; they all are of this one church; and there is one integral catholic church that is made up of them all: for, 1. There is in all the world but one heaven and kingdom of heaven that is the viſible church, as there is one earth or world diſtinct from it; and it cannot be ſaid there are two, there is but one temple (as there is but one ark) that in darkneſs all are ſhut up in, and which, when liberty cometh, is but that ſame temple opened, and is ſtill one, although it be enlarged to receive more. And as all profeſſors in a nation become one national church, as hath been ſaid, ſo all profeſſing nations do become one catholic church, by the ſame grounds proportionably followed: for now they become his, not only ſeverally but conjunctively, and theſe have their national unity, as being parts of that whole with a ſubſerviency thereunto. There is in all the world but one *woman:* when ſhe travaileth, there is an unity and conjunction for delivery, as there was common hazard; and ſo all profeſſors and churches did join in prayers, judicatures, &c. for this end, there is but one ſpouſe to Chriſt, the viſible church: therefore it is either not Chriſt's ſpouſe, nor married to him; or there muſt be a catholic viſible church, married to him by the ſame goſpel-band every where: for to ſay that Chriſt had many ſpouſes, would ſound monſtruouſly, and not anſwer the analogy of that oneneſs that is between Chriſt and his own church, as between a man and his own wife: there is but one mother bringeth forth, and all viſible profeſſors, who were either liable to heatheniſh perſecution, or Antichriſtian, in any part of the world, they are children of this mother, Gal. iv. 27. and ſeed of this one woman, which ſheweth ſhe muſt be one: all the prophets and miniſters,

wherever they ſerve, they feed this one woman, and are appointed for that end, as is clear, verſe 6. All profeſſing Chriſtians, who poſſibly belong to no particular congregation, are of this church; for they are not of any particular church, and yet cannot be without even the viſible church, but in that reſpect have a mother: this church is the church that the twelve apoſtles and their ſucceſſors adorn, verſe 1. And if that be not, there can be no ſolid expoſition of the xi. chap. and of this; neither can the church be conſidered in this univerſal notion as a genus, (which is but a philoſophic notion) as one might apply the notion woman, mother, or houſe, to all women, mothers, and houſes, becauſe that is a genus including notionally all that kind: nay, it muſt be no univerſal integral, as the world is not a genus to all nations, or perſons in it, but doth comprehend them all as parts under itſelf as the whole; and it is conſtituted of all theſe; for, all viſible profeſſors are members of that church, as parts thereof, as all men are of the world. Beſide, what ſenſe is it to ſay, that a genus, which is an *ens rationis*, ſhould ſuffer, flee, be more or leſs viſible, have feed, be fed, &c. Theſe things prove it clearly to hold out the catholic viſible church as an integral body and ſociety, whereof all particular profeſſors are parts.

Neither hath this been accounted ſtrange doctrine in the church; for, before Chriſt, this church was one: and if after his coming, her unity were diſſolved, then ſhe were not the ſame church, or woman, but many churches, or women, that one were many, the primitive times knew no miſs; but the church, and theſe that were without the ſame, who were baptized, were added to one church, Acts ii. ult. 1 Cor. xii. 13, &c. And theſe who were rejected, were caſt out of this one church, John ii. Upon this ground all the apoſtles but fed one church, when they fed Chriſt's lambs any where. Upon this the general councils are founded; and there is nothing rifer and more ordinary than ſuch phraſes, as, *The unity of the church, the praying for the church, &c. renting of the church, perſecuting of the church, &c.* mentioned both among the fathers, and latter divines; yet none will think that any particular church is meant, or that the viſible church is not intended. Hence the Novatians, Donatiſts, and others of old, and the Anabaptiſts of late, have been by all the orthodox branded with this, that they rent and ſeparated from the church, which certainly can be underſtood of no particular congregation; and how often is the ſeamleſs coat of our bleſſed Lord ſpoken of? Thereby to ſhew, how they conceive the unity of the church viſible, which ought not to be rent, being by him appointed to be one entire piece; yea, this form of ſpeech, is not abhorred by many judicious men of the congregational way, and judicious Ames (whom the learned Hudſon citeth) is expreſs for a catholic-church, that is *integraliter univerſalis*. We will find alſo that moſt ſolid writer, Cobbet of New England, aſſert it, and own that, as a principle deſtructive to rule, Antipedo baptiſm chap. ſect. 5. at the cloſe; ſo doth Cotton, cant. 6. 9. and Robotham appoſitely maketh the garden, chap. vi. 2. to be the catholic-church, and the gardens to be particular churches comprehended under the ſame, and as parts thereof: tho' all theſe, and the catholic-church be not in themſelves different parties, but ſhe exiſteth in them, as the world exiſteth in particular nations and perſons; there is no reaſon therefore to brand this as a principle of Popery, and this being both the univerſal judgment, and practice of all divines hitherto, to account the viſible church to be one: the expreſſions that are in their writings are to be interpreted thereby, as being intended againſt the Popiſh catholicneſs; which we alſo oppoſe, and the following words in our hands do deſtroy: and they diſpute that the catholic-church is not viſible, that is, either not glorious and of great extent, or not of neceſſity alway to be ſeen or acknowledged as ſuch, therefore, ſay they, ſhe is *viſibilis*, tho' not alway *viſa*; but they do not contradict this, that the viſible church hath an unity in it, and is one body, altho' many of them do account that to be the church, but improperly, and the regenerate elect only properly to be the church; and this is as much againſt particular churches as this general church, becauſe they look upon the inviſible church, as that which is the object of many promiſes, applied by Papiſts to their catholic, or rather their particular church abſurdly; and there is odds to ſay the catholic church is viſible, as they underſtood it, and to ſay the viſible church is one, which is the thing we plead for.

2. We gather that this catholic church is the firſt church, and fountain from which all particular churches do flow, and of whoſe nature they do partake; for, ſhe is the mother, and they are the ſeed, which doth demonſtrate the ſame; ſhe is the

travailing woman, and they the birth brought forth and exalted, and they are churches as they partake from her, and are of that ſame homogeneous nature with her. This firſt goſpel-church, in which the Lord ſets the apoſtles, as it were, travaileth and begetteth more, and (as the prophet ſaith, Iſa. xlix. 20.) when the place of meeting becometh too narrow, then is it ſubdivided, as divers branches ſpring from one root; and when it increaſeth in number or diſtance, accordingly this ſpringeth out ſtill the broader, as branches when they extend themſelves from the root, or ſhut forth new branches, yet is the root ſtill one; or, as a family increaſing, muſt have divers beds, and poſſibly divers tables and divers rooms, yet ſtill is the family one and the mother of the reſt; ſo is it here: ſo the root is firſt, and beareth the branches, and not the branches the root, which would be inferred if particular churches were firſt. Thus one is entered into the catholic church, as to the mother, when he may be no member of a particular church: and if we look at the properties and adjuncts that are attributed to the viſible church, they will agree primarily to the catholic church, as to have good and bad in her, which can hardly be ſaid alway of all particular individual congregations; and when the church's condition is reckoned pure, or impure, quiet or perſecuted, few or numerous, it reſpecteth principally the catholic church, and goeth upon conſideration thereof, which ſheweth that the church, ſo conſidered, is moſt eſſentially the church of Chriſt.

Neither ought it to move any, if it ſhould be objected, that preſbyteries are before ſynods, and congregations before theſe, becauſe members that conſtitute the one, have commiſſion from the other: and therefore congregations muſt be firſt, as ſhires are before a parliament or kingdom made up of them, becauſe they commiſſionate ſuch. This, I ſay, hath no weight in it. 1. Becauſe the catholic church hath not her being from particular churches, but doth deſcend, as is ſaid, from the preceding generation, till it come to the firſt church that ever was, from which all that followed were derived, and did extend themſelves accordingly as they increaſed, as hath been ſaid; and Adam's family is once God's church, thereafter Noah's, then Abraham's is eſpecially adopted, after that, at Chriſt's coming, the Gentiles are ingrafted in that ſtock, and the ordinances that came from Zion prevailed; and that, not to conſtitute different churches, but to increaſe and enlarge that one church, which for its accommodation, might have its divers rooms but be ſtill one family; the goſpel-church therefore hath its being from the church before Chriſt, and particular congregations have their being from it as parts of the ſame.

2. The ſimilitudes hold not: for, before there be a general aſſembly, there is an unity of the catholic-church which warranteth her members to conveen in one, and commiſſioners for to inſtruct for that end, otherwiſe they could not do it, even as the kingdom, as ſuch, is before a parliament met, and hath unity before cities choice: and although cities, conſidered abſtractly, may be before ſuch an union, becauſe the union may depend upon voluntary ſubmiſſion; yet, if they be conſidered as parts of that kingdom, it is ſuppoſed to be firſt, and to communicate to them ſuch privileges; and therefore they are free parts of ſuch a body; not becauſe they give the whole a being, but becauſe they have a being from it: ſo here, particular congregations cannot be conſidered as parts of the whole, but the whole muſt be ſuppoſed to be firſt, which on ſuch occaſions are bound to concur in general, although ſometimes in the particular it may be free whether to join with ſuch or ſuch a particular church or any other: from which, many uſeful points touching the external order, diſcipline and government of the church, will follow: and as the right underſtanding of the nature of the covenant of grace, doth conduce exceedingly to the clearing of the goſpel-truths; ſo the right underſtanding of this unity of the catholic-church, hath great influence upon the uptaking of what concerneth her outward adminiſtration in order and diſcipline, and that communion which is amongſt miniſters and members of the viſible church, whereof ſomewhat was ſaid, chap. ii. verſe 1. To this purpoſe may be obſerved, that famous Auguſtine did long ago take the defence of Ticonius, writing againſt the Donatiſts upon this ſame ſubject, as may be ſeen in his writings againſt Parmenianus, lib. 1. cap. 10.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. XIII.

Verſe. 1. *And I ſtood upon the ſand of the ſea, and ſaw a beaſt riſe up out of the ſea, having ſeven heads, and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blaſphemy.*

2. *And the beaſt which I ſaw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power and his ſeat, and great authority.*

3. *And I ſaw one of his heads, as it were wounded to death, and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beaſt.*

THE right underſtanding of this chapter is of great concernment to the underſtanding of this propheſy: it hath ſuch difficulty in it, that by ſome it is accounted as *crux interpretum.* The difficulty is not (even almoſt with Papiſts) whether the Roman ſtate be deſigned here or not; or, concerning the beaſts, if by one of them Antichriſt be holden forth: both theſe are palpable and certain, this being compared with the xvii. chap. The difficulty lieth in theſe two, 1. To what time, ſtate, or head of the Roman empire they relate? 2. If different ſtates be meant by theſe two beaſts? Or, if one Antichriſt, as diverſly conſidered, be ſet out by theſe ſhapes? becauſe one doth not ſufficiently paint him out, who ſtandeth both in a civil and eccleſiaſtic relation, ſo that now Satan, as it were, being firſt ſpoiled of temporal authority in his lieutenant, the heathen emperor, and being alſo diſappointed of his ſecond deſign of drowning the church by errors, ſetteth himſelf to haſten up a new kingdom or deputy, but in another ſhape, that by joining both violence and deceit in him together, he may bring to paſs, what theſe, being eſſayed ſeparately, did not effectuate. So that this is looked on as the product of the dragon's third deſign, wherein his uttermoſt ſkill kytheth, and the greateſt ſtrength of his kingdom lieth; which deſign is anſwerably deſcribed in a double type. The 1. Shewing what really Antichriſt is, to whom he ſucceedeth, of whom he hath his power, where he ſitteth, and to what height he cometh, &c. The 2. How he appeareth, what way he carried on, and brought about that deſign, and what weapons and pretences were abuſed for that end. This we conceive ſhortly to be the ſcope and drift of both theſe types: for more clear underſtanding whereof we ſhall premit ſome general propoſitions, the particulars whereof will appear more in opening this and the vii. chapter.

Propoſition 1. It is ordinary to the prophets, eſpecially to Daniel, to ſet out temporal monarchies, by great beaſts, as chap. vii. and viii. And theſe beaſts do not hold forth individual perſons, but a ſucceſſive ſeries of the ſame line on that throne; and it is uſual in this propheſy to borrow types from him; only ſometimes that which is ſpoken in the Old Teſtament of temporal enemies or ſtraits of the church, is applied to ſpiritual and covered enemies, as many things literally agreeing to Antiochus are applied to Antichriſt, and things literally true of Pharaoh are applied to the devil. So by a beaſt here may be meant a ſtate of great power and violence againſt the church, tho' not in, or by a ſingle perſon in one generation executed, but for a long time, by a ſeries of one combined body, ſucceſſively under one head. This muſt be underſtood that of the church's ſuffering under the dragon formerly, his firſt deputy the heathen empire and emperor being underſtood thereby, as it was one body, tho' under divers individual emperors ſucceſſively.

Prop. 2. Sometimes one ſtate, thing, or perſon, will be ſet out in ſcripture by divers types and beaſts: ſo, Dan. vii. The Perſian empire is ſet forth by a bear, the Grecian by a leopard.

In the viii. the Perſian by a ram, and the Grecian by a he-goat. See chap. vii. the Seleucides kingdom (though but a branch of the Grecian) is ſet out by a beaſt, as different from the other wholly, becauſe in ſome things different. Which ſaith, that though the types be different, yet the party ſignified may be one, conſidered in divers reſpects, in which ſenſe, chap. xvii. this ſame Antichriſt is called the eight beaſt, and yet really there alſo but one of the

ſeven, and the ſeventh, though in appearance, or upon diſtinct conſideration, different from the ſeventh, verſe 11.

Propoſ. 3. More particularly, the ſtate or power deſigned here, is the ſtate and power which hath Rome for the ſeat of it, as the metropolis of its kingdom during its ſtanding, as it was of the heathen emperors before; for, the dragon placeth his deputy in that ſame ſeat where the former ſat before, verſe 2.

Beſide, this ſeat is particularly deſcribed, chap. xvii. in three things,

1. In its natural ſituation for that time, *ſeven mountains*, ver. 9.

2. In its politic government, viz. ſeven ſorts, counting in this beaſt.

3. In its preſent authority, in John's time, *over the kings of the earth*, verſe 18. and what is, and hath been, the ſtate which both had, and now hath, Rome for its ſeat this long time, is not hard to determine.

Propoſ. 4. By this wonderful beaſt is not ſet out the Roman empire ſimply, as under any head, but as under its ſeventh and laſt head, or government, whatever it be: for although the beaſt have in all ſeven heads, as it is conſidered in its whole body; yet ſeeing theſe heads are ſucceſſive, and the removing of one is the inferring of another, *et contra*, it is to be looked on at one time as under one head only: therefore that which was in John's time being the ſixth, Rev. xvii. And this beaſt having the ſixth wounded, and healed again before he exerciſe his power, it muſt follow, that it is here that Roman empire under its ſeventh and laſt government. Hence the difference is remarkable between the beaſt here and chap. xii. Although it ſet out the ſame empire with *ſeven heads and ten horns;* yet, there the heads are crowned, and the horns were not, becauſe the Ceſars then reigned, keeped their power, the provinces were governed by their deputies: here the horns are crowned, to ſhow, that the inſtruments acted by this beaſt, have ſovereign power, which is more clearly expounded, chap. xvii. However, this is the Roman empire, or that government of it, which is the ſeventh. All the effects here agree to the beaſt after its head is healed, and after it has gotten the throne and ſeat of the dragon. This beaſt therefore is completely deſcribed, to ſhew in what ſeries the laſt ſucceedeth to the former: but that of *wounding of the head*, and healing it again (which muſt be the head then in being) is to direct us to what ſtate of government of that empire or ſeries we are to look for the fulfilling of theſe effects, and which ought to be pointed at, as great deputy and lieutenant of the devil, viz. in its again revived and healed condition, which is the laſt or ſeventh government.

Propoſ. 5. We would diſtinguiſh this beaſt's beginning to ariſe, from his public appearing; becauſe they are in themſelves different events, and have different times: and we conceive it is the public appearing and manifeſting of this to the world that is pointed at here, which differeth from its begun underhand working: even as the church's begun flight is different in its riſe from its hid private condition at the loweſt; ſo this being cotemporary to that, muſt have that ſame conſideration; for, as he riſeth, ſhe fleeth, and her flight increaſeth with his riſing, like light and darkneſs. His beginning will appear to be, 1. After outward perſecution; for, the dragon giveth him that ſeat and quitteth the chair to him: and ſo this cannot be the heathen perſecuting emperors, but ſome ſucceeding them, and that immediately; for, there is no vacancy of this throne, but the one reſigneth it to the other. 2. It beginneth as ſoon as the woman's flight, that is, immediately after Satan's dethroning, he ſeeketh to advance this beaſt, and piece and piece he groweth from that time; for, ver. 5. His power and commiſſion is for the ſame forty-two months, and the time being alike, the period of the cloſe is alike (for when the beaſt beginneth to be deſtroyed, her prophets put off their ſackcloth, verſe 11. and 16.) Therefore the beginning of both muſt be together alſo. Again, this ſheweth it is no French nor German emperors that can be meant by this; for they had not their riſe ſo ſoon; for this will be about the 300 year, as is ſaid before. 3. The manifeſting of this beaſt will be found to be after the devil's diſappointment of his deſign to drown the woman (when theſe groſs hereſies prevailed not to gain his end) and alſo to be cotemporary with the healing of the deadly wound which the ſixth head had gotten; yea, to be the very healing of it in Rome's recovering a public court and authority by the Papacy, which by the Ceſars and emperors their becoming Chriſtian, and removing their court from it, had left. It received again in Papacy an head, and that ſame ſuperſcription of blaſphemy

on it, which it had under its former maſters, which will fall in about the 600 year, or a little after, when both the peaceable poſſeſſing of Rome by Popes and inbringing of idolatry made foreward together. Beſide, in this ſtate the horns are crowned, which from chap. xvii. 12. relateth to the erection of new kingdoms not then in being, which ſheweth, that the manifeſtation of Antichriſt and the erection of kingdoms out of the empire muſt go together, and that is his manifeſtation which is intended here.

Out of which propoſitions we may draw three *concluſions*.

Concluſion 1. It is not any ſtate or branch of the civil Roman empire that is holden forth here. 1. Not the heatheniſh ſtate, as is ſaid. 2. Not the Grecian emperors, which had their ſeat at Conſtantinople; (the firſt Chriſtian emperor had in God's wiſdom, transferred his court thither, that ſo this beaſt might have the fairer acceſs to the dragon's throne) for theſe had not their ſeat at Rome. 2. They continued not during theſe forty-two months, but are gone. 3. There was not always ſo good friendſhip between them and the Popes, as between theſe two beaſts here, the emperors being always jealous of them, and ſometimes by their lieutenants afflicting and ſtraitening them, and they again, by excommunications, caſting down ſome of theſe emperors, who were violent oppoſers of image-worſhip, and of praying, &c. unto ſaints departed, as Leo Iſaurus, and Conſtantinus, Copronymus, and others called fighters againſt images by them. 3. This beaſt appeareth not till the wound be healed. Now, in the heathen emperor's time it was but hurt, in theſe emperors at Conſtantinople their beginning it was not perfectly healed till a time thereafter. Neither can it be the ſucceſſion of French emperors brought in by Stephanus the third after Carolus Martellus, viz. Pipinus, Carolus Magnus, Lodovicus Pius, &c. who are called to defend the empire, partly againſt the Goths and Lombards, who then trode on Italy; partly for reſtraining the inſolency of the Exarches of Ravena, who, being deputies to the Grecian emperors, pillaged and ſpoiled Italy exceedingly; for theſe emperors' riſe will not come up till this beaſt's riſe. Their riſe was about the 750 or 766. Neither is it of that continuance, nor will the reſt of the characters agree to its having that ſeat, &c. Beſide, that empire is, by many, counted a ſpecial favour of God to this part of the world, (*Pencerus in Caroli Magni*) which could never be ſaid of this beaſt's riſe. The like reaſons alſo will ſtrike againſt the German emperors, or that elective ſucceſſion brought in by Otho the third, and Carolus the fourth, who may be chief horns of this beaſt, crowned by him to execute his decrees, and may be amongſt theſe who gave their power to this beaſt, but cannot be the beaſt himſelf.

Concluſion 2. By this firſt beaſt then is underſtood Antichriſt in his kingdom, which appeareth by all the characters given, 1. He ſucceedeth the dragon in his ſeat, 2. His riſe, reign, and continuance agree to theſe forty-two months deſolate condition of the church ending and beginning with it. He is worſhipped not civilly only (that worſhip is no fault in itſelf) but religiouſly, as no emperor was; he hath abſolute dominion, and taketh a title to him over all kindreds, tongues, &c. Their ſubmiſſion to him is voluntary, and with admiration, which was never to any civil ſtate; he hath crowned horns and kings under him who reverence him; which will more particularly appear in opening the words: for all ſpoken here agreeth to one beaſt, and in one ſtate or condition, viz. under the laſt head, when the wound which the ſixth got was healed, (things to come being repreſented to John as paſt) the beaſt thus healed in his head is admired, worſhipped, followed, &c. To him is given power over the ſaints (alluding, as is ordinary in the Antichriſt's caſe, to Antiochus. Dan.) ſo neither Antichriſt is no head of this beaſt, or he is ſet by this beaſt who this long continueth, and in whom and by whom the dragon is again worſhipped by the men of the earth: all which can agree to no other. To ſpeak in ſhort then, here is ſet out the Roman empire as Antichriſtian, or headed with Antichriſt, having now the ſixth head which was wounded by the throwing down of heatheniſh idolatry, again healed by the papacies becoming the ſeventh; (for there are but ſeven) and to this empire, as under this head, agreeth all that is ſpoken unto here, conſidering it as repreſenting that ſame civil ſtate, now the ſeventh time carrying another head of blaſphemy, yet again repeated under another type, that it may be known not to be the ſame head, tho' on the ſame beaſt, with that which was wounded, nor of the ſame kind altogether with the former.

It is true this is generally otherways expounded by learned interpreters, whereof ſome do expound

this first beast to hold forth the Roman's civil empire become Christian; others understand it of the complex body of kings arising out of the ruins of the empire (as Mede calleth it Universitas Regum et Incolarum) and so they distinguish this beast as representing some civil power from the two horned beast following, which to them is Antichrist, and an ecclesiastic state; yet, upon the matter, there will be found no great difference: for even these do acknowledge this civil power (whether consisting in emperors or kings) to be acted and made use of by this ecclesiastic beast, which is the same upon the matter, that we say, viz. that the head acting these horns is the Antichrist; and therefore the beast is to get its denomination from the head, whereby the rest are swayed. Beside, if we look narrowly to this description, we may well call emperors, (as they now are) or kings, horns of this beast, but cannot account them the beast itself, but as they are united in and under him; for, the beast here, is that which supported the whore, chapter xvii. which is acknowledged by the same forenamed author to be the ecclesiastic beast. Again, this beast having its beginning immediately after the close of heathenish persecution, that can neither be said of the Roman empire, or of that university of kings. We may add, that the horns of this beast, being crowned, (that is, having supreme civil power) cannot be thought subject to any other civil power; and it is clear here, that the worshippers of this beast are of equal extent with these who bear this mark, and are contradistinguished from the hundreth forty-four thousand that were sealed, whereby all Papists are included as under his power: and seeing this can agree to no emperor (whose dominion is not of such extent) so neither can this beast be applied to him. Again, it cannot be the university of kings, for they are horns acted by this beast, and so may be distinguished from him, as we will often find them, as, chap. xvii. these horns are turned to hate the whore, which was supported by this beast, chap. xix. this beast is cast into the lake with the false prophet, (and therefore must be understood of this first beast, according to that learned author) yet can it not be said, that all these kings or emperors go to the pit, as if none of them could remain after Antichrist, especially considering the prophesy of the Lord's making some of these kings, who were formerly horns of this beast, to become instruments of his vengeance against the whore. We conclude it therefore, as most safe and consistent with this prophesy, to expound this first beast of Antichrist, who acteth these horns, and to whom the kings of the earth willingly gave their power, and so to be applied to the Pope and his kingdom, supposing him to be Antichrist.

Conclus. 3. It remaineth therefore, that these two beasts must be, upon the matter, one; the last holding forth no different state, but the same which the former held forth in a different notion. Therefore there is no particular description of parts of it, or of its rise in respect of time and continuance, but it becometh one in all these with the former. Therefore in this chapter there is but one name, one character, and one beast or number alway spoken of; yea, they have one sea, commission, &c. and are designed by one beast, chap. xi. 7. spoken of as one, chap. xvii. yea, the woman that is said to sit on the beast, ver. 13. is called this very city or empire, Rome, ver. 18. The woman certainly is the Antichristian church, but that woman, ver. 18. is not a distinct government or state from that civil state, or from Antichrist's state, but that same supported by its civil power, therefore they are one. Thus we see every one of these conclusions do follow each other: if it be not the civil empire which is typified by the first beast, it must be Antichrist's, and so both one; for, the last is he. We may add, that in the chapters following, whenever Antichrist's diminishing is spoken of, or the destroying of his kingdom, it is done under the name of the beast, and but as one, as may appear by these and the like phrases, *who worship him, who had gotten victory over him, his seat*, chap. xvi. which by all is expounded to be Rome. Therefore these two must be one, and such an one as hath one seat at Rome over all nations, with a slavish, superstitious, or rather idolatrous dependence on him: And therefore when he is here set out, and elsewhere through this book, by divers representations, as a woman carried by the beast, and false prophet, it is not as if they were two things, but divers types, setting out one diversely considered, to set out Antichrist's two swords civil and ecclesiastic, or his twofold means he maketh use of, viz. power and violence, as a beast; hypocrisy and dissembling, as a false prophet: for it cannot be thought, that one can be of such sibness and likeness to Antichrist in all things, as this beast rising with him, reigning

with him, falling and going to the pit with him, eſpecially ſeeing two heads are not conſiſtent together, as upon one ſeat at the ſame time, as hath been ſaid. This is acknowledged by Bellar. lib. 3. de pont. cap. 15. *Idem Antichriſtus per duas beſtias exprimitur; per unam, ratione regiæ potentiæ et tyrannidis, qua coget homines violenter; per alteram, ratione magicæ artis, quæ callide homines ſeducet*, that is, the ſame Antichriſt is expreſſed by the two beaſts; by the one, becauſe of his kingly power and tyranny, whereby he ſhall force men violently; by the other, becauſe of his magic art, whereby he ſhall ſeduce men, and he alledgeth Rupertus for the author of this expoſition, And, ibid. calleth Antichriſt king of the Roman empire, but not under the name of emperors. This alſo agreeth with the titles ordinarily aſſumed by the Pope, who is a good prince, whereby he exerciſeth temporal arms and a holy Pope, whereby he is armed with ſpiritual weapons. See the hiſtory of the council of Trent, page 37.

Concerning the image mentioned, ver. 14, and 15, we alſo premit, that by it, is underſtood no meer civil power, ſeeing it receiveth ſuch worſhip, and that univerſally; but it is the ſame power or ſtate here typified by the firſt beaſt, or Antichriſt's temporal kingdom, under the ſame notion as it is deſcribed here. It is called, 1. The image of this beaſt, which was wounded, becauſe although it be not in all things the very ſame empire, yet doth it ſo exactly repreſent the former Roman ſtate, that it may well be called his image, as if a pattern had been taken from that. 2. It is alſo called his image, that is, the image of the two horned beaſt, becauſe it is his creature, and is brought forth by him, and may be claimed as his, when it is brought forth; and therefore although it be the image of the firſt and ſecond beaſt, yet in divers reſpects: wherein alſo we may conclude, that by both theſe beaſts, and alſo by the image here mentioned, is underſtood the ſame Antichriſt, or Antichriſtian kingdom. This introduction hath been the more largely inſiſted on, both becauſe exceeding uſeful for underſtanding the propheſy, and alſo becauſe difficult, and by divers other ways applied.

We come then to the chapter, which hath two parts. The firſt ſetteth out Antichriſt in his power, outward glory and cruelty, as in one ſeries with the heads of that beaſt, and as now being the ſame ſeat and power, but under another head. This part of Antichriſt's deſcription is begun at, 1. Becauſe this is indeed the thing which he is, appear what he will. 2. Becauſe temporal greatneſs was the firſt bait that took with the Pope, and brought forth other corruptions as they might advance that; this is the end. 3. Becauſe in this reſpect, by his power, ſeat, and predeceſſors, he is beſt diſcerned and known what he is, and who he is. 4. Eſpecially he is here looked on as an head or kind of government of a body politic, whereof ſome were already paſt: he is deſcribed with reſpect to that ſeries, as he ſucceedeth theſe who went before him in that ſame ſeat, the Roman empire here, under the firſt beaſt, being conſidered as with ſo many heads whereof he is the laſt. In the ſecond viſion he appeared without reſpect to ſeat or ſucceſſion, but as in himſelf; and ſo is deſcribed, 1. In a word, in the firſt viſion, to ver. 11. he is holden forth as a temporal idolatrous monarch, having the ſeat of the dragon in poſſeſſion.

The ſecond part of this chapter, from verſe 11. ſetteth out the means and ways how he came to that temporal greatneſs, and how he entertaineth it by ſpiritual weapons, miracles and cenſures, with hypocriſy, drawing all men to give him that voluntary adoration which he deſired. In the firſt beaſt, is ſet forth the nature of the Antichriſtian kingdom and power compleatly, with the ſupreme head and kings under him: in the laſt, is ſet forth eſpecially the head himſelf. This being compared with chap. xix. 20. will be more clear. Again, for the firſt part, 1. Antichriſt is typically deſcribed, to verſe 9. 2. Some plain doctrine and uſes are laid down, verſe 9, 10.

Before his deſcription, a word is prefixed, *I ſtood on the ſea-ſhore*, or *the ſand:* it is to ſhew what poſture John was in when he ſaw this. He was put in that conveniency, that now when the devil goeth to renew his war, he may ſee what it produceth. He ſaw it at no great diſtance, but was placed commodiouſly to diſcern the riſe of this monſtruous beaſt. This word knitteth not only the ſeries of the viſion with the cloſe of the former chapter, but alſo timeth the matter, viz. the public appearing of this beaſt, as a fruit of Satan's third deſign after the ſtorm of groſs hereſies by the firſt four trumpets is over.

To come particularly to the deſcription; it is in many parts or reſpects, 1. Its original or riſe is, *from*, or, *out of the ſea*. By *ſea*, we underſtand

a low baſe beginning, riſing out of the commotions of a troubled world, and coming to an height by temporal changes and afflictions on the empire, yet indeed proceeding out of the bottomleſs pit, as chap. ix. which is that ſame to aſcend out of the ſea, ſave that this may ſerve to clear, how ſubſervient the toſſings and ſhakings of the empire were to its riſe. 2. If we take ſea, as it was, chap. v. it will be a riſing out of the bulk of churchmen, and an aſcending above them, alluding in general to Dan. vii. and viii.

2. This beaſt's riſe is ſet out actively: it was not raiſed up, nor exalted as lawful powers are, but it raiſed itſelf up, and, by its own working, wrought itſelf out of its own ſtation to ſuch a height.

3. This riſe is palpable, *I ſaw him riſe:* not that he was not working and riſing before, but that he, who inſenſibly, under the great confuſions of the empire, had been ſettling his own throne, now he bringeth his power from the ſea to land, as a ſettled thing, owning it, and appearing in it.

Secondly, After the riſe is deſcribed, there is given a general character of him, verſe 1. in three things, 1. He had ſeven heads; not together, but ſucceſſively, ſeven kinds of governments, tho' the ſeventh was not come, chap. xvii. in John's time, that is, the Roman empire, having in all ſeven ſundry governments, viz. 1. Kings. 2. Conſuls. 3. Tribuni. 4. Dictators. 5. Decemviri. 6. Ceſars, or Emperors, who were then preſent. This ſeventh, who is called the eighth, was not then come: this will be more clear on chap. xvii.

1. He hath ten horns, that is, ſo many, or poſſibly indefinitely, many kings, who when John wrote this had not received their power, but now at this beaſt's riſe had obtained it; ſo Antichriſt's appearing goeth along with, or after the empire is diſcerped in ſeveral kingdoms. The red dragon had theſe two characters, chap. xii. 3. yet with theſe two differences, 1. He looketh more red-like, and appeareth cruel. This beaſt was not ſo bloody at the firſt, but, chap. xvii. it hath a ſcarlet colour. 2. There the heads were crowned, here the horns and not the heads: this is to ſhew, that now theſe ten kings had gotten their power, chap. xvii. but withal, were made uſe of by this head, as the other made uſe of them before they got their crowns: whereby it is clear, that the Roman civil empire, as under this beaſt, is conſidered as different from itſelf under the dragon. Compare this with verſe 12. chap. xvii. The third character is, that all the heads have *the name*, or *names of blaſphemy on them*. Blaſphemy is three ways fallen into, 1. When ſomething derogatory to the holy and excellent nature of God is aſcribed to him, ſuppoſe to ſay, he repented, lied, or when there is any ſinful apprehenſion that he was weary, ſickly, faint, finite, &c. 2. When ſome of his excellencies belonging to him are denied, as to ſay, he is not omnipotent, juſt, infinite, &c. 3. When ſomething proper and peculiar to the infinite God is aſcribed to a creature which is not God, as when an angel is ſaid to be omnipotent; ſo ſaid the Jews when they miſtook Chriſt, he blaſphemed, becauſe he forgave ſins, which none can do but God only, and ſo did make himſelf God. A *name of blaſphemy*, is any uſurped title inferring one of theſe three, eſpecially the laſt: many of their emperors did fooliſhly require divine honour; and what buſineſs Caius made to get his image put in the temple at Jeruſalem, Joſephus reporteth, Antiq. lib. 18. cap. 11. In a word, all theſe heads were idolaters, blaſpheming the true God, worſhipping idols, giving what is due to him to creatures; yea, taking it to themſelves to heathen idolatry, ſo did the ſix former heads, ſo ſhall the ſeventh do: the idolatry whereof was ſpoken to, chap. ix. 20. None taketh on him, and hath attributed to him, what is due to God in titles, power of diſpenſations, religious worſhip, obeying of his commands more than he, who exalteth himſelf above all that is called God. For the titles and ſcriptures peculiar to God and Chriſt, arrogated by him, and attributed to him, ſee Bell. de Conciliis et præf. ad libros de pontif. By which it appeareth, that this ſeventh head of papacy is immediately linked with the dragon's fall, there being no head thus characterized till his riſe.

This beaſt is further deſcribed, verſe 2. in his parts and commiſſion. His parts are deſcribed in three ſimilitudes, 1. His likeneſs was as a leopard; that was his ſhape. A leopard or panther, is called loving, and a friend to all creatures, ſave the dragon, ſo ſaith Iſodorus; Franzius joineth the hyæna and the cock, and calleth him *animal ferociſſimum et aſtutum, Hiſt. animal, cap. 9. page* 60. Beſide, that he is bountiful, and not terrible as the dragon. By this the devil ſheweth his ſubtilty, chuſing that ſhape to appear in, wherein folks would leaſt ſuſpect him. This beaſt is famous for

theſe three, 1. Swiftneſs, Habak. i. 8. For this the Grecian was compared to him. 2. Cruelty, Hoſea v. 14. 3. Subtilty, Jer. v. 6. All agree here.

2. His feet are like a bear's. Thus was the Perſian, Dan. vii. 5. with three ribs in his teeth. By this cruelty is holden forth, and ſtrength, or the exerciſing of cruelty by force, not diſagreeable to this Antichriſt, as cruel as ever the Perſian was againſt the people of God.

3. His mouth as a lion's mouth: partly to ſhew his rapacity towards others; partly to ſhew his inſolency and audacity againſt God in wicked bold decrees: in which reſpect the Babylonian monarchy is compared to a lion, Dan. vii. This ſaid lion's mouth is indeed, ver. 11. the dragon's mouth; and there is alluſion to theſe three beaſts in this one, to ſhew that one could not ſet forth ſuch a monſter; and that which is meaned here is ſome monſtrous brood, partaking of ſomething of the cruel nature of all other tyrants, and in ſome things going beyond and differing from them all.

4. The beaſt is ſet forth in his predeceſſor and author, that is, the dragon, who loveth this beaſt ſo well, and layeth ſo much weight on his greatneſs, that now the power which he uſurped in the world, by heathen emperors, being ranverſed and removed, he conſtituteth this beaſt, his univerſal vicar, as he is called, chap. ix. the angel and prime deputy of the bottomleſs pit; and accordingly he authorizeth and inveſts him in that office, by his gift and donation, in three ſteps, 1. He gave him, that is, as he offered to Chriſt, all the world, or ſo far as he could reach, he ſtretcheth himſelf to advance him by giving him his power; partly furniſhing him with lying miracles, ſo he *cometh after the working of Satan*, 2 Theſſ. ii. 9. Partly committing to him, and employing for him all his forces and armies; his might, to the uttermoſt, was engaged to ſupport Antichriſt his deputy. 2. He gave him his ſeat, that is, Rome, where he before, by the heathen emperor, held his throne. The emperor now is laid by as ſuch, and this ſeat made vacant for the Pope. This is the ſeat, as is clear, chap. xvii. *ult.* This is called Satan's throne in an eminent way, becauſe from it he gave out his orders, &c. as is ſpoken in part of Pergamos, chap. ii. 3. He gave him great authority, that is, not as if ever his dominion on that ſeat by any preſcription of time could be lawful, ſeeing it riſeth from this ground of the devil's grant, who hath none to give; but it implieth two things, 1. That by the devil's inſtigation he ſhould venditate, and gave out himſelf to have a large authority and power committed to him, even ſuch ample large commiſſions and power as the like were never heard of; his tripple crown reacheth to command heaven, by giving orders to the angels; and earth, by diſpoſing of all the kingdoms of it; hell and purgatory, by bringing thence, and ſending thither whom he pleaſeth, and at what price he pleaſeth, without any controul, ſo that none can ſay, what doeſt thou? He is only countable to the dragon who commiſſionateth him. This is clear from the Pope's practices, and their ſchoolmen's writings in defence of his power. 2. That by that ſame mean never was any authority ſo much reverenced, adored and obeyed, as this blaſphemous uſurpation of the Pope's ſhould be, witneſs the general enſlaving of the world to him ſo long: what penances and ſubmiſſions and pains have been gone about by great emperors and kings, even to the laying of their neck under his feet to be troden on by him? Many inſtances and examples are of it.

Before he go on to deſcribe the practice of this beaſt, he putteth in a word, verſe 3. concerning the wounding and healing of one of the heads of this beaſt, and the effect of it, to ſhew, that what is ſpoken of this beaſt belongeth to it allenarly under its laſt policy, or ſeventh head; and the healing of this head, is the very ground and riſe of this wondering. For underſtanding this, ye muſt conſider two things, 1. Concerning the hiſtory in fact. 2. Concerning the phraſe of this book. 1. For matter of fact, as ye have heard Rome had ſeven ſorts of governments, (including the Pope) all idolaters; the ſixth, viz. heathen emperors, was then when John wrote, it was the immediate foregoing head to this ſeventh. By Conſtantine, and other emperors, this heatheniſh religion was altered to Chriſtian, and the ſeat of the civil empire tranſported to Conſtantinople, ſo that Rome ſeemed to want an head, eſpecially an head that had blaſphemy on it, till by the Pope's ſtepping up at Rome, both were helped. 2. Conſider, that when this revelation ſpeaketh of the empire, it ſpeaketh of it with reſpect to its religion, and as it was the ſeat of the dragon's exerciſing power in all theſe governments, even as under the ſixth ſeal, a change of religion in the world is ſet out by types, as if the world were changed; ſo

here the wounding of a head, is not a cutting off of emperors ſimply, but their ceaſing to be a head to that beaſt, and to be blaſphemous and perſecuting as before; for, they are not heads to it ſimply, but as having on them a name of blaſphemy; for, they hold of the dragon: and this healed head is his creature, verſe 4. and he is worſhipped in it. This cannot be ſaid of civil authority in itſelf, which is God's ordinance. The devil then muſt have a ſpecial hand in this cure, ſo the wounding or ſlaying of a head deadly, will not infer the ceaſing of that government ſimply, but to be ſuch as it was, and in other viſions and changes in the world's paſſing away, &c. which holdeth out, not its annihilating, but its ceaſing to be ſuch. See chap. vi. 13. and chap. viii.

Add, that this word is not to be given to the head after this beaſt's ariſing, but before it; yea, the healing of this is the ſame with this beaſt's riſing: for, all he doth he doth it after it is made whole, then he is admired, then he fighteth with the ſaints.

This head then that is wounded, is that which was in John's time, viz. heathen emperors. It is here particularly ſaid to be wounded, which is not ſaid between the ſucceſſion of any other two heads, becauſe they ſucceeding one to another, their idolatry was not hurt. But here, when heatheniſh emperors were caſt out, heatheniſh idolatry was caſt out with them. Idolatry before keeped always its room in all the heads equally, here it is degraded. 2. It is for a time interrupted before this head be again public, viz. between the altering of heatheniſh idolatry, and the public appearing of Popes. Therefore it appeareth deſperately wounded, more now than between any other heads before, where the interruption between them was not ſo deſperate and palpable. 3. At other times, no queſtion, the civil ſtate of the empire got many wounds by many invaſions and invaders; but the dragon, who is ſtill here repreſented as chief through all the heads, got never ſuch a wound. Shortly, this third verſe containeth three things, 1. The heads wounding. 2. Its healing. 3. Its effect on the world. The head that is wounded is the heathen Ceſars or Emperors; for five were paſt, the ſeventh was not till the wound was healed. Therefore it was the ſixth then preſent which was wounded. This wound is in two things, 1. A deadly ſtroke upon idolatry, ſo as it was, chap. vi. under the ſixth ſeal, the idolatrous body was ſlain and overturned by it: that ſame may be ſaid of the blaſphemous head. 2. By an huge eclipſing of the chief ſeat of this empire, by the emperor's removing his court to Conſtantinople, whereby the glory of that city was diminiſhed: ſo when John ſpeaketh of this wound, I ſaw, ſaith he, an huge idolatrous beaſt, with ſeven ſucceſſive idolatrous governments (counting both what was paſt and what was to come) and I ſaw the ſixth of them thus wounded, and that deadly: 1. Becauſe it was a great ſtroke it got, and none would have thought that after theſe two, Rome ſhould have had again an idolatrous government in pomp; and yet, 2. But *wounded, as it were, to death*, becauſe I ſaw the devil after, recover that ground another way which he loſt by this.

2. This wound was healed: the curer is afterward pointed at, verſe 4. the dragon: it is a birth of his, that is, the bringing forth the ſeventh head, viz. papacy, whereby that beaſt, or Rome recovered both its former loſſes with advantage. 1. By the popes they recovered idolatry: for, if the want of that is the wound, the reſtoring of that is the cure, and it was not done till it was done by the popes. This was touched, chap. ix. 20. For the healing of this head, is not the reſtoring of the ſame head and name of blaſphemy, which was, but it is the in-bringing of another to ſucceed that; for the healed head continueth during the forty-two months that Antichriſt reigneth, and the horns are crowned: therefore it cannot be the reſtoring again either of emperors or heatheniſh idolatry, but of that which ſucceed theſe; otherwiſe there would be no time for the ſeventh; or, two behoved to be together: but it is called a healing, in reſpect of the idolatry that was wounded, the empire being ſtill ſafe. This is healed not only by bringing in idolatry, and yet not the ſame, but one exceſſive like it; ſo that what was given to devils directly, is now given immediately by ſaints, angels, and images to them, and all their ſuperſtitious ceremonies, and idolatrous temples, are profeſſedly transferred from one idolatry to another. But ſecondly, alſo, by this Rome, the ſeat (almoſt like to a widow before this) now received a court, popes, cardinals, and her ſolitarineſs was helped, and ſhe looketh out again as majeſtically and commander-like by this head as by any other. That this is the healing here underſtood, appeareth by the effects. 1. The admiration that then followed in

the world, and the thanks they, in effect, gave the devil for this ſervice, as generally better content with this than with any other head that ever was before.

The particular effect in this verſe is, *all the world wondered after the beaſt.* It is more to wonder after, than at the beaſt. Here beginneth the effects of his enchantment on the world, after this healing, which was not before. 2. This admiration after the beaſt, is more particularly ſet forth afterward: it implieth, 1. An unexpected amazement, as at the ſeeing of ſomething they had not ſeen or thought to ſee ſo ſoon: and certainly the wicked world could not have expected again an idolatrous head ſo ſoon. 2. It importeth a ſort of divine or religious reverence, or doting on the beaſt ſuperſtitiouſly; for, it is after the beaſt: which is clear afterward, as holding out an eſtimation of ſome religious thing in this head (who is called Chriſt's vicar) more than in any which went before; which cannot agree to a civil ſtate. 3. It importeth a willingneſs or gladſomeneſs in the doing of this, as affected or delighted with it: it is otherwiſe expreſſed by enchanting the inhabitants of the earth; men's wicked nature, that loveth whoring from God, now welcometh exceedingly this corrupt beaſt, and ſubmitteth to him, and drinketh-in, in a deluded way, his fornications willingly, where we have an emblem of man's nature. 2. The parties admiring, are, *all the world*, that is, as large dominion, and poſſibly more under this head healed than ever any head had before him; it is all who are not elected: whereby it is clear again, that this beaſt wondered after is Antichriſt; and this admiration or worſhip, is more than civil: he hath exceeding many; yea, emperors, kings, and great men giving their power to him and that willingly, chap. xvii. which they never did to any other. In a word, ſaith he, when this head came up, this beaſt got more followers and other ſort of reſpect than ever before.

For clearing this expoſition of the wound and healing, conſider, this wound muſt be at the time of the church's begun flight, which was cotemporary with the fall of idolatrous emperors: for, this healed head is cotemporary with the woman's flight, therefore this wound muſt be before, which can be no other but that, though this healing immediately appeared not, as is ſaid. 2. Conſider, that at that time five heads were paſt, the ſeventh to come, which riſeth after the healing of this wounded head, and is the ſeventh, or Papacy; it is not wounded here, nor was it in being before theſe forty-two months began, and during that time it hath power, and is not wounded: it muſt be then the ſixth of the emperors that ſuffered at that time when the woman began to flee. Now, there was then no wound in the temporal grandeur, glory and ſtate of the empire, it was as great under Conſtantine as ever (therefore he is known by that name Conſtantine the Great) it muſt then be the change we expounded it to be. 3. Add, if the Papacy's riſing to be the ſeventh head, be the healing of this wound, then muſt the wound be ſuch a want or change as Papacy ſupplieth; but Papacy healeth this, and is the ſeventh head. This beaſt which endureth forty-two months and hath power from the dragon, healeth and recovereth this ſeat that was loſt, and ſitteth again in Rome, &c. And this is Papacy, as is proven and will, chap. xvii. more fully appear. Now, the thing which the devil aimeth at by the Papacy's ſettling at Rome, is the recovering of that worſhip which he loſt; and by the Pope's means again, by idols and images, the devil is worſhipped, chap. ix. 20. and here, ver. 2. Ergo, The removing this idolatrous worſhip by public authority, which was the dragon's caſting from heaven, chap. xii. is the wound here. Beſide, temporal over-running of the empire by Goths, Vandals, and ſuch like, can neither be called one wound, becauſe it was frequent; nor attributed to this ſeventh head; becauſe out of it the Popes reaped ſtill advantage; as alſo they ſuit not this time, nor was the emperors healed after theſe incurſions, ſo as to have more following than before; and the emperors not being heads, after they became Chriſtian, as will be clear, chap. xvii. and it not being they who are wondered at, as this head after its healing is, it cannot therefore be applied to them but as is ſaid.

LECTURE II.

Verſe 4. *And they worſhipped the dragon which gave power unto the beaſt: and they worſhipped the beaſt, ſaying, Who is like unto the beaſt? Who is able to make war with him?*

5. *And there was given unto him a mouth ſpeaking great things, and blaſphemies: and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.*

6. *And he opened his mouth in blaſphemy againſt God, to blaſpheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.*

7. *And it was given unto him to make war with the ſaints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.*

8. *And all that dwell upon the earth ſhall worſhip him, whoſe names are not written in the book of life, of the Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world.*

THE firſt part of this chapter deſcribeth Antichriſt under a ſecular notion of civil power. It ſetteth him out, firſt, in his riſe, verſe 1, 2, 3. In three things, 1. To what ſtate he belongeth, viz. that of *ſeven heads and ten horns*, that is, the Roman, verſe 1. 2. Of what nature he is; he is compounded of monſtrous qualities, verſe 2.

1. To what time of revolution of that Roman ſtate he belongeth, viz. that which after the wounded head was healed, and the horns had gotten crowns, that is to ſay, after the civil empire is weakened and divided in ſundry kingdoms, and the Pope ſteppeth up to act them all.

2. His reign or the effects of his riſe, after this head is ſealed, and ſet down, from ver. 4. forward, in four ſteps or effects, firſt, toward the graceleſs world; he obtaineth much reſpect and applauſe from them, even in the higheſt degree, ſo that he ruleth amongſt them at his pleaſure, verſe 4. The ſecond is the time of his continuance, verſe 5. The third containeth his blaſphemy or doctrine towards God, verſe 6. The fourth and laſt, his perſecution againſt the ſaints, or his practice toward them, verſes 7, 8. The univerſality of the ſubjection he getteth, or of the power he hath, is reſtrained to the reprobate world, as the proper object of his kingdom, as it is of the dragon's who giveth him that power.

The effect after his riſing, ver. 4. is ſet out in three ſteps, expounding the wondering that was mentioned, ver. 3. 1. It is ſaid they worſhip the dragon. 2. The beaſt. 3. Their reſpect to the beaſt is ſet down in a queſtion or two, expreſſing their admiration.

This worſhip is not ſuch as is given to civil emperors, but is ſome religious, ſuperſtitious worſhip. 1. It is ſomewhat which is ſinful to be given, which mere civil worſhip is not: for, Chriſt, the prophets and apoſtles, do allow honour where it is due, as to great men, &c. 2. It is ſuch worſhip, as is, on the matter, worſhip to the devil, that is, not as directly intended to him, but as all idolatry and worſhipping of images is interpretatively worſhipping of devils, chap. ix. 20. it being not commanded of God, but derogatory to him; ſo the world's applauding and adoring this Antichriſt will be, on the matter, before God, a worſhipping of the devil, eſpecially conſidering that this Antichriſt is peculiarly the devil's lieutenant and truſty ſervant: and therefore, what honour he getteth, redoundeth to the honour of him that commiſſionateth him; ſo this worſhip terminateth immediately on the beaſt, as ye ſee in the end of the verſe, *who is like him?* but mediately and conſequently on the devil who gave him power. In a word, the world gave divine honour to this beaſt, and in him to the devil that commiſſionated him. Now, concerning that divine honour Popes get in their titles, by being accounted gods on earth, and able to forgive ſins, being adored by kiſſing their feet, and by reverencing their words and decrees as infallible, even like ſcriptures: yea, eſteeming the ſcriptures (as Bail. Jeſu. Catech. part. 1.) but, as Livius' writings without the authority, and ſo receiving them only as they are ratified by them, &c. Theſe are known things.

It may be queſtioned here, how it can be ſaid, that the devil gave him power, ſeeing he hath no power to give, and ſeeing it is univerſally ſaid, Rom. xiii. *That the powers that are, are of God? Anſ.* Certainly this power is by God's ſecret juſtice to puniſh the world's ingratitude, 2 Theſſ. ii. He ſendeth this deluſion for a juſt end; yet it is ſaid to be of the devil and not of God, becauſe it is not by his reveal-

ed approving will, but contrary to it. 1. In the nature of the power, or the thing wherein he taketh power. 2. Of his way of coming to it. 3. In his exerciſing of it: in all which he holdeth of the devil as his author, and not of God, who hath warranted no ſuch thing in his word.

However, by this worſhipping it appeareth, that this beaſt who is the object of it, is more in the account of his worſhippers than ordinary monarchs. 2. That he ſtandeth in a ſpecial relation to the devil, who is thus a ſharer of this honour, and ſo can be no other than the Antichriſt.

The particular worſhip, is inſtanced in two queſtions.

1. *Who is like the beaſt?* Which ſetteth out their thoughts of him as more than ordinary. It looketh like theſe queſtions that the true worſhippers of the true God have of him, *Who is like the Lord? &c.* ſo there is a ſuperſtitious admiration wrought thro' deluſion in theſe falſe worſhippers as ſuppoſing Antichriſt to have ſome divine eminency and ſingularity in him, which hath been verified in reference to the Popes.

2. Theſe two queſtions alſo hold out the ground and height of their admiration, viz. his dreadfulneſs and power. Therefore the ſecond queſtion is, *Who is able to make war with him?* Or, who can ſtand in oppoſition to him? it looketh to his power and the conſequents of it. This was the world's judgment of their Popes ſo long, that they thought the greateſt powers could not make head againſt them, and indeed ſo it was; partly by that drunk-in deluſion of his ſanctity and authority; partly, by his excommunications and bulls, depoſing kings, looſing ſubjects from their oaths, giving away their crowns, hounding out others on them; and all this to be executed under pain of damnation: and partly, by his having all civil powers at his devotion, as horns to puſh with where he pleaſed, and to ſet one againſt another; he did what he pleaſed. The examples of the Popes proceedings againſt the emperors of the Eaſt, who were againſt images, and againſt emperors of the Weſt, giving their crowns from them to others, which wrought ſuch terror upon all others, that there was much more fear to anger the Pope than ever there was to anger any monarch: yea, than there was to anger God, to ſuch an height came his impiety: mark here the Lord's cenſure of Popery in its full extent, it is a worſhipping of the devil; and this, in leſs or more, will be his cenſure of all corrupt worſhip not warranted by him.

The ſecond ſtep of the deſcription of his dominion, is in its continuance, verſe 5. What is ſpoken of his blaſphemies, cometh in verſe 6. *He ſpeaketh great things*, in threatnings, promiſes and aſſertion of his own power. This the devil putteth him to; not by giving him power, but, 1. By making him take this power to him, as though he might blaſpheme without hazard, he having liberty to ſay and do what he will. And 2. By moving others to grant this to him, as if he only were to be exempted, and this is meaned by power given him to blaſpheme: which is not ſimply to blaſpheme as others do, but a liberty by his office to do it without controul, as one who legally, and by right, doth what he doth: and this agreeth well to the Pope, who pretendeth a power to do whatever he doth. This is a peculiar clauſe and article, as it were, in his commiſſion, and it alludeth to what is ſpoken of Antiochus, Dan. vii. 25.

His time or continuance in this blaſphemy, is, *forty and two months:* the ſame with the Gentiles treading under the holy city, chap. xi. 2. during which time blaſphemy prevaileth, and the ſaints are overcome and he domineereth. By the *forty and two months* are not to be underſtood ſo many natural days, but, as we expounded, a long conſiderable time, probably counting a day for a year. This only is marked here, to ſhew it would not be a ſhort ſtorm, it looked like a continuing one: and this expreſſion, *it was given to him to continue*, though there be a limitation in it, yet its main purpoſe is to ſhew its long continuance. 2. To ſhew it belonged to the ſame time of the church's low condition, chap. xi. and xii. and that he is the beaſt ſpoken of, chap. xi. verſe 7. 3. To learn us where to fix this beaſt's firſt riſe, or from what time to deduce him; it is from the church's fleeing, or the Gentiles beginning to tread under foot the holy city. 4. It ſheweth alſo that this power of his is bounded, and tho' God give him way ſo long in his juſt permiſſive providence, yet it is but ſo long: his cloſe tryſteth preciſely with the witneſſes killing and putting off their ſackcloth.

2. By the ſetting this time of *forty two months*, we would not conceive, 1. That he was at an height in the firſt month, or alway alike: no, but as the church's declining grew, ſo grew his riſe; nor, 2. That at the end of forty two months his power

ſhall be utterly broken, no, for when he killeth the witneſſes, then the vials are to be poured out, that piece and piece ſlowly bring on his deſtruction, but this is meant, that his kingdom is on the increaſing hand, till theſe months be paſt, what oppoſition cometh to him, he will cruſh it; but after that he will not be ſo, his power will be clipped, his tyranny diſcovered, and his authority ſo ſhaken and queſtioned, that it will never be ſo univerſally after that accepted, or be admitted to the exerciſe of it, for, as that term bringeth not the full outgate of the church to an height, but a beginning of it, even ſo here. Out of all this we may confirm what we ſaid of this beaſt, and that wound and its healing, which muſt be before theſe *forty and two months*, during which time he continueth whole, and perſecuteth the ſaints, even at the very cloſe or laſt part thereof.

His blaſphemy is more fully ſet down, verſe 9 in reference to three objects, whom he taketh a liberty to blaſpheme, which, being in reference to God, derogateth ſome way from his excellent holineſs, and pure ſovereign nature; when applied to men or creatures, to blaſpheme, is to ſpeak ill of, to detract from, and to wrong them by our words, ſo to blaſpheme God and the king, 1 Kings xxi. 10. and in the New Teſtament often, Col. iii. 8. Tit. iii. 2. or to make them ſubſervient to our blaſphemy.

This blaſphemy is three ways vented, 1. Againſt God: this he doth by aſſuming to himſelf, and giving to idols, angels and ſaints, what is due to God, and his Son Jeſus Chriſt. What prerogative is more than to forgive ſins, and to be worſhipped with religious worſhip? And this he taketh to himſelf, and giveth to others, at his pleaſure, making them the object of adoration, invocation, and ſo of faith; his diſpenſations, indulgences, &c. 2. It is againſt God's tabernacle, that is, either the human nature of our Lord Jeſus, called the true tabernacle, Heb. ix. wherein God dwelleth in a ſpecial manner, John i. and Col. ii. 9. or his church and ſaints on earth, which is called the temple, chap. xi. oppoſite to the outward court, and is God's tabernacle with men, becauſe in them he dwelleth, and, as it were, ſojourneth till he bring them to a ſettled enjoying of himſelf in his temple in heaven, which ſometimes in ſcripture is oppoſed to the tabernacle, as the triumphant church is to the militant. Both theſe the Pope blaſphemeth; the firſt, by his maſſes, hoſts, adorations, tranſubſtantiations, and ſuch things as theſe, whereby our Lord's human nature is quite altered and blaſphemed, as if it were there, or had a created being at the pleaſure of a wretched man. The ſecond, the true church and ſaints are here blaſphemed, viz. by curſes, reproaches, excommunications, and devoting of them to deſtruction, and propoſing them as the vileſt men, and as the greateſt heretics in the world. Inſtances many are palpable. 3. *He blaſphemeth theſe that dwell in heaven*, that is, ſaints departed, and angels, fathering many miſchievous things on them, abuſing their name to idol worſhip and charms: is there any thing more wronged and abuſed by them than Peter and Mary the bleſſed virgin? When many vile things are fathered on them, and ſought from them, as if they approved theſe things, idols and idolatrous temples ſtiled by them, and erected to them; and what greater wrong than this can be done to theſe ſaints, while as the angel, Rev. xix. reproved John for it? Theſe three, viz. God, his church militant and triumphant, the moſt excellent things in the world, he wrongeth them all, and in the higheſt degree; and to whom agreeth this ſo well as to the Pope? And all this he doth not only in his own perſon, but, by decrees ordaineth it as by law. In ſhort, as Antiochus blaſphemed all, whom in his practice he deſpiſed, and abuſed all, ſo ſhall he do, and ſo hath he long done, as if he profeſſedly did blaſpheme them.

The fourth part of the exerciſe of his power, is in perſecution, verſe 7. *It was given to him*, even as all the reſt was given, *to make war with the ſaints, and to overcome them:* here are his fightings with the remnant of the woman's ſeed, chap. xii. 17. he raiſeth the world againſt them, and over their bodies they prevail. This war with the ſaints, taketh in all violent martyrdoms of ſingular perſons put to death for oppoſing this beaſt's uſurpation, as were (eſpecially in the end of thoſe months) very many in Italy, Germany, England, &c. It taketh in alſo the purpoſed wars that for many years to the effuſion of much blood were undertaken againſt the Waldenſes, and others, that looked on the Pope as Antichriſt. Ten hundred thouſand men were ſlain (as is reported by Peronius apud Med.) in France, and this done by way of ſtated war, not by pillagings, but by making uſe of ſtrong armies once intended againſt the Saracens, which by the Pope were diverted and employed againſt the Waldenſes. The hiſtory alſo of the Bohemian wars, after John Huſs and Jerome of

Prague were burnt, againſt theſe who were called Huſſites, which continued in great eagerneſs for many years; the hiſtory of the poor people of Piedmont, Calabria and Angrongue, and other places in Italy, perſecuted by an army under the lord of Trinity, the deſtruction of Merindol, and many poor people about in Provence, by the archbiſhop of Aix, and the lord of Opede preſident. Beſide the many barbarous cruelties in Holland, Germany, France, &c. are evidences of this war of the beaſt againſt the ſaints, touched before, chap. xi. 7. which blood, though immediately ſhed by civil men, yet principally flowed from, and is to be charged on the whore, in whoſe ſkirts is found *the blood of the prophets and ſaints*, chap. xvii. 6. and xviii. 24.

The ſucceſs is ſet down, *He overcometh them*, viz. by ſpoiling them of their liberty, life and temporal eſtate for a time; but they overcome him, by adhering to truth, and refuſing his corruptions, even at their loweſt eſtate of ſuffering, as it was chap. xii. verſe 11.

After theſe characters of his dominion, his ſucceſs, or the amplitude of his dominion, is more particularly ſet out and repeated, in three things, 1. In its extent, *He had power over all kindreds, tongues, and nations*, that is, there was none exempted from him; no nation, tongue, &c. who were Chriſtian, that were preſerved from his corruption, and many whole nations carried away with it, though not all of every nation and kindred were infected; in a word, it was very broad, verſe 7. 2. It is ſet out in the degree of their ſubmiſſion, *all that dwell on the earth, they ſhall worſhip him*, that is, be every way at his devotion, and ſhall take orders from him, and be as ſlaves to him. It is a ſort of ſubmiſſion from ſome apprehenſion of ſome deity peculiar to this beaſt and this ſtate of it beyond all others as is ſaid. 3. Leſt it ſhould be thought that all went wrong, and there were no church, the elect are expected, and this univerſality is reſtrained by this implied exception, *all ſuch as were written in the Lamb's book of life are preſerved;* theſe are the little temple ſet by, chap. xi. And the ſame who were ſealed, chap. vii. and excepted from the hurt of the fifth trumpet, chap. ix. 4. And the one hundred forty and four thouſand, which, chap. xiv. are ſtanding as conquerors over the beaſt with the Lamb upon mount Sion. Whereby it appeareth, 1. There will be ſome excepted in the greateſt tyranny of Antichriſt. 2. That they are the ſame with the one hundred forty and four thouſand that were ſealed, and conſequently then this beaſt is Antichriſt, and this worſhip Antichriſtianiſm: for, theſe ſaints, or elect, are not keeped or exempted from giving civil worſhip to temporal powers or from being overcome with this beaſt as to temporal hurt, but from worſhipping of him, which is the ſinfulneſs of this plague. Therefore after it is ſaid they got the victory over him, chap. xiv. and xv. This alſo is to be underſtood of full and final yielding to the Pope's blaſphemies; for, otherwiſe elect ſouls have ſometimes been enſnared. In which reſpect here it is implied to be impoſſible, that an elect can worſhip him, whence plainly it followeth, that no native Pope-worſhipper, owning him and the compleat body of his doctrine, and dying ſo, can be ſaved, except we would ſay one not elected may be ſaved: for, clearly this is pointed at as inconſiſtent with election, and proper to the reprobate, Matt. xxiv. 24. Theſſ. ii. 10.

It's true, this aſſertion is not rigidly to be extended to all who, in part, ſhall be guilty of Popery: Nor, 2. To theſe, as is ſaid, who ſhall repent, but where there is a full and final whoring with wondering after this beaſt: this ſtandeth as a peremptory truth, becauſe in the Spirit's account this worſhipping of the beaſt, is blaſphemy, and derogatory in a high degree to God. And, 2. His manner of worſhip in its complete body, is idolatry. And, 3. His intermixing of traditions, ſatisfactions, merit of works in juſtification, &c. in his doctrine, is a perverting of the right ways of the Lord, and a corrupting of the pure waters, that who drinketh thereof muſt die. Therefore we may confidently aſſert it; and indeed ſeeing the Lord diſtinguiſheth his true church from Antichriſt, and calleth them Gentiles, chap. xi. 2. and ſuch as are not elected, chap. xiii. 8. but are to be damned, 2 Theſſ. ii. 10. and to drink of the wine of the wrath of God without mixture for ever, chap. xiv. 9, 10, 11. There is no place left for diſputing this: which is ſet down as a dreadful ſentence for ſcarring all from worſhipping of that beaſt, or receiving of his mark. Popery will be found no little crime before God, and to bring no little guilt and hazard upon ſouls, whatever men think of it.

LECTURE III.

Verſe 9. *If any man have an ear, let him hear.*

10. *He that leadeth into captivity, ſhall go into captivity: he that killeth with the ſword, muſt be killed with the ſword. Here is the patience and faith of the ſaints.*

11. *And I beheld another beaſt coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he ſpake as a dragon.*

THE Spirit, having given a dark deſcription of Antichriſt, before he proceed to enlarge it in the following type, he doth in theſe two verſes, viz. 9. and 10. ſet down in plain words ſomething neceſſary for the conſolation of the ſaints. 1. He layeth down that common, and often repeated, advertiſement, *he that hath ears, let him hear:* by which, in this place, he ſetteth out, 1. The concernment of the knowledge of this myſtery to believers: and therefore we would not think it unworthy the pains to ſearch in it. 2. It holdeth out an impoſſibility (ſave to theſe who have ears) to take it up and underſtand it, therefore it will need the more diligence to ſearch it. 3. It importeth a deafneſs in many who want ears for ſuch truths, and therefore it is not to be wondered although many Papiſts continue blind and do not diſcern this truth.

Having premitteth this general, he ſubjoineth, verſe 10. a ſpecial conſolation, which may be a reaſon why people, in the flouriſhing eſtate of the wicked would be the more obſervant, becauſe there was retribution coming on the greateſt and cruelleſt enemies of the church, they being to be dealt with as they dealt with others. *He that leadeth into captivity—he that killeth,* ſhall be ſo met with: which judgment holdeth out, 1. The ſingular obſerving of juſtice, meeting them in their own meaſure, Pſal. cxxxvii. ult. Iſa. xxxiii. 1, 2. 2. A great change coming on the higheſt power, and ſo that there can be no ſtability in greatneſs when this admired beaſt is captivated, as if he ſaid, think not this beaſt's ſtanding will be eternal, he that leadeth captive ſome, baniſheth and killeth others, the day cometh when he ſhall be led in captivity; for, if the general be true, that all that lead captive, ſhall be led captive, then this beaſt alſo ſhall be ſo dealt with, beſide that it peculiarly relateth to him.

The conſolation is expreſly in theſe words, *here is the patience and the faith of the ſaints. Here,* that is, in this thing, and on this promiſe, there is good ground for founding of both the patience and faith of the ſaints. So that here, ſaith this much, that from this word they may patiently abide a while ſuffering, and by faith expect an end to it, and an overthrow, and turn upon this powerful enemy that carrieth all now before him. Or, here, that is, in this trial of Antichriſt's before the end come, is exerciſed the patience and faith of the ſaints; now they will have to do with faith and patience, now is the time of their acting of it, till this word ſpoken (to give them an encouragement) come to paſs, viz. that the two evils they ſuffered, killing and captivity, ſhall be returned on their enemy's heads: God's promiſe is that which keepeth life in faith and patience, and ſtrengtheneth them, but ſtill a time interveneth between the promiſe and the out-gate for the exerciſe of both theſe: and this is the end of continuing ſtraits, elſe there ſhould be little uſe for theſe graces which are well put together.

From the 11th verſe followeth, the ſecond part of Antichriſt's deſcription under a different type, becauſe his way, end, and pretexts, are ſuch as cannot altogether, by one beaſt, be ſet out, it being no ſtrange thing to ſet out our Lord differently, ſometimes as a lion, and ſometimes as a lamb, as in the fifth chapter: ſo is his ape Antichriſt, under a twofold conſideration, deſcribed, as was ſaid at the entry to this chapter. If it be aſked; how it can be called another beaſt, as different from the former? *Anſw.* 1. It is another type deſcribing the ſame power, as Grecia, Daniel vii. is deſcribed as a leopard: and, Daniel viii. as an he-goat, yet but the ſame power ſignified in its divers qualifications. 2. It may be calleda nother beaſt, 1. Becauſe it ſetteth out the ſame Antichriſt, as in a different conſideration, viz. under the firſt beaſt, he is conſidered as a temporal ſecular monarch, in a ſeries with the heads of the beaſt that went before, altogether conſtituting one beaſt and power in a continued line in one ſeat; but under

this beaſt, he is conſidered as abſtracted, and under this particular head, viz. the laſt, and as conſidered diſtinctly by itſelf and not complexly under the multiplicity of heads, as it was conſidered before, the Roman monarchy being conſidered abſolutely in the firſt, but in ſome reſpect only under the laſt; in which reſpect (according to the beſt interpreters) the kingdom of the Seleucides and Lagides, though it be comprehended under the fourth beaſt, yet is there a diſtinct conſideration taken of Antiochus by himſelf, who was one of the horns of that beaſt, Dan. vii. Becauſe God's people ſpecially ſuffered from him; and he being in many things typical, or Antichriſt, it may thus be done with reſpect to that alſo. 2. He is conſidered under the firſt type, as conſtituting one body with the horns and making uſe of them: here as head to the clergy and making uſe of them: in the former he acteth by a civil power, warring againſt the ſaints and overcoming them. Here by ſpiritual weapons, as miracles, excommunications, pretences to Chriſt, as we may hear, and therefore may be conſidered as a different power, the things he doth and the means he maketh uſe of being ſo different, one type will not fully deſcribe him, therefore this ſeventh head, being in reſpect of his claim ſo different from the reſt, ought to have a conſideration or type beyond them; in which ſenſe, though he be the ſeventh head, chapter xvii. yet is he alſo called the eighth upon this conſideration. 3. Under the firſt type, eſpecially the matter of Antichriſtianiſm, or this dominion or kingdom itſelf, is ſet down; but under the ſecond, the perſons exerciſing that dominion, and that by pretence to Chriſt.

For the better underſtanding of this, conſider three things, 1. That this beaſt is not in time poſterior to the firſt, as conſidering it under the laſt head; for, he giveth life to the firſt, hath a hand in the healing of his wound, and ſo in his riſe, it muſt be at the beginning of the forty-two months with the other. But this head, as abſtractly conſidered, may be ſaid to be behind the firſt beaſt in his complex conſideration with all his heads. 2. As they agree in time, ſo they agree in deſign. This beaſt's deſign is to make the firſt to be worſhipped, (which certainly ſheweth they are one) but under this vail of an eccleſiaſtic power and intereſt, as is ſaid, and *in ordine ad ſpiritualia*, he driveth his deſign of purſuing temporal greatneſs and grandeur. 3. The power is the ſame; for, verſe 12. all the power or commiſſion of the firſt is exerciſed by this, but variouſly vented, viz. formerly by a violent way, here ſpiritually under deceitful ſigns, yet for the ſame end: whereby it appeareth, that the chief deſign of the Spirit in this laſt part of his deſcription by this type, is to ſhow. 1. Upon what account the world gave him ſuch reverence. 2. By what midſes he procured that temporal greatneſs and reſpect; he deceived the world by ſigns, &c. as is expreſsly ſet down, verſe 14.

In this deſcription, there are three parts. In the firſt, Are ſet down the characters and deſign of this beaſt. 2. His weapons or means, whereby he prevailed to make his deſign effectual, from verſe 13. to 27. incluſive. 3. He giveth a character common to both theſe beaſts, whereby it appeareth they are one, verſe 18. From all, it will be evident, that this ſecond beaſt ſetteth out Antichriſt as a falſe prophet, as the firſt did as an uſurping tyrant.

There are four things marked in his deſcription, verſe 11, and 12. 1. It is deſcribed whence he roſe, viz. the earth: this doth not neceſſarily infer a different thing to be ſignified, as by comparing Dan. vii. 2, 3. with verſe 17. will appear; the ſame beaſt's riſe both from the ſea and the earth: and though in that place the ſea be figuratively, and the earth properly to be underſtood, whereas both are figuratively here, yet it enervateth not the force of the reaſon, becauſe as there may be many divers types, ſo divers riſes of theſe types, as the Grecian monarchy, compared to a leopard, having his riſe from the ſea, Dan. vii. verſe 3, 6. is ſet forth by an he-goat, having his riſe from the weſt. But it ſetteth out, 1. An human or earthly beginning, oppoſite to divine; it is not from God's warrand, but from beneath. 2. An extending of his dominion to ſea and land, as the angel, chap. x. ſet his feet on both, or, both over ſecular powers and eccleſiaſtic, according to the two riſes of the ſeveral beaſts. 3. A baſe beginning, yet riſing withal ſlowly and inſenſibly, in reſpect of this ſpiritual power; whereas his temporal power grew moſt in troubles and commotions, his ſpiritual did grow moſt in peace. 4. Becauſe this appearance like as a lamb, is not ſo monſtrous like as the former, (which came out of the ſea, where great monſters do breed) but more tame like, from the earth.

The ſecond thing he is deſcribed from, is his nature, in two ſimilitudes, viz. of his horns and

his ſpeech: and this partial deſcribing of him but in few parts, and not in more, as the firſt beaſt was, ſheweth, that in all other things he agreeth, and is the ſame with the former, as is particularly ſaid of his power, ver. 12. Generally this reſemblance holdeth him forth to have a meek pretext and appearance, as hurtful to none by his power, more than a lamb can be with his horns, but really to ſpeak and to be far otherwiſe indeed, as Chriſt ſpeaketh of falſe prophets in general, Matth. vii. 15. *They come to you in ſheep's cloathing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves;* ſo to the chief falſe prophet this doth exceedingly well quadrate. More particularly, looking on this ſimilitude of the lamb here, to relate to Chriſt, as certainly when he is ſaid to ſpeak like a dragon, it hath reſpect to the dragon formerly mentioned, chap. xii. and his blaſphemies; (ſeeing otherwiſe dragons do not properly ſpeak) ſo while he is ſaid to have horns like a lamb, it holdeth out a pretence he maketh to Chriſt's power, and to look very innocent like, as his vicar on earth, having all power to bind and looſe for the good of ſouls, and ſo to do all in the Lamb's name, and to proſecute his deſigns by his means, viz. miracles, cenſures, excommunications, &c. This he is in ſhew; but really come nearer to the trial of him, he ſpeaketh as the dragon, that is, his doctrine in general is blaſphemous and idolatrous, as was the heathen emperors. Where it is obſervable, he ſpake not as the firſt beaſt, verſe 5, 6. of this chapter, but as the dragon, chap. xii. there being an identity in theſe two beaſts; and he is likened to the dragon, becauſe none intervened; the firſt beaſt ſpake like him alſo. 2. His decrees were to the ſame purpoſe, commanding the worſhipping of images, murdering of ſaints, ſuppreſſing of truths, &c. 3. His manner is not meek like a lamb, but terrible with threatnings, in caſe all be not obeyed that he commandeth. In a word, he appeareth one thing, and is indeed fully another.

LECTURE IV.

Verſe 12. *And he exerciſeth all the power of the firſt beaſt before him, and cauſeth the earth, and them which dwell therein, to worſhip the firſt beaſt, whoſe deadly wound was healed.*

13. *And he doth great wonders, ſo that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth, in the ſight of men.*

14. *And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of theſe miracles which he had power to do in the ſight of the beaſt, ſaying to them that dwell on the earth, that they ſhould make an image to the beaſt which had the wound by a ſword, and did live.*

15. *And he had power to give life unto the image of the beaſt, that the image of the beaſt ſhould both ſpeak, and cauſe that as many as would not worſhip the image of the beaſt ſhould be killed.*

16. *And he cauſeth all, both ſmall and great, rich and poor, free and bound, to receive a mark in their right-hand, or in their foreheads.*

17. *And that no man might buy or ſell, ſave he that had the mark, or the name of the beaſt, or the number of his name.*

WE have heard two parts of this beaſt's deſcription, viz. concerning his riſe and nature, ver. 11. In ver. 12. there are two other, touching his practice and deſign. If it be aſked, what power this beaſt hath, or exerciſeth, who looketh ſo lamb like? it ſaith, *He exerciſeth all the power of the firſt beaſt.* In a word, the ſame power formerly deſcribed, as agreeing to the former type, is exerciſed by this beaſt, under pretext of his reſpect to Chriſt, as his vicar and depute; he warreth with the ſaints, maketh blaſphemous decrees, &c. whereby a different power certainly is not deſcribed, but the way laid down how that beaſt did attain to exerciſe ſo great power, ſo that the Pope is inferior to no emperor. This ſaith, its under the notion of Chriſt's vicar, and pretence of religion: which confirmeth what was ſaid, that the firſt type deſcribeth Antichriſt's power; this the perſon exerciſing it, and the manner of doing it. There is more difficulty of interpreting theſe words, *Before him*, or, *in his ſight*, which importeth a cotemporarineſs of this beaſt with the former, but not that they be different. It may be underſtood then, 1. To imply a reſpect to this end, viz. temporal great-

neſs, which this beaſt, under this type, eſpecially aimed at. So, before him, is as much as in his favours to uſher him in, as if he were the other beaſt's harbinger, as it is ſaid of John, Mark i. 2. *I ſend my meſſenger before thy face*, &c. And thus, by this ſhape and appearance, he maketh way for the power formerly deſcribed. This agreeth well with the ſcope following, viz. the Pope's uſing this eccleſiaſtic cloak for attaining this temporal end.

In a word, that the power was exerciſed by the Pope under this pretext or ſhape, to eſtabliſh the ſecular power expreſſed in the former type. 2. It is expounded by ſome, *before him*, that is, in the ſeat where the beaſt (complexly taken) ſat, viz. at Rome.

The fourth part of the deſcription cleareth this, viz. that which holdeth forth his great end and deſign in exerciſing that power; it is to *cauſe the earth, and them that dwell in it, to worſhip the firſt beaſt, whoſe deadly wound was healed.* By this firſt beaſt is not underſtood ſimply the Roman empire, but as under the ſeventh head, viz. the Papacy, after the deadly wound, which the ſixth head got by Conſtantine's deſtroying idolatry, was healed by Papacy.

By *earth, and them that dwell therein*, are meant the generality and plurality of the Chriſtian world, eſpecially the carnal multitude. By *worſhipping*, is meant that adoration whereof we ſpoke, verſe 8. and by his *cauſing them*, &c. is imported both his end and effectualneſs in promoving it. In a word, he ſeeketh and endeavoureth by all means to keep up the authority, and corrupt way, of the old heatheniſh empire in his perſon, that it get no leſs reverence in the world than any head that went before. And this which is in general here, he more particularly proſecuteth in the verſe following. Out of which is confirmed, 1. That theſe two beaſts are not, upon the matter, and really different, ſeeing this laſt always ſeeketh the firſt honour; which if they were different, could not agree to the Pope or Antichriſt, who preferreth his own credit and authority to any other. And, 2. It ſheweth, that the ſcope of this type is to ſhew, how the Pope came to what he was deſcribed to be in the former. So really the Pope's gaining honour and worſhip to himſelf, was, upon the matter, a gaining reſpect and honour to the beaſt, as it had before his time; for though the object was ſomewhat altered, the ſeries and kind was materially the ſame.

The particular way how the Pope roſe to this temporal height under a religious ſhew, is ſet down in three ſteps, or a threefold influence he hath, 1. On the world, to cauſe them make an image. 2. On the image, to make it be reſpected. 3. On all men, by making them receive his mark. And the means how he attained all theſe are ſet down, 1. By miracles and ſigns; he cometh in on folks eſtimation, and deceiveth them, as if he were ſomething, ver. 13, 14. 2. He propoſeth the making of an image to the former beaſt, that is, to clatch up, and ſet on foot again, a Roman power ſomewhat like the former, before the head was wounded, tho' not the ſame, ver. 14. which by miracles he effecteth. 3. He giveth power to, and animateth that beaſt's image to do for itſelf, and to gain worſhip, verſe 15. by its killing ſuch as do it not. 4. By his engaging all to worſhip that beaſt, and taking them in a ſpecial manner engaged to him, under higheſt certifications of not buying or ſelling, or keeping common commerce with them, ver. 16, 17. And he bringeth this to paſs.

The miracles which are the firſt mean, are, 1. Set down generally. 2. Inſtanced particularly. 3. The influence of them on the world to deceive them (which is the ſhot of all) is ſet down. Generally miracles are divided in true and falſe, 1. True, are ſuch as exceed natural cauſes, which were proofs of our Lord's deity, and ſometimes by the power of God are mediately exerciſed by men. 2. Falſe miracles, are not only ſuch things as are mere juglings, (ſuch as poſſibly were by the magicians in Egypt) but ſuch, as tho' they have ſome wonderment in them to men, who know not the cauſes which produce theſe effects, yet are really brought about by ſecond means; ſuch are ſpoken of by Chriſt, Matth. xxv. and ſuch the apoſtle ſaith, ſhall make Antichriſt famous, *He ſhall come in the power, and after the working of Satan, with ſigns and lying wonders*, 2 Theſſ. ii. 9. Of this laſt ſort are the Pope's miracles; and it ſuiteth well with Antichriſt to be ſtored with miracles of this nature, ſuch as the Papacy aboundeth with and glorieth in: and therefore none needeth to ſtumble to hear them mentioned.

The particular pitched on, is, *He maketh fire come down from heaven.* It is not needful to ſtick to the letter here, the ſcope is clear, it is to ſhew he ſhall do great ſigns for confirming his doctrine and power, even as Elias did, who twice made fire come down from heaven, 1 Kings xviii. 38. 2 Kings i. 10. So, as it were, he ſhall not be be-

hind him. That miracle of fire coming down, is inſtanced, to ſhew they ſhall be great. Beſide, hiſtory maketh it clear, that often fiery viſions have been made uſe of by the Popes for gaining their point, as when Stephanus is going to ſeek help from Pipinus againſt Aſtulphus king of the Lombards, anno 751, fiery balls are ſeen reeling and falling in amongſt them, which he interpreteth as holding forth their ruin; and anno 776. two fiery targets appear againſt the Saxons, when they are to fight againſt Charles the Great at Herburgh. Zecharias the Pope, in his march againſt Ravenna, hath Igneas Acies going before him, Cent. 9. 301, &c. Or it may be applied to the fiery threatnings and curſes by which they thundered and terrified men, and a counterfeit aſſuming of Chriſt's power and authority, as the two witneſſes were really furniſhed therewith, chap. xi.

The ſcope and effects is, *He deceiveth the world* by theſe miracles: in a word, he deludeth them to think him indeed more than ordinary; which, 2 Theſſ. ii. is called to believe lies; and by theſe he confirmeth his doctrines and mandates, and maketh them paſs as uncontroverted: and indeed all the Popiſh miracles tend to confirm invocation of ſaints or angels, tranſubſtantiation, purgatory, or ſome ſuch thing, as witneſſeth Baronius his frequent mentioning of miracles, for this end, to confute heretics, &c. and further in the centuries, cap. de miraculis, &c. This agreeth well to Antichriſt in the doctrine, and to the Pope in the fact: and under miracles and ſigns would be underſtood all theſe ſtupendious things ſpoken of amongſt the Papiſts, either as done by the Pope himſelf, or by ſome of his vaſſals under him, yet ſo as the authorizing of ſuch things dependeth only on him.

We come to that wherein he deludeth, or deceiveth the world; which he by his miracles aimeth at: its *ſaying to them that dwell on the earth, that they ſhould make an image to the beaſt, which had the wound by a ſword, and did live.* Concerning this image take theſe advertiſements, 1. That it is no dead image, but an empire, that can ſpeak, and can cauſe ſuch as will not worſhip it, be killed. 2. It is no different power from the two beaſts formerly deſcribed, but the ſame under a diſtinct conſideration of its riſing, or of its appearing. This image is the Pope under a civil notion, in which reſpect he is the image of the former empire, and the effect of his lamb-like appearance: in which reſpect, he is the efficient of this effect; for, this image of the beaſt getteth the common worſhip of all the world with the former, in all repetitions afterward, chap. xv. 2. and xvi. 2. and xiv. 9. it is alway one; the character of the beaſt and his image, the victory over the beaſt and his image, are one; the judgment of the worſhippers of both is the ſame, which can be true of no other but Antichriſt. 3. The reaſon why it is called here the image, is to hold forth the way and ſteps how the Pope came to an height in temporal things by ſome reſemblance to the old empire. It is not every way the ſame with the former under this head, yet very like. Therefore in ſome reſpect it is its image rather than itſelf; and that though both in its power and its pretext he ſaith one thing, as if he were ſetting up Peter's throne, yet really he is doing another, viz. making an image to the old heatheniſh ſuperſtitious way of worſhip that was under the former heads. Therefore it is ſaid, he deceiveth the world, this is, that he made them never acquaint with the deſign or intention of this work, which was to erect former idolatry in worſhip and tyranny in his own perſon, but as if he minded the honour of Chriſt, Peter, ſaints, &c. and the furtherance of religion: he brought the world to be inſtrumental in bringing about this deſign, which, when it was accompliſhed, is the image of the heatheniſh empire, for extent of dominion, manner of worſhip, cruelty againſt the ſaints, &c. And therefore when he is brought in, ver. 14. ſaying, *that they ſhould make an image to the beaſt*, this is to be underſtood as the language of the deſign in itſelf, and not of his expreſſion, as is frequent in ſcripture. In a word, by *image* is underſtood the Papacies temporal power, which is indeed imperial-like, and therefore ſo expreſſed by the former type. So then in this 14 verſe, there is, 1. The deſign to make an image to the beaſt which was wounded. This is called an image, becauſe it was in a great part like it, therefore repreſented as one monarchy with it; yet not every way the ſame, therefore ſet out by another type alſo, as is ſaid. 2. His manner of proceeding in this deſign, is, 1. In engaging the men of the world; for, he could not without them effectuate it. 2. The way he engages them, it is ſaying, or perſuading; which is not to be meaned of expreſs ſaying ſo, but his miracles had

ſuch a language with them, as to incline and perſwade the deluded world to be well content to further ſuch a thing.

3. The ſucceſs is hinted at in the laſt words, *and it did live*, ſo it will read, *& revixit*, or *vixit*: not as if he were deſcribing a preſent living patern according to which that image was to be drawn, but either he ſpeaketh of the beaſt as it lived before it received the wound, which did then live: or, as it may be read, it was wounded, and it did live, viz. after his pains taken on the world to heal it, which is inlarged in the following verſe, ſo that this is ſet down here by way of anticipation as is uſual. That this wound is ſaid to be by a ſword, ſheweth it is not a wound by a ſchiſm, but by violence, as was that in the ſixth ſeal, chap. vi.

He proceeds to ſhew the third ſtep how this image was made to live ver. 15. It is by this two horned beaſt the Antichriſt, he hath power to work a threefold effect on this image, that is, by the devil's aſſiſting him, (God in ſecret juſtice permitting the world to be deluded) he is able to bring this deſign about, and that little rude draught of the image, which at firſt was but dead and as it were in ſhape, he brought ſo on, till he at laſt made it look like that beaſt which went before it.

The firſt effect he worketh on the image he makes it live, there was matter for a time in the Roman church ſufficient to heal the wound which the former head had gotten, but wanted the form, which in time the Pope did give it, by his taking to him ſupreme power in civil and eccleſiaſtic things, and imitating heatheniſh ſuperſtitions in worſhip, ſo that which ſeemed to be dead before, now ſtandeth up and appeareth. 2. He giveth it power to ſpeak, that is, he furniſheth pretexts to it for taking on and venting this power in its decrees, threatnings, curſes, &c. The third effect or part of the power committed to him, which conſtituteth this image, is, *power to cauſe* (for the image getteth this power) *that as many as will not worſhip it ſhall be killed*: which implieth, 1. That this image is worſhipped, and allowed to be ſo univerſally, as the beaſt was. 2. That this beaſt, or image, will have worſhip under pain of death, that is, where the ſupremacy of this Pope is denied there is nothing can keep from burning: it ſhall be capital, as heretical, and treaſonable. 3. This image cauſeth that they ſhall be killed, that is, by ſtirring up the powers of the world, who are devoted to it, to ſuffer none to live under them who did not acknowledge him. 4. It is ſaid, this two horned beaſt giveth that power to the image, becauſe it is under the pretext of being vicars to Chriſt that they take theſe things on them; and it is that pretext which giveth them ſo much weight amongſt men in the world, as to be ſo worſhipped. They may thank their counterfeiting Peter's ſucceſſion for that. 5. He killeth not, but cauſeth that they ſhould be killed: this is their way to deliver to civil magiſtrates, as executors of them whom they deſire to be deſtroyed.

The laſt ſtep of exerciſing his power, is verſe 16. and 17. in his engaging and marking all for himſelf, as his proper vaſſals and ſlaves, by three marks. All which tend to ſhew a ſpecial relation between him and them, and a peculiar dependence of them on him. 1. There is a mark, ſuch as men put on their beaſt, or merchants on their goods, to make them known to be theirs. This mark is ſpecially urged by him, and threatned with wrath from God, chap. xiv. 9, 10. 2. His name, or the name of the beaſt, which is broader: the meaning is, others are like children who partake of their father's name, or as the wife that partaketh of the huſband's name; ſo they partake of this beaſt's name. He is the Pope and they Papiſts, glorying in that as his native brood, thinking more to be called a catholic Roman, or Papiſt, than a Chriſtian, or ſomething like this. 3. The number of his name ſeemeth to be yet larger, as ye would ſay the *minimum quod ſic*: Without which none can paſs as his, ſo that if they have not the mark, they muſt have the Name, or, at leaſt, the number of it, whereof more hereafter. This effect is extended and particularized in two reſpects, 1. None of any ſort eſcapeth, ſmall or great, &c. 2. The part marked, is the right hand and forehead, holding forth an obvious manner of avowing him, and an active engagement for him: it is ſaid, ſoldiers did wear marks on their right hands, and ſervants in their foreheads; but Popes hold men engaged under both theſe relations to them: (this Mede upon the place cleareth) by which characters we are not to underſtand viſible marks imprinted; but according to the ſcope, that as our Lord hath his ſeal on his, chap. vii. ſo this beaſt, who imitateth him, hath ſome thing peculiar as from himſelf, which Chriſt inſti-

tuted not, which he will have on these who are his: and let it be observed, that both the beasts and the image cometh under one beast here. 3. The certification whereby he inforceth this mark or subjection on men, it is by taking from them the common privileges of conversing with others under these words, *to buy or sell*, that looked either to ecclesiastic or civil communion; all that will not become his, shall be excluded from both these: and if we look how far the Papists extend the excommunication of their Popes, in debarring men from these things, and the use they make of their excommunications to force their obedience on many emperors and others, they will be found clearly applicable in this particular.

In a word, this beast's drift is, to make up an image to the head that is wounded, and to establish such an idolatrous grandeur and government again. And he bringeth it about by exercising his power, 1. On the men of the world, to make them pliable to it, which he doth by miracles and signs, ver. 13. 14. under pretext of some divinity. 2. On the beast's image, by helping on that design in three steps, giving it life, and putting it to act for its own worship when once formed; for the scope (reckoning still the intention of the work) is to shew this beast's design. Now if the beast and image were different, he would not, yea, could not, procure universal worship to both, and that by one power, and if any of them were different from himself, he would not. 3. He exerciseth his power by putting his mark on all, which he attaineth by censures, lest they be shut out from common commerce, or the advantages of his soul-merchandize and markets, as he prevailed in the former of procuring worship to the image for fear of death and killing.

For the confirming of what is said, we will find these things clear in the matter of fact from history, 1. That what Rome wanted by the emperors turning to be Christians, or removing of their seat from it, it recovered by the Popes. And, 2. That that recovery began immediately after Constantine's coming to the empire. 3. That the Popes used the same practices of blasphemy against God, persecution against his saints, and followed it by the same means of deposing emperors, assuming temporal power, and interdicting from all fellowship with others: and altho' these things be particularly marked in particular treatises, and upon particular occasions, yet it may be observed here, 1. That Rome recovered and preserved dominion and grandeur only by the Pope's means, witness, 1. That passage out of Steuchus de donatione Constantini. *Everso imperio, nisi Deus restituisset pontificatum, futurum erat, ut Roma nulla tempore excitata ac restituta, inhabitabilis posthac, foedissima boum porcorumque futura esset habitatio: at in pontificatu et si non illa veteris imperii magnitudo, species certe non dissimilis longe renata est, qua gentes omnes, haud secus ab ortu et occasu, Romanum pontificem venerantur, quam omnes nationes olim imperatoribus obtemperabant.* Et Paulo post, *An non omnia quae Romae quandam profana erant, sacra effecta sunt quemadmodum omnia templa deorum facta sunt ecclesiae sanctorum? Ritus item profani, coeperunt esse ritus sacri? Nonne pantheon, templum omnium idolorum, effectum est templum beatae virginis? (Secundum alios omnium divorum) Nonne in Vaticano Templum Apollinis, ubi condita erant corpora Apostolorum, conversum in Ecclesiam ipsorum Apostolorum? Ut superius demonstratum est, &c.* That is to say, the empire being overturned, if God had not restored the pontificat, or papacy, it had come to pass, that Rome at no time being raised up and restored, afterward being unhabitable, had become a most vile stable of cows and swine: but in the pontificat, or papacy, although not that greatness of the ancient empire, yet surely the appearance of it, not much unlike, was brought forth again, whereby all nations from the east to the west do adore the Roman pontiff, or Pope, no otherways than of old all nations did obey the emperors. And a little after, are not all things which at Rome of old were profane, or common, made holy, as all the temples of the gods were made churches of saints? Also their profane rites began to be holy rites? Was not the pantheon, that temple of all idols, made the temple of the Blessed Virgin (according to others of All-saints) was not the temple of Apollo in the Vatican, where were buried the bodies of the apostles, turned into the church of the apostles themselves, as was demonstrated above, &c. These are a Popish writer's expressions, defending Constantine's donation: and in this sense it may well be called the image of the head that went before. Add to this some passages cited by Bellarmine, lib. 3. de Pont. cap. 21. The first out of Leo Magnus, Serm. 1. De natali Apostolorum. *Per sacram D. Petri sedem; Caput*

orbis effecta (Roma) *latius praesides religione divina, quam dominatione terrena. Quamvis enim multis aucta victoriis, Jus imperii tui, terra marique protuleris, minus tamen est, quod tibi bellicus labor subdidit, quam quod pax Christiana subjecit.* That is, by the holy see of St. Peter, (O Rome) thou being made the head of the world, commandest further divine religion than earthly domination: for albeit being augmented by many victories, thou hast extended the power of the empire both by sea and land, yet it is less, that which the labour of war hath subdued to thee, than that which Christian peace hath brought in subjection. The other passage is out of Prosper. lib. de ingratis, cap. 2.

Sedes Roma Petri, quae pastoralis honoris.
Facta caput mundo, quicquid non possidet armis.

Religione tenet, that is to say, Rome the see of Peter, which is made to the world the head of pastoral honour, whatever it doth not possess by arms, it holdeth out by religion. Also that passage cited by Forbes out of lib. 2. de vocatione gentium, cap. xvi. *Roma persacerdotii principatum amplior facta est arce religionis quam solio potestatis.* That is, Rome, through the dominion of priesthood, or papacy, is made larger by the castle of religion, than by the throne of power.

From which passage it is clear, that Rome before the papacy's height was really short (as wounded) in respect of what formerly it was, and also, that what pomp Rome now enjoyeth, and what dominion it hath, it hath by virtue of the Pope's supremacy. Let us add further some passages more, 1. Out of Socrates, lib. 7. cap. 11. who speaking of the violence of Calestinus, who was bishop of Rome, saith, that he, in exercising his power (as also the bishop of Alexandria) had gone, *Jamdudum extra fines sacerdotii in principatum saecularum*, that is, long since without the bounds of the priestly office into the secular dominion. And if it be true what is commonly asserted by Papists, concerning the donation of Constantine, whereby he gave Rome, and the parts about it, to the Popes, to be possessed by them, as the patrimony of Peter; and that therefore purposely he left Rome to the Pope upon that account, thinking it fit, &c. *Ideo autem par esse censuimus ut nostrum imperium imperique potentiam in orientem transferemus, &c. quod ubi est principale sacerdotium et caput Christianae Religionis datumsa Rege coelorum, non est aequum ut terrenus imperator illi potestatem habeat.* This is, Therefore we judged it fit to translate our empire, and the power of it, into the East, &c. because where the chief priesthood, or Papacy, and the head of Christian religion is appointed to be by the King of Heaven, it is not right that an earthly emperor should there have power. Which donation is more largely set down by Balsamon, page 88. and is generally owned by them, with all the contents thereof.

Agreeable to this it is which Baronius asserteth, anno 312. num. 80. of Constantine's giving the imperial palace to Melhiades the bishop of Rome, and what is afterward recorded by him to be conferred as pieces of dignity by that same emperor upon them, anno 324. num. 79. that Constantine would not suffer the prime priests of the Christians to be exceeded in glory by the heathen priests, who were ever adversaries to Christianity. And these privileges are reckoned by him thus, *Haec erant privilegia quibus templorum sacerdotes a majoribus traditis fruerentur: inter eos, eminebat sacrorum rex, qui in convivis super omnes excubare solebat; erat et Pontifex maximus, arbiter humanarum atque divinarum rerum omnium, quod breviter narratum habes ex Festo. Quanta autem potestas in Augure, qui comitia irrita reddere et abdicare etiam consules magistratu valeret, quae paulo ante recitavimus ex Cicerone declarant. Vetitum iis erat, (ait Plutarchus) equo vehi, sed uti carpento pro amplissima dignitate soliti erant. Sacerdotum peculiaris mos (quod affirmat Tacitus) erat, carpento capitolium ingredi; sic et videas Romanos pontifices (quod tradit Ammianus) per urbem carrucis vehi, procedunt (inquit) vehiculis insedentes, circumspecte vestiti: sed et magna illa dignitas esse videbatur, quod (ut idem ait) nunquam pileum, insigne flaminum, deponebant, cum (ut idem testatur Plutarchus) caeteri solebant occurrentibus caput detegere. Observat hoc ipsum in hunc diem Romanus Pontifex. Refert idem etiam dialis flaminis immunitatem, ut jurare ei minus liceat, quod non conveniat de rebus minimis fidem eidem non habere cui res sacrae et maximae concreditae sint, &c. Rursum vero deorum sacerdotes purpuram inducbant, eandemque pretiosam nempe, bis tinctam, ut indicat Ciceronis locus ille, &c. Mos quoque erat, quum dedicaretur summus sacerdos, vitta et corona aurea caput ornari.*

That is to say, these are the privileges which the priests of the temples did enjoy, as being deliver-

ed unto them from their forefathers: amongſt them was eminent the king of their holy things, who in their banquets uſed to watch over them all; and the chief prieſt was empire of divine and human things, as ye have briefly related out of Leſtus, and how great power was in their ſoothſayer, who could render even their common councils of none effect, and abdicate the conſuls from their magiſtracy, theſe things which we did a little before recite out of Cicero, do declare. It was forbidden to them, ſaith Plutarch, to uſe a horſe, but they were accuſtomed to uſe a chariot for their greater dignity. It was the proper cuſtom of the prieſts to enter the capital, as Tacitus affirmeth, in a chariot; ſo ye will ſee the Roman prieſts, as relateth Ammianus, to be carried through the town in coaches, *they go*, ſaith he, *ſitting in coaches, being clothed very circumſpectly:* and that alſo ſeemed to be a great dignity, that they never took off their cap, or bonnet, which was the enſign of the prieſts, when as (as the ſame Plutarch witneſſeth) all other uſed to uncover their head to theſe they met. The Pope, or Roman prieſt, obſerveth the ſame until this day. The ſame author reporteth alſo this immunity of Jupiter's prieſt, that he might not give an oath, becauſe it was not ſuitable, that he ſhould not be truſted in ſmaller things, to whom the holy things and the greater were concredited, &c. But again, the prieſts of the gods where clothed with purple, and that very precious, viz. twice dyed, as that place of Cicero ſheweth, &c. Alſo that was the cuſtom, when the high prieſt was dedicated, to have his head adorned with a ribbon or lace, and a crown or garland of gold, &c.

In which words we have the derivation of much of the Roman or pontifical pomp, viz. the imitation of the heatheniſh high prieſt: in which reſpect, this ſame author Baronius diſputeth much of their honour, anno 312. num. 85. and 98. as alſo giveth that for the reaſon why the Chriſtian emperors did ſtill retain the title of Pontifex Maximus until the reign of the emperor Gratian: *leſt*, ſaith he, *the people ſhould have been ſtirred up againſt them, if publicly ſo ſoon they had diſowned their antient religion, which by that title was ſtill after a ſort preſerved in emperors.* By which reaſon the author grants a great ſuitableneſs in that title to the old heatheniſh religion; and that therefore ſeeing Popery, by his confeſſion, hath both the name and the thing, in a great part, from the heatheniſh idolatrous prieſts, as a copy caſten in imitation of them, there muſt be here a great reſemblance to the former wounded head indeed. And if that be true which Bellarmine aſſerteth, (Lib. 1. de Conciliis et Eccleſia, cap. 19.) as the reaſon why the biſhops of Rome never keeped perſonally the councils while they were in the Eaſt. 1. That it became not him who was the head to follow the councils. And, 2. That he eſchewed to be preſent where the emperors was, leſt he ſhould have ſeemed to cede in place to him. This will ſhew a very timely ſpringing up of this ſupremacy. And although ſome doubt may be made of ſome of theſe particulars in matter of fact, and what was true of them, was not without a teſtimony againſt them; yet their owning of, and pleading for theſe things, do ſufficiently clear the ſucceſſion and reſemblance of Popery to heatheniſh idolatry, beſide what is elſewhere ſaid of its blaſphemy. Again, it is clear, if we will conſider how many emperors and kings have been trode upon by this Pope, and their kingdoms diſpoſed of to others, not only neighbouring nations, but their own ſubjects looſed from all tye and obligation to them, and all commerce even of buying and ſelling to be interdicted with theſe who acknowledge not the Pope: of which, ſee *Decretum Martini* 5. *in fine Concilii Conſtantinenſis. Prohibetur iis qui Romanam ſedem non agnoſcunt domicilia tenere, larem fovere, contractus inire, negotiationes et mercaturas quaſtibet exercere, aut humanitatis ſolatia cum Chriſti fidelibus habere. Et in Concilio Laterano, ſub Innocentia tertio. Si dominus temporalis terram ſuam neglexerit purgare ab haereticа previtate, excommunicationis vincula innodetur, et ſummus pontifex vaſſalus ab ejus fidalitate denunciet abſolutos, et terrant exponat aliis occupandam.* That is to ſay, it is forbidden to theſe who acknowledge not the Roman See to keep houſes, kindle fire, make contracts, exerciſe whatſomever negotiations or merchandiſes, or to have the comforts or refreſhings of humanity with the faithful ones of Chriſt.

And in the Lateran council, under Innocent the third. If a temporal lord neglect to purge his country from heretical wickedneſs, let him be under the bond of excommunication, and let the Pope declare his ſubjects or vaſſals free from their fidelity, and ſet forth his country or land to be occupied by others.

Hence it was made treaſon to have any commerce with the Lollards: and according to theſe acts the Pope excommunicated Henry VIII. and interdicted all commerce with the Engliſh nation, as it is emitted by Paulus tertius, anno 1538. and recorded in the hiſtory of the council of Trent.

Their bloody cruelty againſt the ſaints, with their ſucceſs therein, is notour, not only by the writings of hiſtoriographers, but is built on by them as a ſpecial evidence of their church, and is made the 15 note of it by Bellar. de Notis Eccleſiae, lib. 4. cap. 18. which being compared with the former chapter, they contain many great victories of old and late againſt the Albigenſes, and others, oppoſers of the Pope; ſo as he concludes, that ſcarcely ever have theſe who were called heretics been ſuperior. Which indeed being looked on as during Antichriſt's continuance of forty-two months, it may be the fulfilling of what is ſpoken, verſe 5. and 7. of this ſame chapter: and what Bellarmine ſaith there of the killing of 100,000 Waldenſes at one time, and what Mede citeth out of Peronius, that the number of the ſlain exceeded in France 1000,000 during theſe wars, or any other hiſtory wherein they boaſt of the unhappy event that followed the oppoſers of the Pope of Rome, and ſo cite many emperors both of the Eaſt and Weſt, over-run by him. It will tend to make up the proof of theſe aſſertions. 1. That the biſhops of Rome aſſumed to themſelves as abſolute ſovereignty over kings and kingdoms, as ever the former emperors did over provinces. 2. That they wanted not witneſſes againſt their uſurpation, but that in God's ſecret juſtice they had power given them for ſo many hundred years together to prevail over them, and with a high hand to maſſacre and undo them. And, 3. That in every thing they have fufilled in them the characters pointed out in this beaſt.

Neither it is unobſervable, that Bellarmine attributeth that greatneſs of the Pope's dominion to the time preceding the reformation, and ſo falleth within his forty-two months reign: for, ſaith he, lib. 3. de Pontif. cap. 21. *Nam ab eo tempore, quo per vos Papa Antichriſtus eſſe coepit, non modo non crevit ejus Imperium, ſed ſemper magis ac magis decrevit. Leonis magni tempore, id eſt, annis centum quinquaginta antequam Antichriſtus veſtra ſententia naſceretur, Papa Romanus pluribus gentibus praeſidebat, quam ſeſe Romani Imperii fines extenderent, &c. Paulo poſt, Noſtris vero temporibus, tam proſpere illi omnia ſucceſſerunt, ut magnam Germaniae partem amiſerit, Suetiam, Gothiam Norvegiam, Doniam univerſam, bonam Angliae, Galliae, Helvetiae, Poloniae, Bohemiae ac Pannoniae partem. Itaque ſi proſpere agere, nota eſt Antichriſti; non Papa qui tot Provinciis exutus eſt, ſed Lutherus Antichriſtus merito dici poteſt.* That is to ſay, for from that time, when, as you will have it, the Pope began to be Antichriſt, not only his empire did not grow, but always more and more it decreaſed. In the time of Leo the great, that is, one hundred and fifty years before Antichriſt was brought forth, according to your opinion, the Pope of Rome was over more nations than the bounds of the Roman empire extended itſelf unto. And a little after, but in our times all things ſucceed ſo proſperouſly to him, that he loſt a great part of Germany, Swederland, Gothland, Norway, all Denmark, a great part of England, Switzerland, Bohemia, &c. Therefore if proſperity be a note of Antichriſt; not the Pope who is ſpoiled of ſo many provinces, but Luther may deſervedly be called Antichriſt. Which words, by their own confeſſion, bear out a great change upon their Popiſh kingdoms ſince the beginning of the reformation, and a remarkable decay thereof ſince the expiring of the forty-two months, before frequently mentioned.

LECTURE V.

Verſe 18. *Here is wiſdom. Let him that hath underſtanding count the number of the beaſt: for it is the number of a Man; and his number is ſix hundred threeſcore and ſix.*

HAVING given more particular and clear marks of Antichriſt, he now biddeth them, as it were, put them together and reckon.

The ſum of the verſe is, in theſe four; 1. There is an advertiſement, to put them to ſtand and pauſe before they paſs theſe deſcriptions; here is wiſdom, &c. 2. An exhortation to reckon, that it may be known what that number is which the

beaſt putteth on his followers; *Let him that hath, &c.* 3. A motive, it may be underſtood and found out; for it is *the number, &c.* A help to find it out; by mentioning a particular number, 666. To ſhew, it is not every heretic, but a chief one, who will have many things compacted and bound up together, that is Antichriſt: or, it is not an innumerable number, but may be underſtood and counted as clearly as 666 may. So it is a confirmation of the former reaſon, or an inſtance for proof of it: for ſome number was meet to be named, ſeeing he had called it attainable, yet not this very number itſelf; for then there needed no reckoning, and therefore the wiſdom required is to be employed in ſearching and applying the characters paſt, and not the number following: and this looketh like the ſcope of that, *here is wiſdom*, putting the reader to a pauſe, and to reſume what is ſaid now, before he paſs from the deſcription of the beaſt to the condition of the church, which followeth, chap. xiv. as, *Here is the patience of the ſaints*, &c. relateth to the words and matter ſet down immediately before. This is the ſum and ſcope.

This verſe then is ſet down by the Holy Ghoſt, as an exerciſe for ſpiritual wiſdom to eſſay itſelf in. We cannot therefore paſs it, tho' it hath tortured many in all ages to find it out: before we come to reckon, we ſhall premit. 1. A ſhort expoſition of the words. 2. Some general conſiderations.

1. The pauſe or advertiſement, *Here is wiſdom*, doth imply a difficulty in the matter, needing ſpiritual wiſdom for finding it out, yet ſo as in it wiſdom ſhould have both an occaſion and warrant for its exerciſe, and it is an invitation to try, as in theſe parallel places, verſe 9. of this chapter, and verſe 13. chapter xiv. alſo verſe 9. chapter xvii.

Only this is to be adverted to, that when he ſaith, *here is wiſdom*, the ſcope is not only to relate to what followeth; but alſo to caſt an eye back on what immediately preceded, as containing the exerciſe of ſpiritual wiſdom, as well as in what followeth, and ſome way conſiſts in knitting what precedeth, with what followeth, as the former cited places clear.

2. The exhortation is, *Let him that hath underſtanding, count the number of the beaſt:* where we conſider, 1. What is to be counted. 2. What it is to count or number. 3. Who is this invited to it. By the beaſt here, no queſtion, is underſtood the beaſt formerly mentioned through the chapter, and by *the number of the beaſt*, that ſame which was formerly expreſſed by *the number of his name:* called there *the number of his name*, becauſe it is ſomething like himſelf in its nature. And this beaſt, as all the former, verſe 1. having a name of blaſphemy, the number of that name muſt relate to a number of ſuch peculiar blaſphemies as differenceth this beaſt from all other heretics, ſuch blaſphemies as conſtituteth him Antichriſt; and ſo the number of them muſt be of ſuch a proportion as conſtituteth the receivers thereof members of that kingdom, and Antichriſtian. It is here changed, and called the number of the beaſt, though it ſignifies the ſame thing; partly, to ſhew the coincidency of this name with the beaſt, that it is proper and peculiar to him; and partly, becauſe this number is invented by him, and impoſed on them, as the character is called his alſo. And therefore in the reckoning of this number, we are led rather to ſearch in the nature of the beaſt himſelf, than to a more particular name, becauſe the thing to be reckoned is here not called the number of his name, but the number of the beaſt, becauſe by deſcribing his nature, it doth conſequently point him out as by name.

To count here, is not then by arithmetic to number out a name, and to caſt up a ſum by ſo many figures, but doctrinally and judiciouſly to weigh the matter of that hereſy, or the nature of that beaſt: ſo the Lord is ſaid to have numbered Belſhazzar, Dan. v. and to have found him light. Becauſe by this way of putting particulars together, and conſidering them, when put together, the judicious ſearchers will find him exactly out, whether he be agreeable or diſagreeable to the rule or character given, as arithmeticians will do by their reckonings. Of this ſort of reckoning there are a great number of examples in ſcripture, but of reckoning from the letters or figures of a name there is none.

The firſt implieth a particular exact ſearch, as if every thing in him were conſidered by itſelf particularly, and put together again in whole, as arithmeticians do in their countings. This is confirmed by conſidering the qualification of him who is invited to number, *Let him that hath underſtanding*, that is, not underſtanding in reckoning and arithmetic, but in the diſcerning of the ſpiritual truths of God, Dan. xii. and Micah vi. 9. eſpecially of the characters of Antichriſt formerly given, and of pru-

dence to apply them where he ſhall diſcern them to be. This ſaith not that none other ſhould count, the duty is common, but it ſaith few will take it to them and find it out, and that no other will come ſpeed but they that take the ſame ballance of the ſactuary and ſpiritual wiſdom to diſcern with; yet it is put to men's doors to eſſay this, but with much deniedneſs and humility.

3. The reaſon or motive added to ſtir up men to eſſay this ſearch or reckoning, is, *for it is the number of a man.* By the *number of a man*, we cannot underſtand ſuch a number as is made up out of the numeral letters of a name; we have no ſcripture warranting that: beſide, that would be little encouragement to undertake this numbering, or little exerciſe for ſpiritual wiſdom: but, by the *number of a man*, we underſtand ſuch a number as men do uſe, or is made uſe of by them, and is attainable to be known by them, Iſa. viii. 1. The *writing pen of a man*, that is, ſuch as men uſe, and as men may underſtand; So Ezek. xxiv. 17. The *bread of a man*, is bread made uſe of by them, and whereon they uſually live: and, chap. xxi. of this book, there is the *meaſure of a man*, that is, ſuch as men uſe to meaſure with: in this ſenſe the *number of a man* is that which men uſe, and is obvious if they have underſtanding to ſearch it out: and certainly there is great odds to ſay the *number of a man* indefinitely, and the number of a man's name particularly. The firſt maketh it common to all ſpiritual men who may conceive it, as the exhortation implieth: this aſtricteth it to one particular man, as only agreeing to him. Thus the words may be rendered, it is the *number of a man;* for there is no article in the original.

Or, by the *number of a man*, may be underſtood a number not having God but a man for its author, and not being approven of God, but invented of man, whatever there be pretended: thus there are in ſcripture phraſes, the wiſdom of a man, the law of a man, the will of a man, in oppoſition to the wiſdom, will, and law of God, &c. Thus the reaſon runneth, let ſpiritual wiſe men conſider her and reckon well, for it will be found that this beaſt's number or doctrine is not of God, but of man, whatever be pretended, even as that ſtatute, Dan. iii. might be called the image of a man or of the king; not becauſe it repreſented him, but becauſe it was inſtituted by him. Neither of theſe will be diſagreeable to the ſcope and truth.

4. The particular inſtance added, is, 666. We take this to ſignify ſome indefinite number, that is, 1. Great: and ſo the errors and blaſphemies of Antichriſt, that he preſſeth on his followers, are not of ſome few points, but of very many. 2. That they are ſubtilly compacted together, and have a dependence on each other, as that number 666 is. 3. That altho' they be compact and ſubtilly interwoven, yet they may be ſearched out. It is not impoſſible alſo that there might be ſome proverbial ſpeech in that number, ſetting out a great number; ſure it is ordinary in writers to ſay, *ſix hundred more*, when their meaning is many more: and hence ſome have entitled their books De ſexcentis erroribus pontificiis. However this number cannot be the particular number which is to be underſtood as the reſult of the reckoning; for then there needed no more counting, but it is a general inſtance for confirming the former reaſon; it is ſuch a number as 666 is, i. e. attainable by men's induſtry: for, this number 666 is not to be gathered out of one word, but all concerning Antichriſt is to be put together, which in its ſum and reſult will amount to this great ſum.

Secondly, The general conſiderations are, 1. The ſcope of this, is, by the reckoning of the number to come to the knowledge of the perſon, power, ſtate or beaſt underſtood. Therefore the phraſe is altered in this verſe from the former: there it was the number of his name; here it is the number of the beaſt, becauſe this being rightly counted and ſummed, it will be as eaſy to know who this beaſt is as if we had his name in particular: it muſt be ſomething more than that which differenceth him from others.

2. Yet the whole ſtreſs of finding him out lieth not on his name, but on his name ſubjoined to all the former characters, yea, as a ſum it muſt be drawn out of them as a reſult from them put together.

3. It would ſeem, that as the mark, or character and name, doth not point literally at one particular mark or name; ſo neither doth the number to a literal way of numbering, or any definite certain number: for this name is in the whore's forehead, chap. xvii. 5. which, as in the former verſe, cannot properly be underſtood; hence theſe phraſes, number of his name, verſe

17. *Number of the beaſt*, ver. 18. *the mark of his name*, chap. xiv. 11. *a victory over the beaſt* and the *number of his name*, chap. xv. 2. which are put indifferently, do import ſuch a name as doth not ſo much conſiſt in letters, as things and doctrines.

4. We will ſee theſe phraſes put indifferently for one another, as *the number of the beaſt* and *the number of his name*. 2. The *mark of the beaſt*, ver. 17. and the *mark of his name*, chap. xiv. ver. 11. whereby apparently is holden forth, that as the beaſt and his name are of one nature, ſo alſo are the *mark* and *number* of the beaſt and of his name: and therefore, what we find the one to be, the other muſt be of that nature, although there may be different degrees; and ſeeing the mark is ſomething indigitating the intereſt of the beaſt in ſuch a perſon who hath it, the number muſt be ſo alſo: for we conceive the number of his name, or mark of his name, is all one upon the matter, but is called the number of his name, to ſhew the numerouſneſs of his errors; the mark of it again, to ſhew the nature of them, which is to make ſome impreſſion on them like him, as a ſeal leaveth its likeneſs in the wax.

5. Whether this number doth point at the beaſt, viz. the Roman empire as taken complexly, or as conſidered under this ſeventh head, by the former types, it pointeth at one thing, and demonſtrateth the ſame power as is ſure; yet, comparing it with the former verſe, and the ſcope, which is to deſcribe Antichriſt, it agreeth more properly to the ſeventh head, as ſuch a number which relateth to him; for, the mark is his, and ſo muſt the name and its number (as all the former deſcriptions do) belong to him alſo.

To come nearer, let us conſider ſhortly what is the mark and name, and ſo the number of the beaſt: it is certainly ſomething not literally to be underſtood, but what maketh men in a ſpecial way to paſs for this beaſt's followers, viz. Antichriſt's, and to be accounted his; for, it is he that maketh them all receive this mark.

This mark ſeemeth to be a peculiar thing agreeing eſpecially to clergy orders, and theſe who, by oath, are engaged to him, which is the moſt intimate ſibneſs between him and any poſſible, (for, it is oppoſite to the mark and ſeal of our Lord Jeſus, whereby he ſetteth apart ſome for himſelf, and having ſuch a wo peculiarly threatened againſt it, chap. xiv. 9. and 11. and ſeeing it ſuppoſeth them to be ſpecially employed for him as ſoldiers under his colours, it may well agree to them, though not only.) It may be the receiving and believing of theſe trumperies, that he, (that is, that beaſt) propoſeth; not only having an outward profeſſion of them, but an inward affection to them, delighting in and reſting on that Antichriſtian worſhip in its complex form and mould. Therefore it is called, chap. xiv. 11. the mark of his name; that is, ſuch a receiving of the name as hath an impreſſion within, and likeneſs to him.

2. By his name may be underſtood his doctrine and the public acknowledgment of it, even as by the name of God and Chriſt is underſtood the truth of the goſpel, becauſe in theſe, and by theſe, he maketh himſelf known; and to make his name known, is to preach his doctrine and truth: and, as the one hundred forty and four thouſand, their having his name in their foreheads, ſuppoſeth no viſible character there, but a diſtinction in their way from others, and a conformity to God in their walk, that, who looketh on them, and will try their way, it will be found they belong to God, and profeſs his truth; even ſo by the oppoſition, we may gather that this name of the beaſt is his doctrine, as oppoſite unto Chriſt's, whereby he is to be known and diſcerned as by a name: by his doctrine, men may be fully perſuaded of him, that it is he; and the taking on his name, is the taking on the public profeſſion of all theſe, and paſſing in this beaſt's reckoning, as one of his, and ſo to be eſteemed of by all others. In a word, it is a public avowing of the Antichriſtian doctrine, and partaking of the name of blaſphemy which is on him.

3. By the *number of his name*, muſt be underſtood ſomething conform to that which is the name, which, being put together, maketh it up as a ſum drawn out of a particular reckoning; or, as letters and ſyllables make up a word; thus the number is in particular doctrines or errors, like ſo many diſtinct letters; the name is like a word made up of theſe put together. This we take to be his characteriſtical tenets and doctrines laid together, that will amount to evidence and prove ſo much as this, that whoſoever maintain ſuch doctrines, is the Antichriſt, and beaſt here mentioned; But this reckoneth *wiſdom*, the Pope and Papiſts maintain ſuch doctrines. *Ergo*, &c. And by this

means, as by ſo many characters or letters, we come particularly to known him, who is here obſcurely deſcribed: and therefore it is called *the number of the beaſt*, as well as of *his name*, becauſe it is as well to find out the beaſt, as to find out his name. This name being rather to deſcribe his nature, and find out this party, than curiouſly to inſiſt on a name, even as he is called, chapter ix. ver. 11. *Apollyon* and *Abaddon*, in reſpect of his nature and properties of tyranny vented by him. This being the Spirit's way, to deſcribe him by his nature, rather than by letters; and ſo is the whore, chap. xvii. ſtyled by a name, ſignifying her nature, and gathered from her practice. In ſhort, the thing we conceive intended here, is, 1. To propoſe the ſpecial and peculiar doctrines and tenets that agree to Antichriſt, without which, he will not acknowledge any for his. 2. By wiſdom, to ſee where theſe are owned, and by whom, and ſo to come to apprehend that party as ſurely to be Antichriſt, as if by name it were recorded.

If it be doubted, what are the characteriſtical doctrines or errors that ſerve to point out Antichriſt? *Anſw.* 1. They muſt not only be different from the truth of Chriſt, but in a ſtrain and ſeries deſtructive to his truth and inconſiſtent with the nature of his mediation, the end of his humiliation and ſuffering, and offices of king, prieſt and prophet. 2. They muſt be ſuch as have ſome pretence to Chriſt, and do wrong him under a ſhew of reverence given to him, and ſo differ from the former heads. 3. They muſt differ from the tenets of other heretics, not in groſſneſs ſo much, as in nature; for all are not *the Antichriſt*, tho' they may be Antichriſts. Theſe particular differencing characters, we conceive, are fully ſet out in the former part of the chapter, and he is to have not ſome, but all, (tho' it may be, every perſon have not all) yet may they in general be inſtanced in ſome few heads, as moſt peculiarly agreeing to him, and differencing him from others, as to conſider the errors, not as in one perſon, but as in a body, or monarchic kingdom, in reſpect, 1. Of the complexneſs of his aſſumed power and authority, and his bringing all things to a dependence on that, and drawing in all under that head: not as an *haereſiarcha*, (as other heretics do make followers) but by pleading for a ſettled power and continuance of it, and for a worſhip due to him for his authority: and, upon this account, this aſſuming of power to himſelf *above all that is called God*, and making all to worſhip him, and driving that as the main thing, with no leſs neceſſity to acknowledge him Chriſt's general abſolute vicar, than to acknowledge Chriſt himſelf. This, both in this chap. and chap. ix. as alſo, 2 Theſſ. ii. ſeemeth to be proper to the Antichriſt. I call this a ſpecial part or number of his name, becauſe, without this, none are admitted to be accounted his: hence ſome may be groſs in many of his ſuperſtitions and idolatries (as many Greeks) yet, by their ſchiſm of diſowning him 700 years ſince, they are not under his number. Again many Dominicans, and others, will maintain many orthodox points of doctrine; yet, ſo long as the Pope's crown is not ſtricken at, his acknowledgment of them will not be denied. A ſecond is, his changing all religion in doctrine and worſhip to another mould, different from the ſimplicity Chriſt left it in, a putting it in a more external, glorious and pompous ſtate, more heathen-like; that is called the making the image of the firſt beaſt, in part, and the Gentiles treading under foot the holy city, chap. ix. 2. 3. His doing all this by an uſurped power, and illimited authority, multiplying traditions, ceremonies, and changing worſhip at his pleaſure; which ſign of proud ſelf-exalting, and walking by that principle, ſeemeth very peculiar to him, as the ſtrain of this chap. and 2 Theſſ. ii. ſheweth. From theſe premiſes, it may be ſolidly reckoned who is Antichriſt, and to whom this name belongeth, thus.

That ſucceſſion of perſons, or that party, power, or ſtate, in the world, which ſucceedeth the Roman heathen emperors in their ſeat at Rome, having no warrant for their authority from God, but from the devil, who came in piece and piece after idolatry was cruſhed, to reſtore another ſort of idolatry in the place of it, and by whom the wound idolatrous Rome got, was healed, after whom all the world wondered, and whom they univerſally worſhipped, willingly giving to him more than human reverence, who boaſteth of great power, beyond any other in the world, and with liberty encroacheth upon God's prerogatives, and wrongeth his ſaints to his diſhonour, whoſe riſe beginneth at the church fleeing to the wilderneſs, and continueth till the witneſſes be killed, growing 1260 years, who maketh war for a long time againſt the ſaints, and overcometh and perſecuteth the godly that acknowledge him not; and he, who in doing all this, bringeth it about under pretext of a title to Chriſt, verſe 11.

deluding the world by falſe miracles for gaining his point, and, by ſentences and excommunications, preſſeth all the world to be in dependence on him, and ſo forth, as may be gathered from the former parts of the chapter. He, I ſay, to whom all theſe agree, he is that Antichriſt; for, this is a ſure reckoning, *Cui competit definitio, ei competit definitum.* But ſpiritual wiſdom will find all excellently well to agree to the Pope in his power, riſe of its exerciſe of it, continuance of it, means by which he came by it, and cloak under which he hid himſelf in coming to it, and in exerciſing of it: and therefore he is by this reckoning the Antichriſt.

There are two other ways of reckoning beſide this, more common to divines: the one whereof, is, from the letters of a name (which in Greek and Hebrew are numerals) to gather a name, including this number 666 in it. Some others reckon it to a ſet year after John's writing the Apocalypſe, as Daniel deſcribeth Chriſt's coming by ſo many years or weeks before he came: ſo here, they make John to deſcribe the time of Antichriſt's coming before he came. Of theſe two ways which are followed by learned men, we ſhall ſpeak a word afterward. It is conſiderable however we reckon it, that it ſtill tryſteth in one perſon or ſtate, viz. the Pope: yet we think the former way we ſettled on ſafeſt. 1. As beſt agreeing to the ſcope, this being ſubjoined at the back of ſuch a particular deſcription of Antichriſt: now reckon, ſaith he, it is not impoſſible to find it out. And, 2. It is likeſt true ſpiritual diſcerning wiſdom to gather from doctrines, rather than from letters, divinity is more in theſe, than in the other. 3. It is moſt ſafe and convincing: for, one, this way, may fix on the Antichriſt, and by no numeral name can he without this; and be his name what it will, if the thing be found, it evidenceth the thief, who is to be apprehended as guilty; and the ſucceſſion of this power to the ſixth head of the wounded beaſt, and his getting the dragon's ſeat, doth more clearly point at the ſtate civil he belongeth unto, than any name, ſuch as *laetinos* can convincingly do: beſide *laetinos* will agree to Heathen Rome or Chriſtians, as well as Antichriſtian, and ſo can be no differencing name: and the words may be taken thus, now ye have gotten ſome: yea many general characters of the Antichriſt; any that hath wiſdom, lay them together, and ſee whom ye will find him to be, as the Lord, Dan. v. 26. numbered Belſhazzer, and found him light; not from the letters of his name, but from his practices. 4. This way of reckoning, agreeth better with the oppoſition that is made to the elect, chap. xiv. who have their Father's name in their foreheads, which is certainly ſome public profeſſion or evidence of their adhering to him, being free from the pollutions of Antichriſt. And therefore, on the contrary, this of Antichriſt's number, muſt be ſome decypher. ing of him in reference to his doctrine, without which none are accounted his: eſpecially, conſi. dering verſe 2. chap. xv. it is ſomething the elect getteth a victory over. Therefore it muſt be ſome polluting thing, which no national name is. Alſo this as the mark is upon them that worſhip him, rather than upon himſelf; yea, it is upon them all, (for, they muſt bear the name, or its number, ver. 17.) and it is ſuch a thing, as by birth they have not, yet by devoting themſelves to him, may be attained; and ſuch a thing, as the having thereof, freeth them of his cenſures, and giving them liberty to his market, as the want thereof doth make them obnoxious to his cenſures, as is clear, verſe 17. And it muſt be ſome ſuch thing as conſtituteth them Antichriſtian, and ſo conſequently in him muſt be ſuch a thing as conſtituteth him Antichriſt: or, contrarily, the name and number in him, is ſomewhat eſſential holding him out to be Antichriſt (as our Lord's eſſential attributes are comprehended under his name, and underſtood by it) therefore, that name, or number, in them, muſt be ſuch as conſtitutes them of that eſſence and body with him; for, it is derived from him to them, as the name of a parent is to the child; or, of the huſband to the wife; and by that which is derived, they become not only to be called his, but indeed to be his: it muſt therefore be ſuch a thing as deriveth with it his pollution and corruption to them that receive it, and which doth really difference and characterize his followers, chap. xv. 2. from the followers of the Lamb, and doth make them obnoxious to God's judgment as guilty. All which do evidence, that by this name and number of the beaſt, muſt be underſtood the things, doctrines or practices of Antichriſtianity, and not any numeral name perſonal or national.

Irenæus (much commended for the firſt reckoner of this number) after he hath touched ſome parti-

cular names, especially that of *Lateinos*, which he accounteth most probable, he maketh a twofold general allusion in this number 666, without astricting it to a definite number: The first is, by comparing the coming of the flood under Noah, which was in the 600 year of his age, with that image, Dan. iii. sixty cubits high and six broad: the 600 (saith he) pointeth out defection at a height, as that of the image pointeth out idolatry in the highest degree. The second way he applieth it, is by applying the first six to the defection of the first age of the world, the second to the second age, the third to the last age; and so to him these three, put together do hold forth the apostasy, defection and idolatry in the greatest height, as if all trysted together, page 248, and 249, which saith, the reckoning of this number by a general allusion, is no less ancient than by a particular definite number of a particular name.

There is one thing yet to be cleared, without it all that is said seemeth to be manct, that is, what is the rise of mentioning this particular number 666, seeing that which is said could be clear without this? Or, what use can there be in this particular number in reference to the exposition given?

For clearing this, that it may be applied as having reference to the former general grounds, we may then consider this number 566 for application, 1. As a definite number for an indefinite, as the Lamb's nature of 144000, is, whereby is holden forth a great number, yet compactly joined and united together. Thus the meaning is, his number is 666, that is, the characters that he putteth on them that he counteth his, or the doctrines he will have them to profess, are not some few errors, as may be in some other heretics, nor some steps wrong here and there, but all that he counteth his (whereby he may be known) must take such a considerable number, and compact body of errors at least, and profess them; which errors are in a certain method all casten together, and linked through other with an orderly-like dependence one upon another, as that number 666 is; so as one thing being granted, many others will follow; and their fundamental grounds are like the 600 that include the 60. and 6. under them, that is, grant once the Pope to be the last judge of controversies, traditions unwritten to be necessary, and the scripture to be imperfect, the Pope to have supreme power, &c. and what world of consequences depend on these? Neither shall we for the time curiously enquire for more particular reasons of this number, but shall acquiesce in, and content ourselves with this general scope. We know learned men have profitably taken much pains in comparing this number, which is made up of multiplying sixes with that of 144000, chap. xiv. which is made up of multiplying twelves, yet considering the 144000, chap. xiv. is of the followers of the Lamb, and cannot be called the number of his name, and that this here must be understood of Antichrist's impression upon each one of his kingdom, we cannot see how they quadrat; and considering that there is very much subtilty in it, and that the other general way is more plain, and yet as sure, we conceive it needless to insist on it, leaving liberty to any to follow it, or any other way whereby they may be edified.

For further confirming this general application, take these considerations, 1. That this number 666 is something which he putteth on his followers, and is rather that by which they are known, than by which he is known, except as he putteth it on them. This is clear from verse 17. He causeth all men to receive this number as well as his mark: and therefore as we seek the mark and name rather among his followers than on himself (even as we do the Father's name on the forehead of his followers) so must we do this number, as it were the least or easiest terms on which he will bargain for one to be privileged as one of his. 2. Consider that it is called his number, not because his own name giveth the account of it in a sum by its letters, but the beast's number is his, as before, the beast's mark, because he setteth it on; or, the image of the beast was his because he made it, and was the author of it as was cleared: so it is his number, 1. Because particularly he condescendeth upon it, and will needs have such a number for his number, else he will not bargain; as it were, like the apostles word, 1 Tim. v. 9. *Let none be received into the number under sixty years*, as if one would count sixty the apostles number in this respect, because he will have none admitted under it. 2. It is his number, as having him for its author, and no other, as opposite to God's appointment. 3. Consider that the scope and way of reckoning here seemeth, first, to propose this number 666. (whatever it be which is intended by it) and

then from it, to conclude and gather who is this beaſt: the name is drawn from the number, and by it, as it were, by his name we may come to know him, and the number is not drawn from the name: that ſuppoſeth we muſt firſt lay down the name, and then reckon from it; this holdeth out a reckoning from the number, to find out the beaſt, as by that which may be ſooneſt known to take up that which is more difficult: the other way ſuppoſeth folks firſt to know the name, and out of it to draw the number; but the ſcope is, to lead us to find out the name, by putting ſuch numbers together. 4. Compare this with Rev. xvii. 5. and 9. there is the name of the great whore, MYSTERY, BABYLON, which is called her name, becauſe her nature, and the nature of the doctrines maintained by her, were ſuch as held her for to be another Babylon; and ſo here the name and number of it muſt be ſomething ſuitable to Antichriſt's nature. Again, verſe 9. *here is wiſdom*, which is a pauſe putting on to conſider what followeth, as in dependence on what went before; therefore muſt be ſomething made up of both; and, if this were to be reckoned numerically by a literal name, what would that which proceedeth contribute to this? Or, where were the wiſdom of comparing theſe together? Beſide, we will not find in ſcripture any ſuch reckoning laid upon letters or figures, although it be ordinary to reckon that a name, which deſcribeth the nature and the eſſential properties of the perſon or party to whom they agree. Therefore, upon theſe grounds, we adhere to the former expoſition as moſt ſafe.

If any ſhould aſk, why we are bidden rather to reckon his number, than his mark, or name? *Anſ.* 1. Becauſe his number is more univerſal: all that hath his mark and name, have his number; but all that have his number, have not his mark and name; and becauſe, by ſearching this, we come to know his name; this is the right order of ſearching: yet if any think meeter to reckon from a name; ſuppoſe *Lateinos* in Greek, which, almoſt ſince John's days, hath been followed, as appeareth by Irenaeus, who was a hearer of Polycarp, diſciple of John, vid. lib. 5. *adverſus haereſ.* cap. 30. page 250. *edit. Eraſ. Sed et Lateinos nomen, habet* 666. *numerum et valde veriſimile eſt quoniam noviſſimum regnum hoc habet vocabulum, Latini enim ſunt qui nunc regnant, ſed non in hoc nos gloriabimur;* that is, the name Lateinos, hath the number of ſix hundred ſixty-ſix; and, it is very like; for the laſt kingdom hath that name; for they are Latins who now reign; but we ſhall not glory in this. Yet, the wiſdom of God hath ordered it ſo, that the ſum or reſult of both reckonings turn to one, and pointeth at the ſame Antichriſt hinted before; for both the forenamed words completely exhibit that number 666, and point out the ſame party where the doctrines reſted before. Neither will this deſtroy, but confirm our former expoſitions; for this name is brought but as an accumulative argument and evidence of the Antichriſt. Thus, he that hath all the characters of Antichriſt's doctrine, and hath a name, which, in the numeral letters, make up 666, he is Antichriſt: but, to the Pope, both theſe do agree: only, as is formerly hinted, there is this odds; the name will not prove Antichriſt without the other marks, (for it may agree to many) and the other marks will prove him without the name: for they can agree to no other, and are proper to him *quarto modo.*

Beſides the former concluſion that this reckoning yieldeth, viz. that, by this beaſt, is clearly pointed out the Pope; for out of this chapter may be reckoned a propoſition, that whoever ſtands marked with theſe properties, is the Antichriſt; but the ſtory and knowledge of the papacy yieldeth the aſſumption, that is to the Pope, to whom all theſe will agree. *Ergo, &c.* Beſides this, I ſay, theſe other concluſions may be drawn, 1. That the conceit of a Danitiſh Antichriſt, invented by Papiſts, to vindicate their Pope, is fooliſh and vain. 2. That Mahomet is not the beaſt intended here. 3. That Antichriſt is no open profeſſed enemy, but a falſe counterfeit pretended friend. 4. That he is already come; and ſo muſt be the Pope.

1. To ſhew the vanity of that fond Antichriſt, which they ſay ſhall be a Jew, one ſingle perſon, of the tribe of Dan, from theſe two ſcriptures, Gen. xlix. verſe 17. and Jer. viii. verſe 16. exceedingly abuſed, which yet Bellar. dare not lay weight on; and that he ſhall come three years and an half before the end of the world, ſubdue all the world, making himſelf a monarch of it, ſit in Jeruſalem, be acknowledged by the Jews, as their Meſſias, build that temple, do ſomething miraculous, giving life as to an image, making fire come down from heaven, &c. and be deſtroyed by Chriſt's ſecond coming, after he hath killed Enoch and Elias, whom they call the witneſſes, chap. xi. We op-

poſe to that conceit theſe truths in this chapter, 1. The time of Antichriſt's riſe is immediately after the ſixth head of the Roman beaſt is wounded, viz. when heathen emperors are put from their throne: *Ergo*, it is long before the end of the world. 2. The ſeat that Antichriſt hath to ſit on is the ſeat of the dragon, viz. that ſeat where the devil, by Roman emperors, ſat and perſecuted the church before; but that is not Jeruſalem, but Rome. *Ergo*, &c. That therefore is a truth of Chryſoſtom's, that he ſitteth in the temple of God; that is, not at Jeruſalem, but in the church, pretending to have a prime place in it. 3. He is not one ſingle perſon, he is the ſeventh head of this beaſt; yea, he is a beaſt; but by none of the former heads of the Roman governors can be underſtood any ſingle perſon, but a ſeries of governors in one ſtate; likewiſe by beaſts are underſtood a ſeries, and not one ſingle perſon, Dan. vii. *Ergo*. Antichriſt is no ſingle perſon. 4. His continuance is longer than forty and two months literally taken: which may be thus made out: 1. If his riſe to his height be ſo ſlow, and by ſo many degrees, till he be up, and if his ſtanding be ſo long, as to bring and hold all the world under (and that by a ſort of willing ſubjection) to fight with the ſaints, and overcome them, and other ſuch things as cannot be done in ſuch ſpace; if alſo his decay and ruin be by a long tract of judgments as is under the vials; then he muſt be of larger ſtanding than forty and two months; but the former is true. *Ergo*, &c. 2. It is clear from this, that it beginneth ſo ſoon as the church's fleeing, which is about anno 300, and continueth till the vials come, which comprehend the time of the ſix trumpets, which certainly are more than forty and two months: for the vials do bring the firſt judgments on him. 3. If his time had been no longer than forty and two months, it had been no great argument for Paul, 2 Theſſ. ii. to prove that the day of judgment was not near, if forty and two months had been the longeſt time of his reign; for that was Paul's argument, the man of ſin is not revealed; therefore it is not at hand; for that could only have proved it was not within three years and an half. 5. He is to be diſcovered before the end: for, the firſt vail cometh on them that have his mark; and chap. xiv. they are threatned by public preaching with judgment before it come.

2. For Mahomet, this cleareth him alſo not to be that *Antichriſtos*, 1. This Antichriſt hath horns like the Lamb, ſitteth in the temple of God, looketh like Chriſt; but ſo is not Mahomet, who was never a Chriſtian. 2. This Antichriſt ſitteth at Rome, and, by a new ſort of idolatry, healeth the wound the ſixth head had gotten, i. e. by worſhipping idols, images, &c. But Mahomet abhorreth that, and pretendeth to worſhip one God only. 3. This Antichriſt doth great ſigns and wonders, but Mahomet claimeth to none, and pretendeth no ſigns, but to cover that, ſaith, that Chriſt was ſent with ſigns, and he with a ſword. 4. This Antichriſt carrieth on, and driveth all his deſigns, under a reſemblance of making uſe of Chriſt's power (as having horns like the lamb) and, by a pretext of, and claim unto, a vicarſhip, and deputation from him, ſo doth not Mahomet.

3. Hence alſo we may conclude, that Antichriſt is no open oppoſer or denier of Chriſt to be Chriſt, or one that calleth himſelf Chriſt, but an intruder of himſelf in what is Chriſt's due, to his prejudice: for, 1. He hath horns like the lamb, which importeth a counterfeiting of him. He hath miracles, which certainly are in imitation of the apoſtles, who did them in the name of Chriſt. 3. He deceiveth the world, which cannot be done by a direct denying of Chriſt to be Chriſt, or the Meſſiah, in a word, eſpecially if his ſtanding be for three years and an half only. 4. He is called the falſe prophet, which implieth him not to have counterfeited himſelf to be Chriſt, but to have commiſſion from him, which he hath not. Beſide, if Antichriſt's doctrine and profeſſion were ſo direct and groſs, there needed not ſo many marks, to know him, nor wiſdom to ſearch him out, it could not but be palpable to all, who were *the* Antichriſt. Again, many, in all ages, oppoſed Chriſt's perſon and natures, and were, indeed, Antichriſts in a general notion, as John ſaith in his epiſtles; yet were not *the Antichriſt*: yea, ſome have called themſelves Chriſt, yet were not the Antichriſt. It can be therefore no differencing mark which agreeth to more. Beſides, his apoſtaſy being a myſtery, and then working, it is not like to be ſo palpable.

2. We conclude, that Antichriſt is come, and not to come, ſeeing the ſixth head is wounded, the woman hath fled, and her children taken up to heaven: which was after her freedom from heathen perſecution. Beſide, either the church hath been this long time put under the dragon, or flood,

or this Antichriſt; but not under the former two. Therefore this time paſt hath been Antichriſtian, ſeeing there is no interval between theſe conditions of the church. Again, if all theſe characters be fulfilled, then Antichriſt muſt be already come; but the former is truth, as hath been ſeen in the expoſition. *Ergo, &c.*

5. It remaineth therefore, as was formerly concluded, that the Pope is the very Antichriſt, and the Papacy the very Antichriſtian kingdom here deſcribed. Of theſe concluſions more may be ſeen, chap. xvii.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *And I looked, and lo, a Lamb ſtood on the mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty and four thouſand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.*

2. *And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers, harping with their harps:*

3. *And they ſung, as it were, a new ſong before the throne, and before the four beaſts, and the elders, and no man could learn that ſong, but the hundred and forty and four thouſand, which were redeemed from the earth.*

4. *Theſe are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins: theſe are they which follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth: theſe were redeemed from among men, being the firſt fruits unto God, and to the Lamb.*

5. *And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.*

THE former chapter deſcribed Antichriſt's riſe and height. This chapter ſetteth forth, in a little view, his ruin, and the church's recovery from his tyranny, which is ſubjoined, partly for clearing the church's condition during that tyranny, which is from the beginning to ver. 6. partly to ſhew her firſt ſtrugglings and conteſts with him, whereby he is diſcovered, and the oppoſition by word tabled to ver. 13. or 14. partly to give a little view of carrying on this begun conteſt till Antichriſt be ruined, unto the end of the chapter, under two types of an harveſt and vintage, which are to be accompliſhed. So the chapter hath theſe three parts: the firſt ſetting out the church's eſtate in a defending or defenſive poſture, relating to her low condition paſt, and clearing that poſture which ſhe was in when Antichriſt was high. The other two do point her out in a fighting poſture: 1. By words. 2. By deeds. This is more fully ſet out under the vials, and is inſert here to comfort God's people againſt that ſtorm of Antichriſt which was then to come.

For clearing of the expoſition and application of this firſt part, we conceive, it relateth unto the church, before Antichriſt's ruin be ſenſibly begun, or, at leaſt, be any way carried on: for, 1. The number here are the ſame with chap. vii. 144000, which number is ſealed for the time of Antichriſt's trial; and after that trial is paſt, an innumerable number doth appear, ver. 9. of that chapter. This firſt part belongeth then to that ſtate of the church, while it conſiſteth of that ſealed number, chap. vii. ver. 9. The two laſt parts of this chapter do belong to that of chap. vii. which followeth from ver. 9. to the end. 2. This is further clear here by what followeth, ver. 6. &c. The goſpel is then, after Antichriſt's diſcovery, ſent abroad through the world, to increaſe the number of the Lamb's followers: but this followeth and beginneth the ſecond part of the chapter, ver. 6. Therefore this firſt part muſt precede that time of the preaching of the goſpel, whereby the church is enlarged.

2. Although, ſome way, this doth repreſent the church in her night and wilderneſs condition, yet we think it eſpecially relateth to her condition immediately before the day break, and to that which is next the morning: for, 1. She is now viſible; the profeſſors ſtand on mount Zion; they have their Father's name now viſible in their profeſſion, which chap. vii. when they were firſt ſealed, was not

diſcernible, now it kytheth. 2. The whole ſealed number is now complete, and the one hundred forty and four thouſand are together, and they have ſongs; yea, a new ſong, which importeth a great part of their ſtrait to be over: now ſhe appeareth to be what ſhe was before, tho' lurking and unſeen: and this probably may relate to the appearing of the Waldenſes and Bohemians, who belonged indeed to the ſuffering ſtate of the church before Antichriſt's Months expired; yet, immediately before the goſpel's ſpreading, and reformation's growth, they appeared with more public profeſſing and owning of the truth, (as it were again in their foreheads) than had been many years before, upon which followed a further ſpreading and growth of the light of the goſpel.

This church is deſcribed three ways by John, *1ſt*, As taken up by his ſight, verſe 1. *2dly*, By his ear or hearing, by what he heard, as well as by what he ſaw, verſe 2, 3. *3dly*, By reaſon, in deſcribing the properties and qualifications of theſe he had ſo diſcovered, he more fully holdeth forth what they were, verſe 4, 5.

I looked, ſaith John, *and lo*. This is a preface, to difference this part of the viſion from the former, and to ſhew ſome conſiderableneſs in the things that were repreſented to him; and it containeth the ſtate of the church then, in theſe four, 1. They are deſcribed by their head, *I looked, and lo, a Lamb ſtood*, &c. By this *Lamb*, no queſtion, is underſtood Chriſt, tho' the article be not prefixed: for, the word, *his Father*, pointeth this *Lamb* to be the Son. Our Lord is called a *Lamb*, partly, for his meekneſs in bearing ſo long with his enemies, partly, to diſtinguiſh him from, and oppoſe him to the two horned beaſt, chap. xiii. 11. that appeared like him. Would John ſay, I ſaw after this the true Lamb, who is indeed the Lamb, as if for a time he had not been diſcernible. And he is ſaid to be *on mount Zion*, to expreſs his care of his church, even then when the former beaſt took all on him in Chriſt's name: yet this *Lamb* had not laid it by, nor committed it to him, but retained ſtill his watchful overſight of his church, tho' for his own good reaſons he delayed the inflicting of vengeance on her enemies: in theſe reſpects, he is ſaid to be *ſtanding*, to expreſs both his watchfulneſs and tenderneſs, Micah v. 4. Acts vii. 34. This ſheweth, the church was not ſlighted by Chriſt, even under Antichriſt: he is there, and ſtanding there; as *ſitting* doth expreſs his dominion, this doth his care.

2. The ſtate of theſe believers is ſet down in reſpect of the place where they appear; it is on *mount Zion*, where our Lord ſtands, and they with him: by this is meant the church, whereof *mount Zion* was a type, Pſal. xlviii. and Pſal. cxxv. for ſtrength, beauty, and the fixing of the worſhip of God: their thus appearing on *mount Zion*, is in oppoſition to their being hid in the temple, chap. xi. 1. They are now, as it were, drawing out; and Chriſt's appearing here, is his appearing by ſome viſible ordinances and worſhip amongſt them: in a word, ſaith he, my eyes was taken off the enemies of the church, to behold her; and I ſaw that Chriſt wanted not a church, neither was the church deſtitute of his care, but both are repreſented here, though, for a long time, both were little ſeen.

3. They are ſet out in their number, viz. 144000, relating to that, chap. vii. *Firſt*, To ſhew, they were juſt ſo many as were ſealed, and none of theſe were wanting, the effect had holden good on them all; and their ſealing was not for nought. *Secondly*, To ſhew, that the number kept clean after a ſtrait, and that diſcerned of God for that end, will be alike. *Thirdly*, To ſhew, that that time is at a cloſe now: for, the 144000, which were brought in ſucceſſively, are now completed: in all which God's faithfulneſs doth kythe.

4. They have *his Father's name written in their foreheads;* that is, a profeſſion of God's truth, as a ſeal bearing out to whom they belonged, they thinking now no ſhame of owning him. In a word, I ſaw that number bearing out his mark and burn-iron on them, looking otherwiſe than all the reſt of the world, that had a different name upon them: by which they are certainly oppoſed to theſe mentioned, chap. xiii. 17, 18. Or, more plainly, this number, in this poſture waiting on the Lamb, is certainly oppoſed to the number that followed the counterfeiting beaſt, and received his name; Chriſt to Antichriſt, his followers to his worſhippers. The name alſo is oppoſed, whereby it appeareth there is ſome light to be gotten in clearing the one, for clearing the other. *Secondly*, This ſtate of the church is ſet out by what John heard: as the firſt, By his looking and ſeeing, ſetteth them out in their appearance and profeſſion; ſo, 2. This of hearing, ſetteth them out in their practice. The third ſetteth them out, as they were

indeed before God real converts, elected, redeemed, called, juſtified and ſanctified.

This practice that he heard, is in general, ſinging and praiſing, partly following the alluſion uſed in the dramatic form of this book, by interludes of ſinging, &c. partly to ſhew the heartſomeneſs and real mirth of Chriſt's followers, ſinging and glorifying him in the fires, Iſa. xxiv. 15. Partly to point out the chearful effect and bleſſed change that was now coming, and at hand.

This ſinging and practice of theirs, is more particularly ſet forth in theſe five, 1. The place from whence, from heaven, that is, the church, as chap. iv. and v. Or, it may be to ſet out the joy in heaven, at the church appearing again on mount Sion. However, theſe 144000 learned this ſong, and joined in it; poſſibly it is both, as in chap. v. 2. In its manner, it is a voice like waters, thunders and harpings. Waters make a great noiſe, ſee Rev. i. 15. Ezek. i. This ſheweth, the loudneſs of their cry, it was now heard, Rev. xix. 6. Thunderings, ſhew a vehemency and terribleneſs in the ſound, or powerfulneſs, as Pſal. xxix. That ſheweth, good-will in their crying. Harpings, ſhew cheerfulneſs in the fingers, and harmony in what was played or ſung: all three put together, they ſhew a ſound in the church, which had the word of God both loud, powerful and comfortable, and that theſe profeſſors were not dumb and ſilent, nor jaring, but now they are both ſeen and heard, and it is pleaſant both to ſee and hear them.

Thirdly, In verſe 3. they are ſet out by the matter of their ſong, it is a new ſong: now looking not to Chriſt to come, but as come, ſo differing from the old ſong of the fathers, ſee chap. v. *New* alſo, in reſpect of a new reaſon and matter, by a new mercy, Pſal. xl. 3. And ſo this may be new, as looking to Chriſt's care of them in their, almoſt now, bypaſt ſtrait, ſo different from that, chap. v. which for opening the ſeals was ſung. 4. This ſong is *before the throne, elders and beaſts*, that is, publicly, as theſe repreſent a public church-ſtate, as chap. iv. Now it is in the congregation, *or before the throne, &c.* that is, they made good muſic before God, and in the approbation of his people, tho' the world underſtood it not, and thought nothing of it. So theſe are looked on as contradiſtinguiſhed from the world. They had the glad tidings of the goſpel that made them merry, but the world was uncapable of that joy. 5. This ſong is deſcribed by this, *That none in all the world that heard it, could take it up*, or join in it, but theſe redeemed ones: whereby it appeareth to be yet a time of ignorance, when the goſpel was keeped up from the world; and alſo it holdeth forth, that it is a ſpecial privilege to underſtand the goſpel, and that naturally men are uncapable of it: in a word, it is this, the church that I ſaw was in this condition, that it was ſinging cheerfully and merrily; Antichriſt's perſecution could not mar nor take their joy from them; that was ſuch a ſong and mirth as was not carnal or natural, but ſpiritual, of a new nature; and therefore they ſing this ſong alone; none could ſing nor perceive, nor underſtand that which comforted them, or kindly bleſſed God for it, but ſuch as had ſome experience of it; they had it given them to learn this myſtery, which none other had: and, as prophetical, it ſaith, that though the church of Chriſt peeped out for a conſiderable time in the Waldenſes here and there, and that they ſuffered joyfully, which indeed they did, yet few were capable of that joy, and did join with them. One thing is to be cleared, whether by theſe ſingers be underſtood theſe ſealed ones, or others, diſtinct from them? *Anſw.* Whether we ſay the one, or the other, it will be one thing: for, if theſe firſt ſingers be diſtinct, yet theſe 144000 learn the ſong, and join both in the matter of it, and manner of ſinging: ſo in the uſe, it will be applicable to the church at that time. 2. Though it be underſtood of theſe 144000 yet may theſe phraſes of ſinging before the throne of God, and the elders, be well underſtood, either as their doing this publicly, as is ſaid; or, eſpecially, as acceptable to God, as by theſe in heaven: it may be alſo, that the angels and ſaints triumphant are brought in here ſinging, with whom the 144000 ſealed ones join and agree; yet the ſcope and connection with what followeth, will agree as well to underſtand it of the militant church; and that angel mentioned, verſe 6. called another, may be in reference to them and other miniſters, (for ſo theſe angels following ſeem to be underſtood) as well as to another angel properly. 3. They are deſcribed by their ſpecial privileges, properties or characters, in number five. The firſt is general and comprehenſive of all, as the ground and ſum of them all, viz. that they are the redeemed of the Lord. 1. They are redeemed from the earth, that is, not only bought by the

blood of Chriſt, and ſo in that bargain of redemption differenced from others; (which ſheweth, it is no little thing to make that difference) but alſo by effectual calling differenced from the prophane earthly multitude, and redeemed from their vain converſation to ſerve the Lord in holineſs, 1 Pet. i. 18.

The ſecond property is verſe 4. *They are not defiled with women, for they are virgins.* By *virgins* here are not underſtood ſuch as have keeped themſelves from all conjugal fellowſhip; for by theſe virgins are underſtood all the true church under Antichriſt; and will any ſay there were none redeemed amongſt all the married of that time? Beſide, it is ſuch a virginity as is oppoſite to defilement, (which marriage is not) yea, to defilement mentioned here. Neither, ſecondly, by defilement here, is underſtood bodily fornication, (for there may be many other luſts beſide) but ſpiritual fornication, viz. idolatry and ſuperſtition, and communicating with ſuch worſhip: which is clear, 1. From the oppoſition between defilement with women and virginity, as if there were no midſt or another luſt, which is only truth in ſpiritual whoredoms and virgin chaſtity in being keeped to Chriſt. 2. That which followeth, is, they follow the Lamb: it is ſuch a defilement then as is oppoſite to ſpiritual adhering to Chriſt. 3. The ſcope cleareth it, in that he is here deſcribing Chriſt's pure worſhippers; it keepeth the phraſes of this book, eſpecially theſe wherein Antichriſt and his worſhip is ſet down: he is called the whore, chapter xvii. and it, whoring, and committing fornication with her, ſee ver. 8. of this ſame chapter. Again, Chriſt is called a huſband, and faithful adhering to him is called chaſtity, 2 Cor. xi. 2, Faith engageth, as by a marriage knot and vow, to be peculiar to Chriſt: idolatry and ſuperſtitious worſhip ſinneth againſt that covenant, proſtituting men to ſome other thing in his room; and that is the reaſon of this alluſion, frequent in the Old Teſtament as in the New.

3. They follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth. This ſheweth, 1. An adhering to Chriſt on any terms, and in all trials, coſt what it may, they follow faithfully. 2. A painfulneſs in following through all duties, hazards, and poſſibly places, that if he go to the wilderneſs they will go with him, alluding to that Gen. ii. (in oppoſition to the former whoring) that a wife or married party ſhall forſake all and cleave to her huſband: ſo did theſe ſealed ones, conſtantly and ſolely adhere to Chriſt and follow him as their huſband. 3. It importeth, upon Chriſt's ſide, that he is tied to no place or particular church, as Rome, Conſtantinople or any other, but may transfer his ordinances and candleſtick where he pleaſeth (for, the Lamb's preſence here ſpoken of, is his preſence by ordinances and church-communion) elſewhere, where he thinketh good; ſo it importeth, upon the other ſide, the temper and inclination of theſe virgins, that they are addicted to one place particularly, bounding Chriſt or ſeeking him there, ſo that if he be not there, they will not go elſewhere to ſeek him, (as Antichriſt's fornicators, in oppoſition to theſe, may be gathered to do, who will not go out of Rome after him) nay, but they go with him and follow him, weighing his preſence not by places or external privileges, but by the evidences thereof in his ordinances; and where he ſetteth up theſe, there, wherever it be, they ſeek him and acknowledge him preſent.

The fourth property is alſo ſet down, verſe 4. *Theſe were redeemed from among men, being the firſt fruits unto God, and to the Lamb,* this redemption pointeth at God's wailing them out amongſt others of that time, and the end and ſcope of it, viz. *to be the firſt fruits unto him,* alluding to that cuſtom of the Jews paying firſt fruits unto the Lord: whereby they are holden forth to be, 1. As holy and ſet apart for that uſe and end, 2. As being the fore-runner and earneſt of a coming greater harveſt: in both which ſenſes, it may be here. 1. They were holy to God, when all the world was prophane; ſo all believers are called firſt fruits unto God, Jam. i. 18. Jer. ii. 3. Thus, it is the privilege he called them unto. 2. As theſe now appearing go before and foretel, as it were the great number and harveſt that were coming, and to follow unto the Lord throughout the earth, ſee cap. vii. 9. even as the firſt fruits were an evidence and pledge of an approaching harveſt, ſo were theſe to God and the Lamb. And thus their redeeming from amongſt men, will be here their ſeparating by effectual calling, as that before, ver. 3. Is their general redemption. The laſt property, is, verſe 5. *In their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.* The ſcope is this, to ſhew their ſincerity in oppoſition to the hypocriſy of that time, 1. There is no guile in their mouth, i. e. no diſ-

ſembling or counterfeiting, as is ſaid of Nathaniel: they are all Nathaniel's John i. 47. and like that bleſſed man, Pſal. iii. 22. In whom there is no guile: they are as they profeſs, ſeriouſly adhering to God in Chriſt, whoſe name they bear out in their profeſſion, and are not counterfeit Chriſtians, as Antichriſt's followers are, to whom they are oppoſed: and in which reſpect, they are ſaid to be without fault, i. e. the faults theſe were guilty of, as was ſaid before. 2. This ſincerity is proven; or, it is hinted wherein it conſiſteth; for, ſaith he, they are without fault before the throne of God. In a word, they are juſtified and abſolved by God, and have his teſtimony, and therefore they are ſincere: which expreſſion, before the throne of God, importeth two things, 1. Sincerity, as it is oppoſed to mens judging, who cannot ſee ſo far as God. 2. It looketh to the ground of their acceptation, which is not any righteouſneſs of their own (for upon that account *none living will be juſtified in his ſight*, Pſal. cxliii.) but the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, that is the ground of their abſolution before God. In a word, they were indeed ſincere and through Chriſt's blood waſhen and abſolved, chap. vii. ver. 14. By all which it appeareth, they are really ſanctified and juſtified, who are meant here, ſeeing no hypocrite, never ſo well painted, can be without fault before God.

LECTURE II.

Verſe 6. *And I ſaw another angel fly in the midſt of heaven, having the everlaſting goſpel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,*

7. *Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come: and worſhip him that made heaven and earth, and the ſea, and the fountains of waters.*

IN the preceding part of the chapter there is a little hint given of the eſtate of the church, when Antichriſt was at his height, ſhe was in a defenſive poſture.

In the ſecond part of the chapter, from ver. 6. and forward, the ſtate of the church is deſcribed after its beginning to be active and to come out of the ſecret wilderneſs wherein ſhe was hid, and it hath two parts, to the end of the chapter. In the firſt, the church it ſet out encountering with the attempts of Antichriſt in lighter ſkirmiſhes, by the word labouring to diſcover his treachery and idolatry, and ſo to bring men out of his ſnare; and this is done by three ſeveral angels, to the 13th verſe, every one of them more clearly ſpeaking to the ruin of Antichriſt, and threatning judgment on him and his followers, than the former. In the ſecond part, from verſe 13th to the end, when advertiſement by the word doth not the buſineſs, the Lord cometh in by deeds, and falleth about the perfecting of what was threatned by the former three angels: which is ſet down in two ſimilitudes, whereby he finiſheth the execution of his wrath.

Theſe three angels come out after the darkneſs of Antichriſt; to ſpread the everlaſting goſpel, and to preach the righteouſneſs of Chriſt: for, the ſending of miniſters and the increaſing of the church go together. The firſt, in the 6th and 7th verſes hath this mainly in commiſſion, to allure ſouls from Antichriſt's flattery to the faith and obedience of Chriſt. The ſecond in the 8th verſe, cometh and foretelleth the deſtruction of ſpiritual Babylon or Rome; and becauſe he would have them certainly believing it, he ſpeaketh of it as a thing already done. The third in the 9, 10, and 11th verſes, cometh to denounce God's fearful judgment againſt Antichriſt, and all that ſhould take his mark, that if they would not be allured by the goſpel, they might be ſcarred by the plagues and judgments that were to come on him from following him. This is the ſum of theſe three angels preaching. If it be aſked, to what time this relateth; though we will not be peremptor to determine, yet we think it looketh rather to the ſpreading of the goſpel about, or in the days of Luther, than to any time before.

Reaſon 1. Becauſe the ſtate of the church, before the riſe of the goſpel, is deſcribed before to be low, and this ſpreading of the goſpel ſucceeding to that low eſtate, it muſt look to her flouriſhing condition.

Reaſon 2. Becauſe the univerſal extent of this firſt angel's commiſſion is ſuch, that we cannot ſo well apply it to any other time before that; it is to all tongues and kindreds, which only was fulfilled then, and is in oppoſition to the former reſtraint.

Reaſon 3. Becauſe after the firſt angel's preaching the everlaſting goſpel, there is an immediate ſucceſſion of one after another, ſtill without interruption carrying on this ruin: we take it therefore moſt probably to relate to the ſpreading of the goſpel after Antichriſt's begun ruin: for, till then, the church was in the wilderneſs, and the witneſſes are few, and in ſackcloth.

In the firſt angel's preaching, we have theſe four, 1. The inſtrument, *an angel*. 2. The poſture he is in, *flying in the midſt of heaven*. 3. His buſineſs, or work, *to preach the everlaſting goſpel to them that dwell on the earth*. 4. His meſſage, or the ſum of his preaching, ver. 7. *fear God, &c.*

For the firſt, that the inſtrument is called *an angel*, it is not properly to be taken: for, the angels are *miniſtring ſpirits, ſent forth to miniſter for them that are heirs of ſalvation*, Heb. i. *ult.* but they have not the everlaſting goſpel to preach. *This treaſure is put in earthen veſſels, that the excellency of the power may be of God*, 2 Cor. iv. 7. and he *hath given to us the miniſtry of reconciliation* ſaith the apoſtle, 2 Cor. v. 18. and it is common to all miniſters to be called angels, as chap. ii. and iii. and chapter i. ver. 20. of this ſame book; ſo we take the word here, to hold out the Lord's making uſe of a miniſtry after the darkneſs of Antichriſt to ſpread the goſpel: and the miniſters are called angels, becauſe they are God's meſſengers, intruſted by him with a high and heavenly employment: and it is a title that ſhould put miniſters in mind of their duty, to do God's will on earth, as the angels do it in heaven, in a ſpiritual and heavenly way, cheerfully, willingly and readily; and it ſhould put people in mind of their duty, to take this word off miniſter's hands, and from angels. 2. Angel here, in the ſingular number, is not one miniſter: for in the loweſt condition the church was in, as chap. xi. ſhe had two witneſſes, and ſhe behoved to have more now when the goſpel is riſing, and to be publiſhed abroad; but we are to take the word collectively: and it is no extraordinary thing, when the Lord would ſpeak of more miniſters nor one, to ſpeak of them as one; and it implieth no ſingularity or ſuperiority in one over the reſt, ſee chap. i. verſe 20.

For the ſecond, the poſture he is in, *it is flying thro' the midſt of heaven*, as is ſpoken of another angel, chap. viii. 13. The Lord is now to ſhew, that he will not keep his church and goſpel, as it were, hid in a corner, or in the temple, as chap. xi. ver. 1. nor on Mount Zion, tho' that be more public, but he will ſend out his miniſters conſpicuouſly, as it were, in the open view of all, to preach the goſpel to all the world. And he is called *another angel*, as contradiſtinguiſhed from that number of the true church, mentioned in the former part of the chapter, the Lord having a new taſk, and a new piece of work, he provideth himſelf of new miniſters, and it may be, ſome out from among Antichriſt's followers, and none of theſe who ſtood on Mount Sion: of ſuch did the Lord make uſe in the beginning of the reformation, to preach and to be inſtrumental for him, who were not of the Waldenſes or Albigenſes, but drawn from the midſt of Popery.

For the third, his errand or work, is, *to preach the everlaſting goſpel to them that dwell on the earth, and that to every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people:* wherein we have, 1. His work. 2. The object or extent of it.

1. His work is, *the preaching of the everlaſting goſpel:* We need not tell you what the goſpel is, or what the word ſignifieth, it is that that the angel hath to the ſhepherds, Luke ii. 10. *Good tidings of great joy;* and it is called *the glad tidings of ſalvation*, becauſe it is eminently and excellently beyond all compariſon, the gladdeſt news that ever were made mention of to ſinners: and the word goſpel is drawn from an old Saxon word, that ſignifieth God's ſpell; ſuch a word to man, as is the beſt word that ever was heard of; there is none to it: and it is called *everlaſting*, for theſe following reaſons.

1. From the riſe of it, from everlaſting in God's eternal plot and purpoſe. 2. From the effect, it bringeth life and immortality to light, 2 Tim. i. 10. and 1 Pet. i. *ult.* It is ſaid, *The word of the Lord endureth for ever;* the effect and efficacy of it never endeth. 3. It is here called *the everlaſting goſpel*, in oppoſition to the Papiſts calumny, who enquire, where was our church and goſpel before ſuch a time? and to charge the goſpel at its reviving with novelty, becauſe differing from their traditions, which for a time had obſcured it, as if it had been buried: now what is preached, is the ancient everlaſting goſpel, altho' it be of new revived; and the angel is here ſaid to have the everlaſting goſpel, according to that word, 2 Cor. v. 18. *He hath given*, or committed, *to us the word of re-*

conciliation; he is made a ſteward of it, which deſigneth and denoteth an office, he hath not ſo given it to the community or multitude, but hath committed it to ſuch and ſuch angels.

2. The object or extent of it, is generally, *To all that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, kindred, and tongue, and people;* as if he ſaid, the goſpel is not now to be ſent to ſome few, as in the days of Antichriſt's prevailing, but to be manifeſted to all ſorts of people of whatſoever kindred, tongue, or nation: and it is by virtue of this commiſſion, that ſo many nations and we at this day enjoy this goſpel.

The fourth or laſt thing in his meſſage, or ſum of his preaching, is more particularly ſet down, *Saying with a loud voice,* implying great boldneſs to be in theſe miniſters, as was in our firſt reformers. His meaning is, they ſhould not by whiſpering do it, but with great authority and boldneſs ſhould publiſh the goſpel.

The preaching itſelf hath three heads, and a reaſon is annexed to perſuade unto the firſt two. The firſt is, *fear God.* The ſecond is, *give him glory:* the reaſon annexed, *for the hour of his judgment is come.* And the third and laſt head is, *and worſhip him that made heaven and earth, &c.* Theſe three look to the three great parts of religion, oppoſite to the three faults that the followers of Antichriſt are given to. The firſt looketh to the regulating of men in their inward frame; the ſecond in their faith; the third in their external worſhip.

1. *Fear God.* This regulateth our fear as to its object, viz. God; which ſuppoſeth now, that many things have been feared by the world more than he: alſo it ſheweth, that outward ſervice will not do it, there muſt be a right principle within; and ſo it is oppoſite to profanity and hypocriſy, fear of men and Antichriſt's curſings, which ſhould from this forth be leſs feared.

2. *Give him glory.* The giving of God glory, is divers ways taken, according to his divers attributes; but we take it here to look mainly to the giving of him the glory of his grace, in reſting by faith on Chriſt alone, as the only Mediator and Saviour, ſo renouncing all others, as it is ſaid of Abraham, Rom. iv. 20. he *was ſtrong in faith, giving glory to God;* and Hoſea xi. 7. *Though they called them to the Moſt High, none at all would exalt him,* none would give him the glory of his grace by believing: for, as the rejecting of the goſpel is a deſpiſing of God; ſo the receiving of the goſpel is a giving him glory. *Reaſon* 1. Becauſe the glory of grace, is eſpecially the glory which the goſpel holdeth out. 2. Becauſe this meeteth eſpecially with Antichriſt's diſhonouring of him, by giving the glory due to him to other things, ſaints, and angels, and mens own works, and in not reſting on his mediation, interceſſion and ſatisfaction alone; and this cometh neareſt the ſcope.

The reaſon perſwading to theſe two, *for the hour of his judgment is come:* which being compared with a word, Acts xvii. 30. *The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent;* the force of the argument is this, beware now of giving the glory of God's grace in a Mediator to other things; for tho' God hath ſpared men a while in the times of ignorance and darkneſs, he will not do ſo now, when the light is broken up, but will ſend ſudden judgments on the deſpiſers of the goſpel; and many churches that have not made uſe of the goſpel, find this true this day.

2. It is called *the hour of his judgment,* to teach us, that as God hath a ſet time for all things, ſo hath he a peculiar time for judgment: and as for all ſinners, ſo for theſe that follow Antichriſt's way, and alſo, that often the hour of peaching the goſpel, hath the hour of judgment waiting on it, if it be abuſed.

The third head of his preaching is, *and worſhip him that made heaven and earth.* This looketh to their external worſhip, as if he ſaid, ye have been worſhipping ſtocks, idols and images of gold and ſilver, vanities that cannot profit you, now beware of continuing any longer in that way, but worſhip the alone living and true God, who is thus deſcribed, that *he made heaven and earth, the ſea, and fountains of waters,* even as the apoſtle ſpeaketh, Acts xiv. 15. *We preach to you, that ye ſhould turn from theſe vanities unto the living God, which made heaven and earth, the ſea, and all things therein,* almoſt in the ſame words: and this cleareth, that theſe exhortations are ſet down in oppoſition to the way they look before, while they were following Antichriſt.

God is thus deſcribed here, 1. That they may ſee the vanity of worſhipping any other

than God, and that they had juſt reaſon and cauſe of worſhipping him. 2. To point out the obligation that lieth on men to give him the worſhip and glory due to him; he made the heaven and the earth, therefore he is a glorious and powerful God. All this preaching is by way of application, and practical, becauſe this is the ſcope of preaching, to put on to holineſs and practice; and this is the right manner, when, ſimply and plainly, it is preſſed on the conſcience, without the curious conceity queſtions, and uſeleſs caſes under Antichriſt.

LECTURE III.

Verſe 8. *And there followed another angel, ſaying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, becauſe ſhe made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.*

9. *And the third angel followed them, ſaying with a loud voice, if any man worſhip the beaſt and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,*

10. *The ſame ſhall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture, into the cup of his indignation; and he ſhall be tormented with fire and brimſtone, in the preſence of the holy angels, and in the preſence of the Lamb:*

11. *And the ſmoke of their torment aſcendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no reſt day nor night, who worſhip the beaſt and his image, and whoſoever receiveth the mark of his name.*

CHriſt hath now begun to ſend out his light into the world, and though by many it getteth no good welcome, yet he goeth on and ſendeth out others to denounce and foretel more clearly the ruin of that Antichriſtian kingdom, that formerly had deluded the world. By this angel, underſtand, as formerly, miniſters ſtirred up after the firſt outbreaking of the goſpel, who, (perceiving Rome's perverſe oppoſing of the preached goſpel, and ſeeing what ſhaking, Chriſt, by the firſt beginnings, had wrought on his kingdom) the more boldly and plainly foretel the ruin of that ſtate now to be approaching.

The preaching of this angel containeth two things, 1. The denunciation of Babylon's judgment. 2. The cauſe of it. In the denunciation, conſider the object threatned, Babylon. 3. The judgment *is fallen*. 4. The manner of expreſſion, it is in the by-paſt time, and doubled. By Babylon here, is certainly underſtood ſome particular ſtate, and the head of ſome ſuch great ſtate as was oppoſite to the church: for, chap. xviii. there are many of her followers who ſtill regret her fall. More particularly, we conceive it to be underſtood of Rome, not ſo much the town as its dominion, being now headed with Antichriſt, and, as it were, the head of this empire: for it is the ſame called MYSTERY, BABYLON, chap. xvii. 5. that is myſtically Babylon, as before, chap. xi. ſpiritually Sodom and Egypt. And to Rome only agreeth the deſcription following, 1. *The great city;* ſo is Rome ſet out for its ſovereignty, chap. xvii. *ult.* called Babylon by analogy, 1. It was the head city over that empire, which of old oppreſſed the people of God; ſo is this now. 2. That empire was not oppreſſing outwardly only, but idolatrous alſo, and enticing others to it, as Dan. iii. &c. may appear. 3. As in Babylon the people of God were keeped under, yet had a being amongſt the Babylonians, even at Babylon, tho' not of them; ſo was the true church captivated by this church of Rome, yet had ſome being under and amongſt them, though wanting outward beauty.

2. The judgment denounced on this Antichriſtian ſtate of Rome, is, *It is fallen;* whereby two things are holden out, 1. That Babylon was no more ſurely deſtroyed, than Rome ſhould be finally and totally. 2. That it was now begun to fall, and that it ſhould never after this be in ſuch a ſettled condition as it was in before; but its fall was approaching, and this goſpel, by the preaching of the angel, had diſcovered Rome's nakedneſs, and made her loathſome to the intelligent, and the coming judgment under the types of harveſt and vintage, ſhould perfect it.

3. The manner of expreſſing this is, as if it were already paſt, and is doubled: both which tend,

1. To ſhew the certainty of the thing ſpoken. 2. The eminency and ſurpriſing celerity of it. And, 3. The concernment of it, to make men take the more notice of it as a great thing, alluding alſo to

the mannner of denouncing God's judgment on old Babylon, Isa. xxi. The cause of this sore destruction on Babylon, is figuratively set down in the words following: in short, it is, because she allured souls of all sorts from God's pure worship, to communicate in her superstitions and idolatries, which before the Lord is as adultery and fornication spiritually, in respect of its pollution and covenant-breaking with God.

By this comparison, or allusion to the manner of vile strumpets, who entice to filthiness, is holden out, 1. Rome's censure, who as an harlot, had broken faith to Christ. 2. Her guilt, in enticing others; yea, many to that superstitious way with her, and prevailing. 3. The more she entice to be her followers, it is the greater ditty; *she made all nations drink*. 4. The nature of men, and of superstitious will-worship, it maketh them drunk, and they sweetly drink it as a cup of wine. 5. The effect of it, for as sweet as it is, it is wrath. 1. Because it deserveth and procureth wrath on her, and all who drink with her. 2. To be given up to drink this, is an effect of wrath, and a great plague of God, 2. Thess. ii. That Rome in its hierarchy and spiritual dominion under the Pope, is this Babylon, will appear more, chap. xvii. and chap. xviii. where this same saying is repeated, but differently: here by way of prediction upon the foreseen begun ruin of it, there, viz. chap. xviii. after in execution, by pouring the fifth vial on the beast's seat, which is Rome.

The third angel beginneth his preaching, ver. 9. and it is prosecuted, ver. 10. and 11. it is a conditional threatning of all Antichrist's followers, if they shall continue to worship him, after the former two angels have preached. There is a notable gradation in their preaching, not as if the first ceased to preach, when the second beginneth, or so forth, (for, all of them preach together) but that, first, God maketh his gospel shine, and revealeth truth both to great and small, learned and unlearned; that is begun by the first angel. 2. When that getteth little hearing, but great opposition, especially from the great ones of the Pope's kingdom, who are enraged at it, then the Lord maketh light, both in the clearness and force of it, to proceed further to discover Rome to be Babylon, and to set ministers more directly against that state, to batter it down, and begin its ruin, and from his word clearly to foretel the complete destruction of it, and that their grandeur, and those grandees in their pomp shall come down. Because a superstitious respect to that see was deeply rooted in the hearts of the plurality of people, the third angel is sent out not only to warn all her followers by that prediction, but to withdraw them from that erroneous way under all highest pains, certifying them, that Popery will bring God's everlasting curse on them, and that it standeth them on no less than the necessity of salvation to quit it: by which angel, separation from him is pressed, as it is, chap. xviii. *Come out of her*, when the same threatning is mentioned; so every one of these preachers and preachings inferreth the other well, and agreeth to the Lord's way of making his truth to break up in the event. 1. Luther began to preach against some errors, as human traditions, and to open the doctrine of justification by faith alone, in opposition to indulgences, purgatory, &c. at first, without thinking that Rome was Babylon, or that there was a necessity of separating from it, but the gospel could not long be in the world, but that must be clear like the light. Then, 2. He grew in light and boldness, and others joined with him, as Melancthon, Justus, Jonas, &c. and they came directly to speak of Rome as of Babylon, and of the Pope as of Antichrist, and thereupon applied these, and such like plain passages, foretelling their ruin, as of the special treacherous enemies of Jesus Christ, who had so long deluded the world, and abused the church.

Followeth upon that, the third angel's preaching, who cometh in with the necessity of abstaining from his worship and fellowship under pain of damnation; and more the Pope foamed and persecuted, the more they preached and cleared that strange truth in the world, that Popery was of itself damnable, and that though God had a church latent amongst them in the time of darkness, yet now he would not have it so, and this doctrine was much urged against the *Pseudo-nicodemites*, to have the sinfulness of the Popish way born in upon souls, not only that it was not good, or so good as the other, but that it was deadly, and a slaying and mortiferous power, and therefore the godly could not communicate with them in it without sin. This was the reformers third work. See Slied. lib. 1. et. 2. Calvin. opuscul. especially, class. 3. per totum. Luther his work ascendeth by these steps, 1. In his Theses, given out, anno 1517. against indulgences, and thereafter in their defence against Sylvester, Eccius, Pererius, and others, he

ſheweth, theſe things profit not to life, but repentance and faith, reſting only on Chriſt's merits, and the mercy of God alone, ſeeing no ſaints merits are perfect. Anno 1519, Caralaſtadius begin-neth a diſpute againſt the Pope at Lypſic, whither Eccius came and provoked Luther to diſpute, by maintaining the Pope's abſolute ſupremacy; which Luther impunged: Melancthon alſo was with Luther at this diſpute, (but after, in an epiſtle to Leo X. he excuſed it ſome way) yet, anno 1520, he, by a book, *De captivitate Babylonica*, publicly aſſerted, and proved Rome to be Babylon, and the Pope Antichriſt. Sleid. lib. 2. page 23. Thereafter, anno 1521. (when Zuinglius had begun to preach boldly, the year before, at Tigurine in Helvetia) Luther, with the whole college of Wintenberge, burnt the books of his adverſaries (as they had done his before) appealing from the Pope to a council, earneſtly exhorting to abſtain communion with the church of Rome, which, thereafter, he hath, both in his ſermons and writings, confirmed. This was more fully afterward jointly proſecuted by Melancthon, Calvin, Martyr, and Bucer. See *Calv. contra Pſeudonicodemitas.*

So we take the ſcope of this chapter generally to ſet forth, 1. Antichriſt's fall, and the certainty of it. 2. The means by which it ſhould be effectuated, viz. preaching and action; by preaching, withdrawing many from him, by judgment overthrowing the reſt: which judgments are more particularly deſcribed by the vials. 3. By what degrees, or in what order it ſhould be carried on by theſe means: 1. Preachings and threatnings go before judgments: and, 2. In preaching the truth of the goſpel is firſt preached, and then judgments more peremptorily denounced, *ut ſupra*, firſt againſt the head, then againſt the followers.

Now, to come more particularly to this third angel: he cometh ſhortly on the back of the former with a *loud voice*, which intimateth much deadneſs amongſt the people that would not awake. 2. Much zeal, boldneſs, and freeneſs in him that preached, making out this truth plainly that he was commiſſionated with. It is, in general, a commination, yet ſet down conditionally, that it may be a warning to make men flee that ſin, that they may eſcape that judgment: and becauſe the key of doctrine in threatnings and promiſes, is not abſolutely to be applied by miniſters, (the conditions whereupon it goeth being indiſcernible to them) and ſo it differeth from the uſe-making of the key of diſcipline, whereby abſolutely we admit to, or reject from ordinances, becauſe the rule of it is converſant about external ſcandals and profeſſion, which are diſcernible. In ſhort, as if he would ſay, follow not Popery longer: for, if ye ſo do, ye ſhall not eſcape the heavy judgment of God's everlaſting wrath; and it will be the greater that ye have gotten warning.

In particular, it containeth a deſcription of a Papiſt, or one of Antichriſt's followers, which is the object of this threatning, ver. 9. 2. It deſcribeth their judgment, ver. 10, 11.

The deſcription hath two parts: 1. They are deſcribed by worſhipping Antichriſt, which pointeth at ſome inward impreſſion. 2. By receiving his mark, which ſuppoſeth ſome outward expreſſion of their reſpect to him.

1. He ſaith, *If any worſhip the beaſt, and his image;* becauſe none ſhall be miſſed, if it were but one that continueth. By *beaſt* and *image*, we are not to underſtand two diſtinct things, as we ſhew, chap. xiii. For here they have the ſame common worſhip, and their worſhippers are of equal extent, and their judgment is the ſame; and, ver. 11. when it is repeated, they are both ſpoken of as one, his mark and his name, and not theirs: but, by *beaſt*, is more eſpecially holden forth the Pope, as the head of that Antichriſtian eſtate, and, as it were, the author; and, by *image*, is holden forth the complex body of the hierarchy, doctrine, and ſuperſtitions which he hath framed, called *his*, becauſe he compoſed it, and made it; called *an image*, becauſe of its likeneſs to the old Roman heatheniſh worſhip and tyranny over the church. The worſhipping of theſe implieth, as was ſaid, chap. xiii. more than a civil devotedneſs to that Pope, as head, eſpecially in his doctrine and worſhip.

The ſecond part of the deſcription, of *receiving his mark in their forehead and hand*, was expounded, chap. xiii. and implieth not only men's acknowledging the Pope, but their yielding and ſubmitting to him, and giving up themſelves as ſoldiers or ſervants to that Antichriſtian ſtate, adhering to that profeſſion, and, by public evidences, owning it without, as well as cleaving to it in affection within. It is called here *the mark of his name*, which was before called the *number*, to ſhew that the *number* is ſomething makes his followers diſcernible, as well as the mark.

The judgment threatned followeth, ver. 10, and 11. which is to be looked on, not only as he threatned them with hell; (for that was common to ſuch at all times) but from the aggravations of it, it is clear he threatned them with more than an ordinary torment in hell; yea, more than theſe that lived in darkneſs before this light ſhined unto them: the judgment is generally ſet out in two ſimilitudes, then aggravated by ſome circumſtances. The ſame ſhall, &c. that is, every one, or any one, that ſinneth, follower or maſter. The firſt ſimilitude is, *He ſhall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, poured out in the cup of his indignation*, &c. This ſimilitude is oppoſed to their ſin, ver. 8. Antichriſt hath a ſinful cup, and they will drink it. God hath a cup of wrath, or wine of wrath, not for refreſhing, but that it maketh mad, drunken, and loathſome, Pſal. lxxv. 8. Iſa. li. *ult.* Jer. xxv. 15, 27. And this wine of his wrath is *poured out*, to ſhew the abundance of it: not in the cup of mercy; no, but of his *indignation;* and when the wine is wrath, and the cup indignation, O what a drink will that be, eſpecially the wrath of an omnipotent juſt God! Pſal. lxxvi. 7. Pſal. xc. 11. Every word ſetteth out its terribleneſs.

The ſecond ſimilitude is, *They ſhall be tormented with fire and brimſtone.* Whether there be material fire in hell or not, we need not diſpute; it is here to expreſs the exquiſiteſt and greateſt torment that can be imagined, from what is uſed amongſt men, poſſibly alluding to the deſtruction of Sodom, which God deſtroyed by fire. Certainly that torment muſt hold out a great torment; yet there are four aggravations added: 1. This wrath is *unmixed*, ver. 10. pure wrath. O how terrible! when little ſparks of wrath here, mixed with many mercies, are ſo ſore; what will it be, when there will not be a drop of cold water gotten to quench burning wrath? Luke xvi.

The ſecond aggravation is, ver. 10. in the end; that is, *Before the Lamb, and his angels:* which implieth, 1. They ſhall be tormented before Chriſt, (as if he took delight in it) whom now they deſpiſe, he will be maſter then, and ſhall ſee them, and not help them; but their torment ſhall be, as it were, a ſatisfaction to him, and a trophy of his victory. See Luke xix. 27. The Mediator's vengeance is ſore, Iſa. lxi. 2. 2. That there will be in them, by this, a ſenſe both of their loſs, and of the ſin that hath procured it, to be a gnawing worm within them; they ſhall not get leave to forget any of theſe, this preſence *before* him, being more in reſpect of their conſcience and ſenſe, than of nearneſs of place, which is not underſtood here.

The third aggravation is, from the eternity of their torment; it hath no end, but that fire burneth alway; for their eternal torment is but *ſatispaſſio* to them, and never *ſatisfactio* to God: for *the ſmoke thereof aſcendeth for ever and ever*, ver. 11. It was Spira's words, *He would care little for hell, if it were for no longer than* 20000 *years;* but when 20000 times 20000 years are expired, it is but beginning.

4. It is aggreged from its want of intermiſſions: pains here are ſometimes leſs and more; but there *is no reſt, night nor day;* it is there alway at the height of torment, as the effect of God's wrath; in which ye have a lively deſcription of hell. It muſt needs be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

If any aſk, how that rigid executing of juſtice upon the damned in hell may ſtand with the mercies of God, which are ſaid to be over all his works, in a general ſenſe at leaſt? *Anſw.* That may be ſaid, notwithſtanding of this, in theſe two reſpects, 1. Becauſe that wrath which is inflicted upon the damned, is not adequate to the power of God: for he is able to puniſh them yet more terribly, even when their torment is at the higheſt. 2. Becauſe even then they deſerve more; and it would be no imputation to juſtice, if they were more intenſely plagued; for, although their ſins, as they are acts in them, be finite; yet, being conſidered with reſpect to the object, God, againſt whom they are committed, they are infinite ills; and therefore deſerve infinite puniſhments, and, ſo in ſeverity of juſtice, might be reached beyond what they are: this expreſſion, in its ſcope here, doth hold forth hell to be inſufferable to all; but that there is a further and greater meaſure of wrath to be poured out upon theſe, who are guilty of the ſin of Popery, continued in, after the bringing of the goſpel to light. Whence we may *obſerve*, 1. What a horrible and dreadful thing hell, and lying under the wrath of God for ever therein, is, that is ſo deſcribed here. It muſt be a fearful thing to be for ever there. Many will curſe their own unbelief of this, when the cup of the indignation of God, filled with his wrath, ſhall be put in their hands, to drink thereof for

ever. 2. This sin of Popery, and worshipping of the beast, must be most abominable, which hath this wrath threatned against it: it must be a desperate religion, that hath this condition for the expectation thereof. Let none think it a light sin, which the Lord so peremptorily threatneth: it is no little mercy that we are freed therefrom, and there is need to be thankful for the light we have, and to improve it well while we have it. 3. Absurd light hasteneth, and heightneth wrath: hell now becometh both more hot, and more inevitable, than before this light doth break forth. The despising of the gospel will make hell exceeding insufferable, even beyond that of the despising of the law, as Heb. x. 28. &c. 4. Mark the connection of these two cups, there is a cup of sin which he maketh others to drink of, (it is called *the wine of the wrath of her fornication*, because in God's justice men were plagued by being given up to that error) whereupon followeth, verse 10. a cup of the wrath of God, and that without mixture. Sin may be sweet for a time, but it draweth on bitterness without mixture: the cup that followeth it, will better shew the nature thereof.

Concerning the difficulty of salvation under Popery.

THERE is one thing asserted here, as also in the preceding chapter, which possibly may need clearing to some not acquainted with the nature and mysteries of Popery: and that is, that the salvation of Papists, according to their principles, seemeth hereby to be made impossible; it may be therefore worthy the enquiring into, whether, or upon what grounds that may be made out? And if that be understood of, and extended unto all within that church? Or, whether, and how difference may be made amongst these that bear that name? What may be said of some, and how differently we ought to construct of many, we shall afterward touch; but now for the main, our direct assertion is this, that a Papist, as such, living and dying according to the complex principles of the doctrine and worship that is followed in Popery, cannot be saved, nor expect justification before God. I say, a Papist living and dying according to the essential principles of Popery, which do especially relate to these three, 1. To their giving to the Pope such ample authority, reverence, and adoration, as they use to do. 2. To their way of carrying on the justification and salvation of a sinner before God, as it is holden forth in their doctrine. 3. To their manner of worship, that is, praying to saints, worshipping of images, sacrifice of the mass, and other such things, owned both by the doctrine, laws and practice of that church. We say, one living and dying devoted to these, although neither scandalous in outward practices, nor defective in respect of external painfulness; yet upon this account, as being a Papist, chargeable with the three general heads foresaid, he cannot but be liable to God's judgment, and die without any solid hope of being saved by these principles. The general, we conceive, is clear from what was said, chap. xiii. verse 8. This kind of worshipping the beast, being held out as inconsistent with election, which saith, that no elect person can so live and die, and therefore none such can be saved: here again, worshipping of the beast, and drinking of the cup of God's indignation for ever, are peremptorily put together: and all alongst this book, the beast with his followers, and great Babylon, are ever looked upon as most hateful to God, till at last, chap. xix. and xx. he and they are cast unto the lake together. And that is mentioned to be upon this very account of their being stated by their doctrine, worship, and practices in opposition to Christ, without respect to moral ills, common to them with others of the world. This is also confirmed from 2 Thess. ii. 10, and 12. where this deceivableness of Antichrist's apostasy is bounded to them that perish, and this is marked as the design of God's justice therein, that all they may be damned which receive not the love of the truth: this then must be of itself the very high way to damnation. And we cannot question the truth of this, without the overturning of the direct scope and meaning of these scriptures, and the application of them, which is laid down all alongst in this book.

If it be required, that further satisfaction be given as to the grounds which render their salvation impossible. We do answer, That it ariseth from these two, which do infallibly demonstrate the same. 1. This way of Popery, is of itself exceeding sinful, and abominable before the Lord, and so doth, in more than an ordinary manner, make a person liable to his wrath. 2. As it is of itself sinful; so it hath no solid way laid down for removing of sin, but doth leave a man without any solid hope of relief

from his original and actual sins, beside that it incapacitateth him to look upon itself as sinful, or to seek for the right remedy thereof. And where these two are put together, viz. hainous sins, and no way to remove it, or any other, what can be expected but inevitable ruin and condemnation? for where the disease is deadly, and the cure naught, death must be certain. We shall therefore a little make out both these assertions, from which the conclusion laid cannot but follow.

1. We say, that the way of Popery in itself, and its complex nature, is most hainously sinful, and doth render the followers thereof exceedingly guilty before God. Therefore we will find it charged with the most abominable guiltiness, that are elsewhere mentioned in scripture: 1. There is in it the guilt of idolatry, and that of all sorts, 1. A worshipping of angels, (whereof somewhat is spoken, chap. xix.) the worshipping of saints departed, and a giving of divine honour to them, a worshipping of the Pope, spoken of, chap. xiii. and xvii. by ascribing to him divine attributes, which he willingly receiveth, (as Thuan lib. 3. page 95. among others, doth observe) a worshipping of the cross, or *staurolatreia*, worshipping of the sacraments, or *artolatreia*, worshipping of saints and their relics, making images of the holy Trinity, and persons of the Godhead, and many other kinds of idolatry commit they, and that both against the first and second command; and therefore are said, chap. ix. verse 20. to worship the works of their hands, and devils, and idols of gold and silver, &c. of which somewhat was spoken in that place.

The second sin charged unto them is *blasphemy*, a sin of the highest nature, that is, either by detracting from the sovereign and absolute God that which is due to him, or attributing to him what becometh not his holiness, mercy, and sovereignty; or by ascribing what is proper to him to some creature: in all which respects, Popery is a doctrine of blasphemy, as was hinted, chap. xiii. and therefore this beast is said to be *full of names of blasphemy*, chap. xvii. 3.

3. *Defection* and *apostasy* from the received truth, is a hainous sin; and this is most essentially proper to Popery, therefore is it 2 Thess. ii. denominate by this to be a *falling away*. When we call Popery an apostasy it is to be understood as differing from any particular heresy, altho' these also be of themselves damnable: for this is a defection by a concurrence of many heresies, corrupting the series of the truths of the gospel; and therefore cannot be but exceeding sinful and damnable, seeing God hath so peremptorily threatned adding unto, or taking from the word, as it is, Rev. xxii.

4. It is in sum Antichristianity, or, the sin of Antichristianism, to be found chargeable in the manner foresaid: and can there be any sin desperately dangerous, if that be not? which tho' it do not expresly thwart with Christ's natures and persons, (which is not to be Antichrist's error, as was observed, chap. xii. toward the close) yet doth it exautorate him, detract him from his offices, and the effects thereof, and constantly, as such, doth top with his church and people, and lay down a way of salvation and life upon these same terms that it stood on in the covenant of works; and therefore in that respect, it may well be said to deny that Christ came in the flesh, which is the very spirit of Antichrist, which doth necessarily follow from that doctrine, For, say they, 1. Obedience to the commands, and the merit of works, is the only way to life still. 2. Say they, that supposing the habits of grace to be infused, and men to perform these works in the strength thereof, they could not but be acceptable to God, and enter the man into life, as being meritorious thereof, altho' Christ had never come in the flesh. And, 3. They say, that his becoming man, or his suffering so much upon supposition of the former, was not necessary for the procuring of this grace; yea they deny *de facto*, that Christ did suffer any thing of the curse inwardly in his soul on the behalf of sinners. Now, all these being put together, do they not amount to this in effect, that Christ coming in the flesh is in vain, or not true? But this corrupt contrivance of their doctrine will be more clear in the following assertion. To conclude this then, we only say, if idolatry, blasphemy, Antichristianism, and apostasy in the highest nature, be sinful and hateful in the sight of God, Popery must be so: neither is it for nought that scripture doth so paint out that sin by such hainous characters, but that he may imprint the detestableness thereof upon hearts; beside the accessory guilt of murders, thefts, persecutions, and other sins which are incident to that way, especially to the leaders thereof, as was hinted, chap. ix. 20. But now we proceed to the second thing laid down, to shew, that according to the Popish articles, a sinner can never win to peace with God, and so cannot but pe-

riſh: we ſhall, firſt, ſhew what is their doctrine concerning that; or what is the way that they lay down for the juſtifying of a ſinner. 2. We ſhall ſhew the inconſiſtency thereof with the way laid down in the goſpel, from which the damnable abſurdity of that doctrine, and truth of the former aſſertion, will evidently appear.

1. It is to be adverted, that tho' they uſe the title *juſtification*, that yet indeed they do deny it, and, upon the matter, acknowledge ſanctification only: and ſo in this rather we are to inquire if there be ſuch a thing as juſtification, diſtinct from ſanctification, then how juſtification is perfected, their juſtification being only an infuſing of grace, whereby he that was a ſinner becometh, by a phyſical change, holy. 2. It is to be adverted, that they maintain a twofold juſtification, one, as they ſay, of the wicked, this they call the firſt juſtification, when the firſt grace is given to one, who formerly was not gracious; the other is the juſtification of one already habitually gracious, this they call the ſecond, and is by augmentation and increaſe of the grace given. The firſt juſtification they acknowledge is free, being only procured by the merit of Chriſt; and that there can be no condign meriting of that, altho' by the right uſe of free-will, and the exerciſe of moral good works, it may be congruouſly, or *de congruo*, merited, ſo that one who doth what in him lieth by the help of common grace, (which is named by them *gratia auxilians*, and in ſome ſufficiency, at leaſt remotely, is given to all) they cannot but obtain it. This firſt juſtification they grant to be ſufficient to children, who cannot merit, or one that receiveth the ſacrament of baptiſm, or penance, and doth not outlive the ſame, but die *in inſtanti*, (if that caſe can fall out) yet this they think impoſſible, becauſe at leaſt they have contrition and holineſs in their vow, and want not ſome deſires of further, or at leaſt continuance in what they have received, and in that reſpect do merit, as Suarez ſpeaketh, de gratia, pag. 223. lib. 8. cap. 12.

The other juſtification that is acquired by the performing of good works, and the merit that proceedeth from them, they maintain to be ſimply neceſſary to all that are at age, becauſe, as that forecited author ſaith, lib. 12. cap. 28. pag. 222, and 223. *ipſa gloria ſecundum totum ſuum eſſe et (ut ita dicam) ſecundum ſubſtantiam ſuam, tanquam merces meritorum promittitur;* and glory in God's way, is laid down to be the reward of merit. And this ſupponeth a free working to precede it: this merit they maintain to be *de condigno*, or of condignity, and that not from any imputation of Chriſt's merit to theſe works, but from the nature and proportionateneſs of theſe works to the reward itſelf. Hence it is, that ſome of them, viz. Vaſquez in 1. 2. diſp. 214. num. 43. do deny that there is any reſpect or look had to Chriſt's merit at all: and others who grant there is reſpect had to it, (ſo as to make them merit in a more excellent way) yet ſay, that that proceedeth not from any defect that is in them, as if Chriſt's merit were to ſupply that; for Adam, before his fall, and the angels had true merit without Chriſt, much leſs ſecondly; as if they did not merit in themſelves properly, except by the virtue of Chriſt's merit: for then, ſay they, that were not to aſcribe the merit to our works but to Chriſt's, and that our works were only meritorious from that extrinſic ground, and ſo God would not reward our works but Chriſt's, which would reſolve in this, that we would not merit grace and glory, but would get it by gift, which to them is abſurd, as is aſſerted by Suarez. lib. 12. cap. 18. and 19. pag. 484, 486, &c. at large: which is the joint opinion of Bellarmine, and others of them, Bellar. de juſtificatione, lib. 9. cap. 10. 938. and of the council of Trent, ſeſſ. 6. cap. 10, and 11. See alſo lib. 5. de juſtificatione, cap. 16, 109. Yea, they ſay that this merit doth not proceed from reſpect to God's promiſe only, as if it did ariſe from that alone, without reſpect had to the intrinſic value of theſe acts, becauſe, ſay they, God's rewarding of good works is an act of proper juſtice, and cannot but be done, and doth only look to God's covenant and law, wherein he hath appointed to accept theſe works as of themſelves meritorious of glory, without reſpect to that intrinſic conſideration: therefore they diſclaim the opinion of Scotus, Durand and the Nominals, that found the merit of works upon God's promiſe allenarly, as if they were not meritorious without that, becauſe that opinion will rather infer it to be a free gift, which one may engage himſelf to give for a thing of little value, and would not be proper juſtice, nor differ from that they call *meritum de congruo*, which often is founded upon a promiſe.

This condignity, therefore, is grounded upon theſe two, 1. An intrinſic value in the works themſelves, that proceed from the gracious habit wherewith the workers is qualified. 2. An appoint-

ment or condition of God's, whereby he hath promiſed ſuch a reward, viz. glory to ſuch works, as Suarez hath it at large, lib. 12. 480. 483, &c. And Bellarmine layeth down that, Matth. xix. *If thou wilt enter into life keep the commands*, as the very form of the covenant, and as the only way to life, de Juſtificatione, lib. 3. cap. 13. In which reſpect, ſometimes they ſay juſtification is free, that is, in the firſt reſpect; ſometimes by works, that is, in the ſecond reſpect.

3. We would advert, that as they diſtinguiſh between the *culpa*, or blot of ſin, and the *reatus*, or guilt and puniſhment of ſin; ſo do they affirm, that the firſt may be removed by juſtification, when the other, viz. the puniſhment, is to be ſatisfied for, at leaſt in part by ſatisfaction to juſtice, where the ſins have been committed by the free-will of the perſon, viz. if he were adult, or at age (for they acknowledge this not to be neceſſary for infants, and original ſin) ſee Suarez, lib. 7. page 128. *Et pœna aliqua*, as he ſaith, *non remittitur gratis, ſed per condignam ſatisfactionem.* And therefore, *gratis remittitur culpa, licet poſtea ſit de juſtitia ſatisfaciendum pro pœna.*

To lay down then their way, theſe things are ſuppoſed without controverſy, 1. That man naturally is obnoxious to God's curſe, and cannot ſave himſelf from it. 2. That before he can be admitted to happineſs, he muſt be juſtified. 3. That God is the efficient cauſe of this, and the principal worker, is alſo without controverſy. 4. That both infuſion of grace and remiſſion of ſin, do accompany juſtification, is denied by none. 5. That the ultimate or final end is the glory of God, and the ſalvation of the perſon juſtified is the ſubordinate, is agreed unto by all. 6. That Chriſt's righteouſneſs is the only meritorious cauſe, is, in word, profeſſed. 7. They acknowledge the neceſſity of faith to concur in it, as we do of good works to follow after: hitherto there ſeemeth to be no great abſurdity, we had need therefore to conſider it the more narrowly in reſpect of three other cauſes added by them, viz. the formal, material, and inſtrumental cauſes, with the effects and conſequents following thereon.

And we put the queſtion thus, *Wherewith may a ſinner hazard to appear before God's juſtice, ſo as to expect God's acceptation of him?* This will draw the queſtion nearer, when a ſinner is to chooſe what defence to take him to; or whereupon to ground his plea, before the throne of God.

1. They anſwer roundly, that man is juſtified *per ſolam gratiam inhærentum, tanquam per formam integram ſine imputatione externæ juſtitiæ Chriſti*, that is, by inherent grace alone, as the entire form of righteouſneſs without any imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs; and that inherent righteouſneſs doth confer this of itſelf, as Suarez layeth it down, lib. 7. cap. 7. page 83. in two corollaries expreſſly; although they differ amongſt themſelves, ſome making it habitual grace only, as Bellarmine, ſome both habitual and actual as Suarez; yet all agree, that it is inherent grace which conſtituteth us juſt before God's throne, therefore do they call it *gratia gratum faciens*.

2. This inherent grace, they acknowledge to be infuſed by God without any condign merit, and to imply theſe two,

1. Somewhat poſitive, viz. the bringing in a new quality, or grace in the ſoul, which is, as it were, a new form to it. 2. Somewhat privative, that is a purging, or cleanſing of the ſoul from the blot of ſin, which neceſſarily followeth upon the former, as two contrary forms are inconſiſtent together. Thus they ſay, this grace expelleth, or excludeth ſin from the ſoul, as light doth darkneſs, or heat coldneſs in water when it is calified. This to them, in effect, is the remiſſion of the fault which they account neceſſary to juſtification, and ſo God's juſtifying of a ſinner, is his infuſing that firſt grace into the ſoul, whereby neceſſarily ſin is really and actually removed (and not in opinion only, as they object, to our not imputing thereof) Aquin. 1. 2. Quæſt. 113. doth include four things in juſtification, viz. an act of free-will tending to God, and another in reference to ſin, beſide the former two.

3. They acknowledge Chriſt's righteouſneſs to be the only meritorious cauſe of this firſt juſtification, becauſe that cannot be merited either by faith, works, or any other thing that proceedeth, page 127. that is, he procured the infuſion of this grace.

4. The material cauſe of this righteouſneſs or juſtification, they hold to be the ſoul of man, which by the acts of its free-will in faith, fear, contrition, love, prayer, and other diſpoſitions, muſt neceſſarily concur for diſpoſing to the receiving of this grace, and that as a cauſe without which it is not attained; for, ſaith the forecited

author, lib. 12. page 504. cap. 24. Faith, contrition, and such dispositions, are laid down, in God's appointment, to be the condition of his infusing this grace; and so man obtaineth this justification, when, of his free-will, and otherwise, he is congruously disposed to receive the same; and, saith he, page 524. God infuseth grace with respect to man's contrition, *et ideo infundit quia contritus*, otherwise not. Although these dispositions be not *de condigno* meritorious of it, yet they are matter whereby, or out of which it is brought forth as a pre-existing material cause; and, in this, man's soul is not to be the subject capable only, (which we say) but the material cause.

5. For the way how, or instrumental cause, by which this is applied, (because this is no less necessary than other causes; for it cannot profit, if it be not applied) they maintain that to be done by the sacraments of the church (although some name the word and ministers also) these, according to their grounds, confer this grace *ex opere operato*, or by applying of them to persons so disposed, especially baptism and penance (that is, the priest's absolution after confession, which to them is a sacrament) this they say *ex Dei ordinatione*, *attritio*, *confert gratiam*, page 568; and, if there be not occasion of the sacrament, they may have it in their vow, and so be accepted without it, page 223. Baptism, they say, conferreth it *injusto*, *poenitentia contrito*, *Eucharistia justo*. Therefore are these two sacraments simply necessary to them, the first for original sin, the second for actual.

6. When one is thus justified by this first justification, although the blot of sin be removed, and the person be just and holy, there remaineth yet satisfaction to be made for the removing of the punishment, at least in part, and that, as some affirm, satisfaction condign, as Vasquez. 3. part. disp. 1. cap. 11. For which end they prescribe their pilgrimages, penances, fastings, vows, alms, dotations; and even purgatory itself, and soul-masses, come in here, for removing of the punishment, and making the satisfaction to God for their guilt. And because, where there are many sins, it will draw to thousands of years in purgatory; for they prescribe sometimes five, seven, ten, or twenty years for one sin, and they may be multiplied in one day, and so draw to a great length; therefore it is to them, as Bellarmine calleth it, a great difficulty what cometh of such whose satisfaction is not complete, as at the day of judgment, seeing it may draw 20000 years. He answereth it, either by the Pope's indulging of it, or by the greater intenseness of suffering, whereby to 300 or 400 years that may be contracted, De indulg. lib. 1. cap. 9. col. 1174.

7. Because heaven cannot be obtained, according to their principles, but by merit, and that by their own proper merit; therefore even these, who are justified by this first grace, must go about the works of holiness, as the account upon which they must attain heaven, even as Adam was to have done for life, if he had stood in his innocency; and, in this respect, they say, that Christ merited to procure God's promise to give life to our merits, and to accept of them, not as if his merit concurred therein to make them meritorious, but as an universal cause influencing them, that they may merit in a more excellent way, as Suarez speaketh, page 488. Therefore he distinguisheth young ones from others, because they are saved by Christ only; but saith, that no promise doth hold forth the reward to any for Christ's merit, but for their own, page 491; in which respect, to them Christ hath merited a new covenant of works, and strength of new to keep the same; and they are to stand and fall in the obtaining of life promised, according to their own performing of the condition of works in the use of that first grace, and all that a man hath to ground his expectation of obtaining heaven upon, is his conformity to this supposed bargain, for which that place, Matth. xix. is made use of, *If thou wilt enter into life*, &c.

In the last place, because man can never be accounted perfectly righteous, much less to merit any thing, so long as he hath sin dwelling in him, and his actions be defiled with the same; therefore, lest their contrivance be marred with this, they do account indwelling concupiscence not to be sin against the moral law, and many sins to be venial, and not to be mortal; which therefore do not hinder a person's merit or acceptation; nay, not their perfection and fulfilling of the law, which they suppose to be possible.

These are the grounds they lay for the throughing of their justification, and from these they draw several conclusions, that seem contrary, as that men may merit increase and perseverance in grace, and that *ex condigno*, that they may come to a perfection of righteousness, in respect of their

inherent holineſs, and fulfilling of the law of God; that one may ſupererogate, and ſo that there muſt be a ſtore-houſe of ſatisfaction; for, though they ſay one cannot merit for another, yet there being a conſideration of merit, and ſatisfaction both in all their good works, they may ſatisfy for another, when they do or ſuffer more than might expiate their own guilt; which would therefore be uſeleſs, if it were not to be extended to other ſaints, as Bellarmine feareth not to ſpeak, lib. 1. Indulgentiis, cap. 4. col. 1160. Upon this they found their indulgences and treaſure of ſaint's merits, which the Pope, by the fulneſs of his power, doth apply to be imputed to theſe who want of their own, (yet this way of imputation is alway rejected by them, in reference to our being juſtified by the merits of Chriſt.) They aſſert alſo, as they may well do, that this juſtification is uncertain to any, ſo that none can conclude, whether he be really ſo, or not: yea, they ſay, that it may be loſt, and one juſtified ſo now, may, thro' the want of good works, or his ſinfulneſs, periſh; or, if he be again recovered, it muſt be by abſolution and the ſacrament of penance, wherein the firſt juſtification is to be renewed, and grace again to be conferred. So that, although he get the firſt juſtification by Chriſt's merits only, yet may that be fallen from, as Adam fell from his covenant-ſtate, if that habitual grace be not improven in the practice of holy duties.

This is a ſhort view of their contrivance of the way of juſtification, which we have laid down out of themſelves, and have cited Suarez moſt frequently, becauſe he pretendeth to a mid-way in theſe queſtions, wherein many of their ſchoolmen do run into extremes; and they want not great confuſion, difference, and contradictions among themſelves in many of theſe tenets: ſo that it is no marvel to find different expreſſions of their judgment in theſe things.

Let us now enquire, if, according to the former grounds, a ſinner that is purſued by the law, may, with confidence, expect to be juſtified and abſolved before the tribunal of God's juſtice; and we confidently aſſert, that, according to theſe grounds, no fleſh living can be juſtified, which this one argument may make out. No ſinner can expect juſtification or pardon of ſin, but according to the grounds and terms laid down in the goſpel; but this way is not ſuch. *Ergo, &c.* Or, that contrivance of juſtification which doth overturn almoſt fully, moſt, if not all the truths of the goſpel, and is utterly inconſiſtent with the ſame, cannot be the way how a ſinner may be juſtified; but this is ſuch, &c. For making out of this, we ſhall, firſt, propoſe ſome general conſiderations. 2. More particularly touch ſome inconſiſtencies of the ſame. 3. Remove ſome objections. And, 4. Reſume the concluſion.

The firſt general we propoſe to be conſidered, is this, that the way which God hath laid down in the goſpel, for attaining of life by Chriſt Jeſus, doth formerly differ from that way of attaining life that he propounded to Adam: hence theſe two covenants of works and grace, and their conditions are frequently and directly oppoſed in the ſcripture, as being different and oppoſite, in reſpect of the account upon which men were to expect life; ſee Rom. x. 6, 7. &c. Gal. iii. But this way laid down, is in matter and form the ſame with the covenant of works in this reſpect, becauſe it foundeth a man's hope of expecting life and heaven, upon the merit of his own works, and obſerving of the commands, which theſe their grounds do confirm: 1. That they do compare his working and merit by it, to Adam's before he fell, and ſuppoſeth this to ſucceed now in the room of that, as in the forecited author, lib. 12. cap. 19. page 487, is clear. 2. That they ſtate the terms of life in theſe words, *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commands*, and *call the labourers to receive their hire*, Matth. xx. And ſo from this they ſay, Chriſt's merits have procured the Lord's re-entering of a covenant with us, wherein he promiſeth happineſs to our working as the condition thereof, *ibid.* page 488. And ſaith there is no promiſe of the acceptation of a ſinner but upon this account. And, 3. That they ſay, the way now to life hath the ſame threatnings and promiſes that the firſt had, and ſo they conclude, it is the ſame with it. And although they acknowledge Chriſt to have merited this promiſe to be made, and this grace to be given us, whereby we may keep it, yet doth that infer no alteration of the way or terms held out in that promiſe, in reſpect of the condition thereof, although it ſhew a different ground upon which it is built, and from which it floweth: if therefore the covenants differ, and a ſinner cannot now obtain life upon that ſame condition, and upon the ſame way that Adam did, (even though he be habitually renewed.) Then can he not come

to obtain life in this way laid down. But to ſay the former were to continue the covenant of works, and exclude the covenant of grace; this way therefore to life is utterly impoſſible.

2. If by the ſtrain of the goſpel Chriſt Jeſus be made all to us in reſpect of our peace and happineſs, and that immediately (that is, without the intervening of any new merit occaſioned by his merit) then the former way cannot be conſiſtent with the goſpel, becauſe immediately infuſed grace is made our former righteouſneſs or firſt juſtification; and our actual good works, our merit or ſecond juſtification: and theſe two are inconſiſtent together; for Chriſt cannot immediately be our righteouſneſs, as we ſtand before God, and inherent grace and good works alſo be immediately the ſame: becauſe according to the firſt, if it be aſked at the ſinner, what is thy righteouſneſs by which immediately thou dareſt appear before God, or expect abſolution and heaven from him? He is to anſwer, Chriſt and his ſatisfaction offered to me in the goſpel, and by faith received, this is the defence I mind to ſhelter myſelf with at the bar of his juſtice, and by which I expect to be ſaved. According to the laſt he were to anſwer that former queſtion, thus, inherent grace is that which maketh me acceptable to God, and my good works, and their condign merit is that upon which I expect heaven according to his promiſe made thereto. Which certainly would reliſh moſt uncomfortably to a challenged ſinner, and is contrary to the former, But the former is true, that by the goſpel, Chriſt Jeſus is immediately made our righteouſneſs, by whoſe merits we may have only confidence to appear before God, to expect remiſſion and ſalvation from him according to that ſcripture, 1 Cor. i. 30. *He is made to us of God, wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification and redemption*, Col. iii. 11. Chriſt is all, which is expreſsly mentioned in oppoſition to circumciſion and uncircumciſion, and every thing elſe, which are not admitted to be any thing to the believer in the former reſpects, but Chriſt alone, Phil. iii. 8, 9.

3. God's contrivance of the goſpel for the juſtifying of a ſinner through Chriſt Jeſus, is clearly holden out to be by a judicial transferring of our ſins, as a debt upon Chriſt the cautioner, and of his righteouſneſs and merit to us, to be imputed for our juſtification before God, without any reſpect had to our inherent holineſs or good works, whether done before or after juſtification, as may appear from theſe two places, 2 Corinthians v. 20. That Chriſt is ſaid to be made ſin for us, that we may be made the righteouſneſs of God through him: where this is clear, that by the covenant of redemption we are to be righteous by Chriſt, as Chriſt was ſin for us; but Chriſt was made ſin or ſentenced by juſtice for it, not by any infuſion of ſinful habits, (which were blaſphemous to think) but by having imputed to him the guilt of our ſin, in reſpect of the puniſhment thereof: it will follow therefore, that he is our righteouſneſs, or we are juſtified or made juſt by him, by having his righteouſneſs imputed to us, and accepted as performed in our name, without laying the weight upon any inherent qualification in us; and can there be a more clear way to expound what this is, to be made juſt by Chriſt, than by its oppoſite, what it is to be made ſin for us? The ſecond place is, Philip. iii. 8, 9. where Paul is ſeeking to be in readineſs for appearing before God's tribunal, and he was one who wanted not inherent grace, or actual good works, and in a great meaſure; yet in reference to God's acceptation, he can reſt no where but in Chriſt, not having his own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that righteouſneſs which is by faith in Chriſt: where we have, firſt, Paul looking on a righteouſneſs within him, which was his own, and that at the higheſt pitch of it: (for, it reſpecteth any poſterior time when he might be called to a reckoning) this righteouſneſs he diſclaimeth as not being that which would be accepted. 2. He looketh to a righteouſneſs without him, in Chriſt Jeſus, which he conſidereth as being the only ſhelter, even of a believer, from the wrath of God; ſo that if the queſtion be propoſed to Paul, what wilt thou chooſe to lippen unto? Where wilt thou chooſe to be found in the day of judgment? His anſwer would be, only in Chriſt. If it be aſked, what this is? He anſwereth, it is to have his righteouſneſs, in oppoſition to his own. If it be again aſked, how he cometh by it? He ſheweth, by faith in Chriſt he cometh to partake of his righteouſneſs, which he dare lippen more unto, than to his own. Whereby it appeareth, that the goſpel's way of juſtifying a ſinner, is by imputing of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, and by a ſinner's reſting upon it. For, this righteouſneſs, is not that which is procured by Chriſt, and

is inherently in the believer, but is that which is in Christ, and whereof the believer partaketh by hiding himself under it, and, by his faith, opposing it to justice, which can be done no other way than by imputation. Now, there being nothing more opposite to the imputation of Christ's righteousness, than the former doctrine, there can be nothing more opposite to the way of the gospel: and so if it be impossible to be justified without the imputation of Christ's righteousness, it is impossible to be justified by the way of the Papists.

4. The scripture holdeth forth God's way of reconciling sinners to himself, to be by way of covenanting, as Isa. lv. 2, 3. wherein God offereth, and the hearer receiveth, and closeth with his offer, upon which followeth God's acceptation of the person, as John i. 12. Heb. viii. Jer. xxxi. and his being reconciled to God. Hence there is so much spoken of covenanting in scripture, that the whole doctrine thereof beareth that name of covenant, or testament, and one that closeth with it cannot but be justified. Now, by this doctrine of justification by inherent grace, or merit of works, there is no place left for such covenanting upon such terms; yea, they are inconsistent together; therefore this cannot be the way of making up the breach between God and a sinner.

5. That justification which the gospel speaketh of, is that wherein faith hath a peculiar casualty beyond any other grace, as that which doth entitle a sinner unto pardon and justification by the virtue of Christ's righteousness, which it doth take hold of. Hence it is, that so frequently in scripture it is called *justification by faith*, and that, as opposite to all other graces in that respect, *the righteousness which is of faith*, and such like. Now, the former way is utterly inconsistent with this; therefore cannot be the way to salvation. And considering, that covenanting with God, imputation of Christ's righteousness, justification by faith, &c. are things so essential unto the upmaking of a sinner's breach with God; and that yet all of them are so great strangers, even in the very name to the Popish way of justification, and materially inconsistent with the same, it cannot be of God.

More particularly, we will find it overturn, 1. The nature of justification; and, at best, it doth put in sanctification in the room thereof; and there is never any distinct ground laid, by which a sinner may come to receive a sentence of absolution before God, but this, viz. justification is lost by the former doctrine; and they acknowledge no such thing distinct from regeneration or sanctification, as if no such act as justification was needful, or mentioned in scripture, as distinct from these; and, in effect, it leaveth a sinner to a way of salvation that wanteth justification in it: and therefore cannot profit him; for, by denying that which is the formal cause of justification, they deny itself, seeing that giveth it a being.

2. It derogateth from the nature of grace, and that in several respects: 1. As to grace's efficacy, that it hangeth at man's free-will. 2. As to its sovereignty, that it boundeth it to man's disposing of himself. As to its freedom, in that it appointeth man's own satisfaction for the removing of punishment, and his own merit for the obtaining of reward; and, as to its spiritual sublime way of working, making it carnally to be conferred *ex opere operato*.

3. It enervateth the merit of Christ: for, at the best it attributeth to that only the restoring of a covenant of works, which may be entered, kept, and broken, according to men's working; and, as it were, the procuring to men a new stock of habitual grace, with which they are to trade, and procure their own happiness by their after merit. In reference to which, if they fail, Christ's merit, and their habitual grace, will not profit them; therefore the weight of obtaining life is laid there. But the removing of the punishment, and the obtaining of the reward, they ascribe to human satisfaction and good works, and that by reason of their own intrinsic worth, without the imputation of Christ's merit, except in respect of the general influence formerly alledged; yea, they fear not to call saints their redeemers, in so far, as by their works of supererogation, they suppose them to have satisfied in something for them, as Bellarmine asserteth, lib. 1. de indulg. cap. 4. col. 1161. and at most they are sanctified by Christ's merit, but after that they do for themselves.

4. It wrongeth the Lord himself: 1. In his grace, as hath been said. 2. In his justice, as if he were to be satisfied by creature satisfaction, and that in such things as many men would not be pleased with; yea, they scar not to affirm, that such holiness could not but have satisfied him, and merited, al-

tho' Christ had never suffered. Which sheweth also how little they respect Christ's merit, as the forecited Suarez, page 484, and 486. asserteth. 3. It wrongeth his sovereignty, in that it tieth him in proper justice to be man's debtor, and that not by virtue of his promise only, but from the consideration of the intrinsic value and merit of men's good works, that he were not just, if he did not reward them.

5. It wrongeth God's covenant: for either it alloweth no covenant at all, or quite altereth the nature and terms thereof, and turneth it to works as hath been said. For it doth still make the stipulation on man's part the same which doth constitute the form of the covenant of works, however one be enabled to perform that stipulation, which certainly was by grace, even to Adam.

6. It enervateth faith, excluding altogether that faith that receiveth Christ, and taketh hold on him, and closeth with the covenant of grace, and leaveth no more to a believer but a naked assent to the truth of God, which is in the devils: and utterly secludeth faith from any particularity of application in the making of our peace with God in any respect.

7. It overturneth the truth concerning man's natural estate, in giving him a free-will in reference to spiritual good, and that before the infusion of grace, and in making this acting of free-will a necessary disposition to justification, and a necessary condition of merit.

8. It corrupteth the holy law of God, 1. In its end, as if now it were to be the condition of God's covenant upon which life is to be attained. 2. In its meaning, as if it did not condemn natural concupiscence; and many other things are exempted by them from it, that they may make the fulfilling thereof possible.

9. It denieth the true nature of sin, and maketh many things that are contrary to the law of God to be no sin; as by its excluding of the remainings of original sin, and many others (by that fond distinction of venial and mortal sins) from being accounted sins that make men liable to eternal wrath.

10. It overturneth the nature of the sacraments, 1. In making these to be sacraments which are not, as penance, extreme unction, &c. 2. In attributing other ends, and another manner of attaining to these ends, than agreeth with the word, or can quiet a conscience in reference thereto, as the conferring of grace *ex opere operato.*

11. It doth not leave discipline undestroyed: for it abuseth the power of the keys in this absolution, to make up a sacrament and confer grace, and give indulgences, and such like, which no other sober man will think a sufficient way for founding of his peace, or to be a defence against a challenge in the day of judgment.

12. It doth altogether overturn that consolation that God alloweth his people: for, 1. There is a great anxiety in the supposed way of attaining it. 2. No certainty of having of it, and so it can yield comfort to none. 3. According to their principles, it may be lost, and one that is justified to day may be in a state of damnation to-morrow. 4. It maketh their recovery difficult, and almost desperate: for, as Bellarmine, in the forecited place asserteth, it may have with it 20,000 years continuance in purgatory. Of this uncomfortableness, and of all this matter, more may be seen on chapter ix. lecture 1.

13. It excludeth knowledge, and crieth up ignorance; so that Bellar. lib. de Justific. doth not fear to say, that faith ought rather to be defined by ignorance than knowledge, *per ignorantiam potius quam per notitiam.*

14. It overturneth and corrupteth the nature of holiness and good works, and all spiritual worship, putting in, I cannot tell what, will-worship, external rites, &c. in the place of all practice, mumbling and muttering unknown words for prayer, afflicting of the body for mortification, and many such like things have they.

These are but a part of the horrible absurdities of this way, and yet we suppose are sufficient to demonstrate the truth of what we assert, viz. that this way is involved with many fundamental inconsistencies with the truth and way of the gospel, and and so cannot be a possible way of attaining salvation; for it maketh men to count many sins not to be sins, and so never to repent of them: the sins that it discovereth, it leadeth them not to the right satisfaction, which only can be accepted for them, viz. Christ's righteousness, but to their own inherent holiness and good works; yea, even this they corrupt; and what they account saving grace, as faith, repentance, humility, and such like, are nothing less than such indeed before God.

If it be again further aſked, what then are we to eſteem of ſuch as lived under Popery, if all of them be excluded from the obtaining of ſalvation? We anſwer with a fourfold diſtinction, 1. We would diſtinguiſh theſe who might live under Popery, and yet be keeped from the infection thereof, and no way belong to that body, from the native members thereof; of ſuch we have ſpoken, chap. xi. and xii. to ſuch the Lord ſpeaketh, chap. xviii. 4. *Come out of Babylon my people:* ſuch were rather captives under her tyranny than ſubjects of her kingdom: of theſe there is no queſtion, but as the Lord ſealed them for himſelf, chap. vii. ſo did he always ſingularly own them, and accept of them. 2. We may diſtinguiſh Papiſts in theſe that are Antichriſtian worſhippers, and others who are ſuperſtitious, and in ſome things are erroneous: we call them Antichriſtian, who receive the beaſt's mark and number, and give him worſhip in more than an human manner, aſcribing to him a certain divinity, infallibility, univerſal ſupremacy, and ſuch like Antichriſtian attributes; and who, 2. Receive his doctrine in the complex contrivance thereof, which is his number; and 3. Who join in his worſhip, wherein it is Antichriſtian, as praying to ſaints, worſhipping of images, adoration of the maſs, and ſuch like. Theſe in the former aſſertion we have excluded.

Again, we call them ſuperſtitious Papiſts, who might not altogether have keeped a diſtance from that church in every thing, but many ways have been tainted with their ſuperſtitions, yet ſo as to be keeped from an Antichriſtian conjunction with that ſociety or union therewith in things that are plainly Antichriſtian; but might be teſtifying againſt ſuch by ſome ſincere zeal and pure light. Thus, 1. We ſuppoſe that many did give ſome reverence to the Popes, who yet did utterly abhor their groſs uſurpations and blaſphemies, his aſſuming to himſelf what was proper to God and Jeſus Chriſt, and deteſt the baſe flatteries of others that aſcribe theſe to him, as to be ſupreme head of all, and that both in civil and eccleſiaſtical things, to be infallible, to be countable to none, to authorize traditions, and ſuch like; and might only give him ſome reverence, either from human policy and eccleſiaſtic conſtitutions, ſuch as was given to archbiſhops, patriarchs, &c. Or, they might eſteem him (though erroneouſly and ignorantly) to be a church-officer, for meddling with things incumbent to church-officers to meddle in, without any opinion of his illimited or abſolute power, even as men might err in accounting biſhops, archbiſhops, patriarchs, &c. of divine authority, altho' they might diſclaim Antichriſtian tyrannous uſurpation and practices in them, and ſeek only to have that power ſubſervient to edification. 2. Further in fundamental doctrines they may be pure, altho' not altogether without errors, even as were many of the fathers. 3. In worſhip they might join many ſuperſtitious rites, as croſſes, altars, bowings, &c. yet abſtain from worſhipping of ſaints and idols, and from accounting the maſs as propitiatory ſacrifice, altho' they might join in the euchariſt, and ſuch like, of ſuch ſort were Gerſoni, Bernard, and ſome others in the midſt of Popiſh darkneſs, who were not altogether free of theſe ſuperſtitions, yet ſtill did check the Popiſh pride and uſurpation, and bound their authority, and preſerved the doctrine of remiſſion of ſins thro' faith in Chriſt's righteouſneſs pure, and preſſed holineſs in ſome ſpiritual manner, even in the midſt of many ſuperſtitions that abound; and whereof they were not altogether free.

We ſuppoſe theſe laſt are no ways to be claſſed with the former, but might have had acceſs to God's mercy thro' Chriſt Jeſus: becauſe, 1. Although they had errors, yet were they not ſuch as were inconſiſtent with ſincerity, and the nature of the adminiſtration of grace. And, 2. Becauſe they keeped the way of attaining pardon thro' Chriſt Jeſus clear, which being followed by them in their practice (as no doubt it was by many) might, thro' God's gracious dealing with them, make them acceptable before him, ſo that their fallings being of infirmity and not of malice, might not be imputed to them; but they accepted as penitents, being ſincerely affected with what they conceived to diſhonour God, although they did not diſcern every thing that was ſin againſt him.

Diſt. 3. We would diſtinguiſh Papiſts living ſo, and dying ſo, from ſuch as, though living ſo, might yet, by God's grace, have repentance conferred upon them at their death. This hath been found by experience, that many who have been tenacious of the doctrines and ſuperſtitions of Popery in their life, have been yet at their death brought to abhor them, and to betake them to

the righteouſneſs of Chriſt alone for their juſtification. Theſe, where that repentance and faith were true, as no queſtion often it was, are no ways to be excluded, or accounted worſhippers of the beaſt.

4. Diſtinguiſh times, ſomething might, through God's grace, be more diſpenſed with in theſe times of more univerſal darkneſs, than afterward in the breaking out of light, and in God's erecting a ſtandard for his truth in the earth, and bringing forth a viſible church-ſtate for his people to join in, which formerly was not: hence communion in church-fellowſhip with the church of Rome is much more dangerous now than that: which will appear upon theſe conſiderations, 1. Becauſe the Lord doth more peremptorily now threaten her and her followers, and addeth more ſevere certifications to the ſame, as we may ſee in this place: now, this is proclaimed, *If any man worſhip the beaſt, &c. the ſame ſhall drink of the wine of the wrath of God.* And again, chap. viii. 4. 2. Their ſtay now is more inexcuſable, becauſe the Lord hath opened a door of freedom, and they refuſe it, even as the people's ſtay in Babylon, while the captivity laſted, was not imputed to them; yet, ſtaying after they proclaimed liberty, was deteſted, and having with it ingratitude againſt the Redeemer, and deſpiſing of their redemption offered, and a willing ſubmiſſion to that bondage, contrary to the warnings and advertiſements given them, and God's call to abandon the ſame. 3. After this alſo, things in the doctrine and worſhip of the church of Rome become more deadly; for, Babylon refuſed to be cured, and, in the Lord's righteous judgment, it came to paſs that their doctrines became more corrupt, that thereby he might puniſh their contempt of, and enmity at, the light which he had made to ſhine. Hence it is that the latter ſchoolmen, eſpecially the Jeſuits, are more corrupt than the former, as may be marked in the writings of divers ſchoolmen upon Thomas, who do mutilate and corrupt things in him; ſo as they may agree with the late determinations of the Pope, and the council of Trent, and may be moſt oppoſite to thoſe they call heretics: an inſtance whereof may be ſeen, in Cajetan, in 3d tom. qu. 48. art. 5. where, explaining that aſſertion of Thomas, that only Chriſt ought to be called our Redeemer (which formerly we had Bellarmine contradicting) he layeth down, for the qualifying thereof, that bull of Leo the X. concerning indulgences, and the application of the ſaints purchaſes to others, which was ſent to him when he was his legate at Germany, and forceth ſuch a ſenſe upon Thomas as might agree with it. Thus alſo, as we may ſee, was done in the council of Trent, wherever, in all debates among divines, the moſt corrupt ſide was inclined to, and concluded. 4. Remaining in Popery, now, hath more contempt with it of God's calling, and hath greater ſnares, as is ſaid; and therefore hath leſs ground, now, either to expect preſervation from ſin or wrath, becauſe God's call requireth ſeparation now more fully, and in a more diſtinct manner than formerly he did, Rev. xviii. *Come out of her, my people, be not partakers of her ſin, leſt ye partake of her plagues:* which doth hold forth a ſpecial hazard, in reference both to ſin and wrath, after the Lord's making this to be proclaimed more than formerly it was.

LECTURE IV.

Ver. 12. *Here is the patience of the ſaints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jeſus.*

13. *And I heard a voice from heaven, ſaying unto me, Write, Bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their labours, and their works do follow them.*

14. *And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one ſat, like unto the Son of Man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a ſharp ſickle.*

15. *And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that ſat on the cloud, Thruſt in thy ſickle, and reap; for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harveſt of the earth is ripe.*

16. *And he that ſat on the cloud, thruſt in his ſickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.*

17. *And another angel came out of the temple, which is in heaven, he alſo having a ſharp ſickle.*

18. *And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the ſharp ſickle, ſaying, Thruſt in thy ſharp ſickle, and gather the cluſters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.*
19. *And the angel thruſt in his ſickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and caſt it into the great wine-preſs of the wrath of God.*
20. *And the wine-preſs was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the wine-preſs, even unto the horſe bridles, by the ſpace of a thouſand and ſix hundred furlongs.*

HAVING ſhewed the foretold threatened and begun ruin of Babylon, in the former part of the chapter, before the Spirit deſcribe the perfecting of that judgment, he caſteth in two words needful for the ſtrengthening of God's people: the firſt is, ver. 12. and reſpecteth the former words, wherein Babylon's ruin was foretold; yet, for the time, Antichriſt rageth, and the ſaints ſuffer. This verſe comforteth and encourageth them againſt that temptation, two ways: 1. By granting that, indeed, this would be an occaſion to exerciſe and try the faith of God's people, and make it known (which an hard time doth beſt) whether they will *keep the commands of God*, in their practice making conſcience of theſe, *and the faith of Jeſus Chriſt;* that is, it will diſcover true faith from counterfeit, and who are true profeſſors of that faith that is true; yet, withal, God's people ſhall have no loſs by it, it will be but temporary, and *here is* their trial, that is God's end to exerciſe. Grace and duty are beſt tried in an ill time, a ſuffering time evidenceth honeſty more than proſperity; and ſuffering is God's peoples ordinary lot, whether Antichriſt be falling or riſing.

The ſecond word caſt in for comforting God's people, is from the bleſſedneſs of the dead (it may be eſpecially of theſe that ſuffered under Antichriſt) that die well in that difficult time.

The firſt conſolation is from the outgate God ſhall give when theſe trials ſhall be over, and Antichriſt ruined. The ſecond, from what might comfort them in hardeſt ſufferings for the time: it is caſten in here before the ſad things coming be ſet down, for two reaſons: 1. To be a warning of the high degree that theſe troubles would come unto, ſo that theſe that were living ſhould count the dead happy, that died well, who were freed from theſe days. See Solomon, Eccl. iv. 1. praiſing the dead more than the living.

The ſecond thing in the ſcope is, to encourage and comfort the godly that took the right way of living, ſo as to die in the Lord; theſe troubles ſhould not mar their bleſſedneſs, but though the earth ſhould triumph over them when they were dead, as chap. xi. yet even then they were and ſhould be bleſſed; and therefore needed not fear or faint under theſe trials which were coming.

There are four particulars in theſe words: 1. A preface, implying a weightineſs in that which was to be delivered. 2. A plain maxim, *Bleſſed*, &c. 3. A qualification not reſtricting that bleſſedneſs to ſuch a time, but ſhewing that it is ſpecially agreeable and applicable to it, *from henceforth*. 4. The reaſons of this application, *that they may reſt*.

The preface cometh in by way of diverſion, as if it were a ſingular thing, thereby to make what is ſaid the more remarkable: 1. It is not John's inventing, *he heard a voice*. 2. It is no earthly voice, but a ſentence *from heaven*, ſuch as ſhould be reſpected. 3. What is ſaid, is to be recorded as uſeful to God's people, *Write*, ſaith he to John, which, except it be ſome ſpecial doctrine, is not uſually repeated.

The plain doctrine or maxim that ſhould be written in the hearts of all Chriſtians is, *Bleſſed are they that die in the Lord*. By which words, three things are holden forth: 1. An end common to all, which is death. 2. A difference in dying; and that is to die in the Lord; which is peculiar to ſome, and oppoſite to dying in our ſins, John viii. 24. as Chriſt ſaith; that is, in effect, under the curſe, and unreconciled to God through Chriſt: ſo dying in him, is to be found in him by faith, Philip. iii. 9. 3. A great odds and difference of the conſequents of theſe divers deaths; the one are bleſſed; that is, fully happy, freed from all miſery, and enjoying fully, unchangeably, and eternally what may make them completely happy, even God himſelf, Matth. v. 8. Or, the words contain a great end men naturally aim at, viz. bleſſedneſs; and, 2. The compendious clear way of attaining it, by *dying in Chriſt:* implying, 1. A being in him, 2 Corinth. v. 17. which is to be a believer by a faith united to him. 2. To live in him; this is preſuppoſed alſo; (for death followeth life) Gal. ii. 24. that is, an exer-

ciſing of faith, not only for attaining ſpiritual life, but for the fruits and acts of it alſo, living like one in Chriſt, and by virtue of that life bringing forth fruits, John xv. 4. 3. To die then in him, is the adding to theſe faith, exerciſing itſelf on Chriſt, in reference to death when it cometh, chearfully, willingly, boldly and confidently in the faith of God's promiſe committing itſelf to him, 2 Tim. i. 12. as Stephen, Acts vii. and carrying with it the ſenſe of its own naughtineſs, even to death, notwithſtanding whereof it reſteth itſelf over upon his gracious promiſe; and, like David, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. dieth there contentedly; theſe are bleſſed. This in general of dying in him. If it be applied to ſuch in particular, who ſuffering for him, keep faith in him to the end, it will ſuit to the ſcope, as if he ſaid, theſe that ſuffer for Chriſt rightly by perſecution under Antichriſt (and thus to die for him is to die in him) ſhall be bleſſed, as if he had ſuffered under heathens, although the world think there is a great difference.

The third is, the qualification added with its confirmation, *yea, ſaith the Spirit from henceforth*, &c. which doth imply, that theſe who die in Chriſt are from the time of their death bleſſed, as freed from that fancied purgatory, and all labours, which certainly is truth; otherwiſe neither could they from the inſtant of their death be called bleſſed, nor yet ſaid to be at reſt from their labours. For, 1. The bleſſedneſs here is brought in as ſomething peculiarly encouraging the godly againſt theſe coming trials. 2. The word, *from henceforth* (*aparti*, from now) looketh to the inſtant the propheſy relateth unto, as when Chriſt ſaith, Matth. xxvi. *from henceforth I will not drink of the fruit of the vine:* it is, as if he had ſaid, from this time forth; ſo here, otherwiſe it would be from thenceforth, if it related to death ſimply; beſide the connection here will not agree, *that they may reſt;* it is not *for they ſhall reſt:* for *in a* is caſually to be underſtood. If it be aſked then, what peculiar happineſs or encouragement is holden out to the godly under Antichriſt's troubles now? *Anſw.* 1. It ſtrengtheneth them againſt the many calumnies of perſecutors, reckoning them not martyrs but ill doers: for now they ſuffer from Chriſtians not from heathens, as martyrs did formerly. The Spirit ſaith not only *before this*, but from *henceforth* ſhall they be fully bleſſed that die in Chriſt, even under Popes, as well as heathen emperors. 2. They are now bleſſed, becauſe freed from many great troubles, croſſes and temptations that were coming on the world for rejecting the goſpel now preached, in which outward troubles the godly living are involved, Iſa. lvii. 1, 2. 3. Their bleſſedneſs is the more now, becauſe hell groweth hotter, verſe 9, 10. and it is more mercy to be freed of it. 4. They have this uſe and advantage of their pains, as to have peace and clearneſs at their death, no fear of purgatory; and clearneſs of ſalvation (now after the Popiſh uncertainty is baniſhed) giveth them quiet, which is a great advantage in this time; yea, whatever the world think of them, who, in zeal for Chriſt do ſuffer under Antichriſt, God will eſteem and reward (of grace) their ſuffering, Matth. v. 16. and take ſpecial notice of what teſtimony is given for him.

The words, *yea, ſaith the Spirit*, are to confirm this truth to be divine, becauſe the world would not believe it.

The fourth thing confirmeth theſe reaſons, viz. why from henceforth they are bleſſed, 1. They are freed *from their labours*, which is ſuppoſed in their life they ſuffered. 2. *Their works do follow them;* for theſe labours they have joy: theſe ſufferings work to them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; and there is a proportionableneſs in their glory to their ſuffering, 2 Cor. iv. 17. ſuitable to it, though not deſerved by it, Rom. viii. 17. Therefore are theſe works ſaid to follow in reſpect of the fruits of them, but not to go before as cauſes to procure an entry. In a word, God remembereth their good works, and in heaven they have the fruits of them, Iſaiah iii. 10.

Verſe 14. We come now to the laſt part of the chapter, which ſetteth forth God's executing his judgments againſt Antichriſt and his kingdom in deeds, when words do not the buſineſs. It is ſet out in two ſimilitudes, one of an harveſt, whereby the world is compared to a field, the wicked to corn, and the execution of judgment to reaping, like as in the other ſimilitude of a vintage; both of them ſet out, 1. The multitude of wicked men that are like fields of corn and cluſters of grapes, good men like berries here and there. 2. A growth of ſin, and an height of ripeneſs that it cometh unto, as corn's at harveſt. 3. A readineſs of judgment, and eaſineſs of executing it, as with a ſickle: both which ſimilitudes are

borrowed from Joel iii. 13. *Put ye in the ſickle, for the harveſt is ripe, come get you down, for the preſs is full*, that is, for the wickedneſs is great: and, Jer. li. 33. the like is ſpoken of Babylon.

For underſtanding of this obſcure place (as ſoberly we ought to ſearch in what is apparently to come, for the moſt part, if not for all) we would conſider and obſerve theſe four things concerning it.

1. That both theſe ſimilitudes hold forth wrath and ſad judgments to come. 1. Concerning the laſt it is certain: for what is gathered is caſt in the wine-preſs of God's wrath, and the ſimilitudes are every way alike, harveſt and vintage; ſharp ſickles are the inſtruments, and they are both ripe. Beſide, theſe places, Joel iii. 13. and Jer. li. 33. hold out an harveſt of wrath when wickedneſs is ripe, which ſimilitudes may well be made uſe of here, when there is clearly an alluſion to Babylon: ſo they ſeem to be of one nature, though different in degree.

Again, the ſcope here cleareth it, for, its the fulfilling of theſe former threatnings of the preceding angels, and the ſummary expreſſion of what followeth in the vials, which are degrees of the ſame judgment, which aſcendeth from the leſs to the greater, as the expoſition will clear.

2. Conſider, that though both hold out judgments, yet apparently different judgments, not in kind or object; but, 1. In degree, the vintage is a greater judgment, as the cloſe of all. 2. In time, as it is greater, ſo it is after, as the vintage is after the harveſt in the ſeaſon of it. 3. It is like alſo different in the inſtruments or inferior agents: therefore it is ſaid, *another angel.* 4. The harveſt is ripe, but the vintage is fully ripe; ſin is at a greater height. 5. The firſt inſtrument is a ſickle, verſe 15. But the ſecond, a ſharp ſickle, verſe 18. When the commiſſion is given to thruſt in.

3. Conſider, that Antichriſt and his kingdom is the object of both, 1. It is the ſcope here: for it is Babylon and her worſhippers who were threatned by the former angels. 2. When it is further explained and enquired into, it will be found to be the ſame under the vials, chap. xvi. and chap. xix. which is clear to be on the beaſt's kingdom.

4. To enquire more particularly, unto what particular judgments and times they relate. In ſhort, we conceive them to hint at the judgments under the ſeven trumpets, and enlarged under the vials, chap. xvi. yet more particularly to hold out the laſt judgment on the beaſt and his kingdom, but not the laſt on the world: for, 1. This judgment of the vintage ſeemeth to be the battle of Armageddon, largely proſecuted, chap. xix. ver. 10. as appeareth by ver. 15. of that chapter: he hath that for his name to tread the *wine-preſs of the wrath of God;* and his armies followed him for the executing of this ſame judgment on the whore, or beaſt.

Now this being a final judgment on the beaſt, it can probably be no other ſo likely as this, where Chriſt doth the thing, from which he hath that name, verſe 16. chapter xix. yet this belongeth to the ſixth vial, probably there being a large deſcription of many things after this, and a new battle of Gog and Magog, chap. xx. 8. and then the end cometh, verſe 9, 10, &c. 2. Then it will follow, that by the harveſt is meaned the judgment on the beaſt's ſeat under the fifth vial, that being the other remarkable ſtroke on Antichriſt, (viz. the firſt harveſt) on his ſeat or ſtate; or, more generally, it may take in God's firſt judgments on him which yet do not deſtroy him: and ſo the vintage will be more univerſal on him and his followers.

The ſcope and ſum will turn to this, 1. That when Antichriſt groweth worſe by the word, the Lord will ſeverely, by judgments, execute wrath on him and his, and that certainly and ſickerly. 2. To ſhew by what method the Lord will proceed, firſt, by leſſer judgments, then by greater, he will make a full end in due time when all is ripe, he will take them as they ripen. 3. By what means, ſome executing, ſome praying, and Chriſt himſelf over-ruling all.

We come to the words. The 1. Judgment is ſet down, ver. 14, 15, and 16. containing, 1. The perſon executing this judgment. 2. The incitement he hath to it, verſe 15. 3. The execution, verſe 16.

The perſon is deſcribed in the 14th verſe, beſide a preface of John's, *I looked, and behold*, which ſhould make this to be obſerved. The perſon executing the judgment is ſet out in four properties. If it be aſked, who it is? For *Anſw.* We conceive Chriſt to be principally meaned here, yet ſo as inferior agents, who are made uſe of by him who is the principal, are not any way to be ſecluded.

That he is principally underſtood, will appear, 1. By comparing this treading with that name Chriſt getteth, chap. xix. 15. He treadeth who is *the Lord of lords*. 2. The properties agree well and only to him principally, 1. *He rideth on a cloud* when he cometh to judgment, Iſa. xix. 1. None hath ſuch a throne as he, and he is ſaid to come *in the clouds with power and great glory*, Matth. xxv. It is called *a cloud and a white cloud*, 1. To ſhew ſovereignty and glory in the Judge. 2. Speedineſs and ſwiftneſs in coming to execute. 3. By *whiteneſs* is meant not only gloriouſneſs but innocency and ſtraightneſs of proceeding. Second property, *He is like the Son of Man:* by which title Chriſt is deſcribed, chap. i. 13. and it can well agree to no other. Third property, *He hath a golden crown on his head;* ſignifying, 1. Authority, he is a crowned King and that with a *crown of gold*, ſignifying ſtatelineſs, Pſal. xxi. and proſperous ſucceſs in his undertakings and conqueſts. Fourth property, *He hath in his hand a ſharp ſickle*, that is, an inſtrument wherewith they uſed to reap, as we mow hay with a ſcythe. By this is ſet out Chriſt's readineſs, furniture and power, to execute judgment on wicked men: as readily and eaſily as a man cutteth down graſs or corn with a ſharp ſickle, he will mow them down.

Yet though we look upon Chriſt as a principal agent, we do not exclude inferior inſtruments. Hence the ſecond angel which cometh out to the vintage, is ſo deſcribed as the inferior agents are, yet in that Chriſt is chief, as is ſaid. Beſide, chap. xvii. it is ſaid, God ſhall put it in the hearts of kings to execute judgment on the whore, and hate her: and, it is like, Chriſt now appearing with a crown as a King, may ſignify his uſe-making of ſuch, and ſo appearing as King of kings, chap. xix. in this work.

2. The incitation that Chriſt getteth to delay no longer, verſe 15. hath theſe two things, 1. The party urging. 2. The motive uſed to perſuade him. The party is *an angel*, and that *out of the temple:* by an angel, we underſtand, as formerly, ſome miniſter or miniſters, as mouths of congregations, interpoſing with Chriſt ſeriouſly to execute his wrath. This prayer ſuiteth with the ſaints practice pointed at, chap. xvi. See alſo, Jer. xxxiii. It agreeth well alſo with the practice of ſaints under Antichriſt, and with the Lord's way of ſtirring up people to pray before he deliver fully, Dan. ix. 23. for, this voice being to Chriſt from an angel that cometh out of the church (repreſented by the temple, becauſe in it miniſters of old uſed there to ſerve) it muſt neceſſarily be vented in praying, and not in commanding. And the angel muſt be no proper angel but a figurative, as before. By *his coming out of the temple*, alſo may be holden forth, 1. Their joint concurrence in that ſuit who were in the church. 2. A liberty that was now in profeſſing ſuch petitions, whereas before they were ſhut up in the temple, chap. xi. 1.

This angel's ſpeech containeth, 1. His ſuit, *thruſt in thy ſickle*, delay no longer. 2. The motives or reaſons (for we ought to ſeek nothing, eſpecially of this kind, but what is well grounded) are two in general, *the time for thee to reap is come*, holding forth, 1. That there was time ſet to the judgment. 2. When it is come, then it is time to pray, as Dan. ix. 3. with 13. This word, *the time for thee*, ſeemeth to point out one eſpecially intereſted in this office, which muſt be Chriſt. The 2d motive is more particular, confirming the former, *for the harveſt of the earth is ripe*. By harveſt, is underſtood in the prophets, eſpecially ſpeaking of Babylon, as was ſaid, a full return of judgment, Jer. li. 33. By ripeneſs is underſtood a fulneſs and height of ſin, Joel iii. ſo together holding forth ripe ſin, and ready judgment; ſin hath its ſowing and growth and ripening, and ſo wrath anſwerable is treaſured up till the harveſt time, as God ſaid to the Amorites, Gen. xv. their cup was not full; and ſin may be long in ripening for hundreds of years. There is a ſet time for mercy, Pſal. cii. and a ſet time for judgment alſo. The meaning in ſhort is, Antichriſt's ſin is become great, aggreged with many circumſtances as now ripened, and when our Lord appeared as on his way to execute judgment, his church and people ſtepped in to beg that it might be ſo, which accordingly (verſe 16.) is granted; and fields of wicked men are deſtroyed, poſſibly that which Antichriſt lived on; and the harveſt he had in the earth by God's judgments was deſtroyed. However, what the angel had to execute, is inſtantly done upon that petition, and accordingly it followeth, verſe 16. in two things, according to commiſſion he putteth in his ſickle. Then *the earth was reaped*, eaſily was the judgment executed which he intend-

ed: there is no more, but *it was reaped;* when he beginneth, he maketh an end.

The second similitude followeth, verse 17. of the vintage, which is both a sorer degree of judgment and posterior to the former; sin being now riper, even fully ripe, their grapes of Sodom are cut down, gathered and cast into the wine-press of God's wrath, it being usual to the prophets to use this similitude, Isa. lxiii. 2, 3, 4.

It hath also three parts, 1. The executioner is described, verse 17. 2. His incitement to proceed, verse 18. 3. The execution. This executioner is an angel, yet diversely described from the former, and called another: yet comparing it with chap. xix. 15. Christ must be understood as principal, but seeing he doth these works mediately (as in that same chapter by armies on horseback) sometimes he is represented, because they act by him; sometimes the types more formally represent them who are agents, because he maketh use of them: however when he is represented, they are not secluded, *& contra;* he is not when the types resemble them most; and the putting these two agents together, it sheweth, that tho' Christ doth by instruments, yet that himself first appeareth, because the work was great, and the church weak; extraordinarily he beginneth, but when the church multiplieth, he provideth him instruments out of her.

The instruments, or agent, is called an angel, (as these who pour out the vials are) yet we conceive them not to be understood as properly so; seeing battles and horses are not obscurely mentioned here, and chap. xix. to be made use of in the execution of these plagues, but the manner of the expression of things in this book, is in the terms of heaven. It pointeth at some fit ready instrument Jesus Christ shall have to make use of when he shall have to do, one or more to cut down and cast these grapes in the wine-press; but, chapter xix. he treadeth it himself. Two things are spoken concerning this angel. *He came out of the temple which is in heaven*, that is, some member or members of his church, here called heaven; for it was the wine of the earth, that is, of the wicked, and not of the church, which was to be gathered. 2. He is armed even with a *sharp sickle*, (such as Christ had) to shew it was that same power whereby this instrument acted, the armour and strength was of the supreme agent. Hence, chap. xix. (which we take to be the same judgment with this, and ending God's controversy on the beast) he as king rideth foremost, and the armies of heaven follow him to this battle: yet none have armies but he, and we cannot conceive them acting but he is on their head. Hence we may think it the less absurdity that the petition again for furtherance of the work is renewed to this angel, although it be not absurd to conceive this angel to be a minister of the gospel (as Levites served at the altar) giving direction to such as Christ should chuse to execute his judgments, as one of the beasts giveth the angels the vials, chap. xv. 7. and so his power over the fire will be to be understood, as chap. xi. of the witnesses their having power over fire, and divers other plagues.

Verse 18. The incitation is renewed: God will be called on in every step: in which ye have, 1. The suiter described. 2. The suit, and its reasons are set down; both which differ from what is spoken of by the former intercessor, verse 15. the suiter is called an angel, but hath two peculiar properties,

1. He cometh *forth from the altar*, which import some more retired, secret, holy place than the temple: we can expound it no otherwise than we did, chapter vi. 9, 10. in the fifth seal, to hold out heaven, ordinarily set out by the most holy. 2. He had power over the fire: not as one peculiarly separated to govern that element, nor one commissionated to execute judgment himself by fire, properly or figuratively to be understood; for then he needed not deal with him who is properly commissionated for that end: and that angel, chap. xvi. is called the angel of the waters; not as having a peculiar charge ordinarily of them or over them, but as peculiarly commissionated in reference to them with his vial (yet it is not properly to be understood of waters, as will appear) it holdeth out then (to speak so) some contest and fight they had with fire, and that the fire did not prevail over them, but they overcame it by the blood of the Lamb, chapter xii. 11. and by their faith and patience, Heb. xi. being invincibly armed against all torments. In a word, we take it to be the reviving of the martyrs cry, which was against heathen persecutors, chapter vi. Now, their number is complete, and there is not that ground of suspending the judgment which was given in that place: this cometh to remembrance before God, who findeth in her blood of all the prophets and

apoſtles, becauſe they have ſerved themſelves heirs to all; and this guilt hath a loud cry before the Lord to procure the haſtening and cloſing of Antichriſt's judgment. So the firſt angel ſetteth out the cry of all the church militant; the ſecond more eſpecially of ſufferers triumphant. See chap. vi. This angel's ſuit in two things differeth from and goeth beyond the former, 1. The ſuit is, *thruſt in thy ſharp ſickle*, it was ſimply ſickle before: this is added to ſhew a ſeverity in this judgment, and a holy preſſing in this angel beyond the former. 2. The grapes are ſaid to be fully ripe, ſo there needeth no longer waiting. The harveſt was ripe before, now the grapes are fully ripe for they have had more time. 2. They had more means, and former leſſer judgments were deſpiſed. 3. They have had more light by what hath paſt. 4. More wickedneſs hath fallen in their hand notwithſtanding, and out over the belly of that light, eſpecially perfection: and now the number of the witneſſes or martyrs ſeemeth to be nigh complete, and therefore the ſin is riper now than it was, chap. vi. or yet under the former ſimilitude. Thus, as it were, heaven and earth concur to pull down Antichriſt.

The execution followeth, verſe 19. and 20. in which theſe things are conſiderable, 1. There is no longer delay, but judgment is immediately executed; ripe ſin and a ſinning people, haſten wrath. See Pſal. cxix. 126. *It is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they make void thy law.* And no ſooner is the execution begun, but in its due order and time it is finiſhed. And the vine is gathered: judgment never miſſeth its end. 2. The vine is not only cut down and gathered, but it is *caſt in the wine-preſs of God's wrath*, that is, brought or put in the place where God executeth his judgments on them, which as it is temporal, is, chap. xix. called Armageddon; and as it is eternal, its the lake, chap. xix. 20. which certainly is the laſt reſult. 3. This wine-preſs is trode, verſe 20. following the ſimilitude, and it ſheweth that Chriſt's wrath who is the treader, ſhall purſue them terribly. 4. It is *trodden without the city:* it is like ſo was their preſſes in their vineyards, for to be near them: it ſignifieth here, 1. A fit place, ſet apart for executing wrath on them. 2. A ſhutting them out as polluted, from his church here and heaven hereafter: ſo the like is oppoſed, chap. xx. to entering into the holy Jeruſalem; a ſeparating of them from his people in that judgment that the city ſhould have no hurt by it.

5. The terribleneſs of the effect and judgment is deſcribed in three things, 1. *That blood came out:* that ſheweth that a proper judgment on men is to be underſtood here. 2. It was to the horſe bridles, ſo very deep: which ſhould be compared with chap. xix. 15. &c. Where Chriſt there trode this preſs, and his followers are mounted on horſeback for purſuing this victory; the blood is ſo deep on the fields, and the ſlaughter ſo great, that it choketh up the horſe bridles of theſe who purſue. 3. This deepneſs of the blood's running, was not a furlong or two, but 1600 furlongs, counting eight furlongs to a mile. It is two hundred miles, a long way; a definite ſpace for an indefinite, but great, and ſetting out great ſlaughter, of enemies, ſo that all the fowls are invited to a feaſt, chap. xix. In a word, it is a dreadful judgment on the beaſt and his followers, moſt certainly to come.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. XV.

Verſe 1. *And I ſaw another ſign in heaven, great and marvellous, ſeven angels having the ſeven laſt plagues, for in them is filled up the wrath of God.*

2. *And I ſaw as it were a ſea of glaſs, mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beaſt, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, ſtand on the ſea of glaſs, having the harps of God.*

3. *And they ſung the ſong of Moſes the ſervant of God, and the ſong of the Lamb, ſaying, great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; juſt and true are thy ways, thou King of ſaints.*

4. *Who ſhall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy: for all nations ſhall come and worſhip before thee; for thy judgments are made manifeſt.*

AT the close of the xi. chapter, when the seventh trumpet did sound, we told you that the order and series of the story of the events would have required a present entering into the particular description of the last wo, which here is called the last plagues, but that it might be the clearer, the explicatory prophesy and vision is cast in, chap. xii. xiii. and xiv. as the first great sign that was seen after the sounding of the seventh trumpet: and when that is sufficiently done, he returneth in the fifth vision, to set down the third and last principal prophesy, which is, as the other two, set down in seven types, and hath its preparation, making way to it as they had. So it is formally in the series knit to the xi. chapter at the close, where the temple is opened: then followeth thunders, generally intimating judgments: now, it is set down what judgments, and this vision declareth these by bringing seven angels out of the temple thus opened with wrath, which is the same hinted at there; and chap. xiv. from verse 15. See chap. xi. verse 15.

This principal prophesy is contained, chap. xv. and xvi. In the fifth vision it hath its preparation and execution. The preparation hath three steps, 1. More generally giving a little view and sum of it, verses 1, 2, 3, 4. of this chapter. 2. More particularly describing its instruments, and concomitants, verses 5, 6, 7, 8. The third is a plain giving of the word to these instruments, thus made ready, chap. xvi. 1.

The more general proposition of this vision, is set down in two things; or, is two ways expressed, First, verse 1. That now John saw, after much delay, these who had the last plagues to execute, making for it. The verse containeth three things, 1. John's designing this vision, to make men the more attentive, *I saw*, saith he, *another sign*, that is, somewhat appearing not accidentally, or from natural causes, but purposely appointed to signify something: it is *another*, that is, different both in type and signification from what was chap. xii. 1. It is called *great and marvellous*, in respect of the events especially which it foretelleth, viz. God's wrath upon the beast and his kingdom, to their very overturning and erecting of a church and kingdom unto Jesus Christ on his ruins. Which considering the beast's grandeur in the world and the way of God's bringing that destruction about, will be a very wonderful thing. 2. The thing is hinted at in general, *seven angels having the seven last plagues;* where is summed the last wrath and judgments of Antichrist; in that respect they are called the *last plagues*. The instruments are angels: it may be God will make use of angels, yet not only or immediately, therefore by angels may be understood whomsoever God shall make ministers of his wrath, probably members of his church, as Kings, chap. xvii. that are made to hate the whore and do his pleasure on her. See chapter xiv. 13. and xix. 14. They are seven, to shew different judgments or several degrees to be poured out.

The last thing in the verse, is the reason why they are called the last plagues, *because in them is filled up the wrath of God*, that is, not only is their wrath in them, but such wrath as will consummate what wrath here-away God determinateth for the beast till he be cast into the lake; there will be no judgment here after these come, neither will there be place for them. These plagues will make a full end.

Verse 2. The second general way, whereby he giveth a foretaste of what these vials bring, is a little hint at the flourishing and gladsome condition of the church, as well as of the hard things which were to come on her enemies: which two ordinarily go together, and usually, by anticipation, are set down in a song. It is in allusion to Moses and Israel's way of coming out of Egypt, who, when they past the sea, wherein their enemies were destroyed, did sing: so the redeemed, when they shall be delivered out of spiritual Egypt, and be put on the shore beyond their trials, they shall sing, and have no less cause to sing, and shall do it as surely as ever Moses did, Exod. xv. The one delivery shall be as certain, great and welcome as the other particularly, in it consider, 1. Who do sing, they are *they who have gotten the victory over the beast and his image, his mark and number:* by these are understood, not only such as were ever keeped from Antichrist's pollution, but all that shall be under the seventh trumpet, as brought out from under that tyranny, as the allusion to the people of Israel's coming out of Egypt cleareth. They are thus described particularly, to shew they are such whom neither the Pope's flatterers, nor terrors, nor church threatnings could prevail over: but through grace they prevailed over all, though for a time they fought.

These four things, over which they get the victory, signify the same corruption of Antichrist, that in no respect its deadly poison did stick to them.

After he hath described these singers by their victory, as fully renouncing and abhorring Popery in all the branches of it; they are, *Secondly*, Set out in that posture they were in; they were *standing on a sea of glass mingled with fire*. Three things are to be enquired here: 1. What this sea of glass is? 2. What it is to stand on it? 3. What it is to be mingled with fire.

First, By this *sea*, or great vessel of *glass*, we shew, chap. iv. was understood the efficacy of the blood of Jesus Christ, by which only his people, and their sacrifices, can be washen and sanctified; and of this we gave the reasons there, and here also it may be confirmed: for, first, this *standing upon the sea of glass* denoteth the excellency and firmness of the foundation upon which they stand. 2. If we consider parallel places, it is in express terms expounded, chap. vii. 14. when this same company, and their victory, are described, this is given as the ground thereof, *they are come out of great tribulation, and have washen their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb:* so, chap. xii. 11. it is said that they *overcame by the blood of the Lamb*, &c. And this being marked as the ground which secureth these redeemed ones, it must be for this purpose, to shew that the way and manner of their getting the victory over the beast, and their security against him, did consist in their fleeing to, and resting upon, Christ Jesus his satisfaction and righteousness, while the rest of the Antichristian world were blindfolded in ignorance and error, going about to establish their own righteousness, as it were, by the works of the law. 3. It is confirmed from that, chap. iv. where this *sea of glass* is described to be before the throne: which signifieth their abiding near unto God in these times of defections. When all generally went a whoring from him, wondering after the beast.

Secondly, Standing upon this sea of glass doth import: 1. A confidence in them, in their betaking them to that shore, as it were; the believer never halteth till he be on Christ, but is ever flying toward him, and then he standeth. 2. It importeth a confidence that they have, as now defying Antichrist through the virtue of that blood, and an exulting in God, who had brought them to that land: and this hath some allusion to the people's practice, Exod. xv. 3. It implieth an efficacy and virtuousness, to say so, in this sea of glass, that being, for excellency, like glass, is yet able to support all the redeemed, and to keep them from drowning. *Lastly*, (which is clear from the scope) It importeth their public owning of the truth of God, which was contradicted and opposed by Antichrist and his followers, whereas they had not appeared so openly to bear testimony to it before. By this *sea of glass* cannot be understood the world: because: 1. This sea of glass is mentioned as that which supporteth them, and the basis upon which they are built, which will not agree to this uncertain world. 2. It is spoken of as a piece of their adorning, and that which separateth them from Antichrist, and keepeth them as contradistinct from his company, which will not be so clear from the other interpretation. 3. This *sea of glass*, upon which they stand, is said to be *mingled with fire*. By *fire* must be understood somewhat suitable to this sea. Now, chap. iv. where this sea is spoken of, ver. 6. lamps of fire are spoken of, as burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God: hence it will follow, that, by fire here, is understood a sanctifying efficacy of the Spirit of Jesus, which is often compared in scripture to fire, *I will baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire*. And so this is the meaning, I saw the redeemed put beyond the difficulties of Antichrist, and out of the hazard of his curse, by the virtue of Christ's blood justifying them, and by the virtue of his Spirit sanctifying them: and I saw them publicly appearing, and confidently giving testimony to the truth, as not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; and this is added to distinguish these truly redeemed from carnal and presumptuous hypocrites, who boast of faith and their standing upon the sea of glass, but do evidence that that sea is not mingled with fire, and the Spirit of sanctification; and therefore is not that foundation which will give them ground to tune their harps, and sing before God: further, it may signify Christ's making use of the cross to promove his people's sanctification, which is subordinate and subservient to the former.

In the last part of the verse, they are said *to have the harps of God*, while they stand upon the sea of glass: this sheweth, that the former ground must be something which giveth them very great chearfulness, and agreeth well with their having palms in

their hands, who are ſpoken of, chap. vii. 14. and are ſaid *to have waſhen their clothes in the blood of the Lamb.* And this phraſe importeth: 1. That their harps were excellent; ſo the phraſe in ſcripture, is often, when it would commend the excellency of things, to call them things of God; that is, moſt excellent. 2. It importeth it to be of God's giving, nor a harp put in their hand, or a ſong put in the mouth by Antichriſt or the world, but by God himſelf: and this is their advantage, that their ſongs and mirth is communicated to them by God, and ſo cannot be interrupted by the world.

Then he cometh, ver. 3, and 4. to deſcribe the ſong: 1. It is generally, *the Song of Moſes;* that is, having the like occaſion and ſubject which he had, Exod. xv. 2. It is *the Song of the Lamb;* that is, ſuch a ſong as Chriſt hath given the occaſion of, the moſt chearful ſong he hath put in our mouth that ever was. *His Song*, firſt, Becauſe he, by furniſhing the occaſion, putteth it in our mouths, Pſal. xl. 3. And, *Secondly*, By his Spirit, he helpeth to ſing it. *Thirdly*, He is the great ſubject of it.

2. The matter of the ſong is more particularly ſet forth in itſelf, which expreſſeth three things, or three ways, ſpeaketh to the ſcope: 1. By commending theſe works of God's juſtice, and him the author. 2. By ſhewing the glorious effects of them. 3. The ſpecial cauſe having influence to produce theſe effects: in all which, there is a ſpecial likeneſs to their ſong, chap. xi. as was noted there: 1. God's works (that is, theſe ſpecially that are hinted at in this type of the vials) are called by them *great and marvellous:* 1. *Great*, Becauſe no mean power could overturn ſuch an eſtabliſhed kingdom ſo eaſily as he did the beaſt's; that is, indeed, a great work. 2. *Marvellous*, breeding admiration, even ſuch as ſhould make men and angels admire God's wiſdom, patience, power, juſtice, &c. that ſuffered this beaſt to thrive ſo long, and now in his height taketh ſuch order with him. Therefore an epithet ſuitable to this work is given to God, *Lord God Almighty*, becauſe in this great work, omnipotency manifeſteth itſelf, and that it was done by him, who could do whatſoever he pleaſeth: ſo, in this, they aſcribe the power to God, and commend his works. They add, *Juſt and true are thy ways*, two other epithets: 1. *Juſt* for it was well deſerved; there was no wrong done to the beaſt by any of theſe vials. 2. *True*, i. e. conform in all things to thy promiſes made to thy people, and threatnings againſt thy enemies; it is not works in particular, but *ways* that are commended, that is, all the ſtrain of thy proceeding ſince the beginning is juſt and true, even as this; ſo they take occaſion from the particular, to bleſs God for all the ways of his providence in all things: thus, theſe who pray for Antichriſt's ruin, chap. xiv. do now praiſe. The name they aſcribe to God is ſuitable, *Thou King of Saints*, who, by thy juſt way, deſerveth to be called ſo. He is King of Saints: 1. Becauſe he loveth holineſs, and theſe that are ſo. 2. Becauſe he defendeth them, and oppoſeth their enemies, and the enemies of holineſs, as here he hath made it appear; ſo that, though he be King over all the world, yet he hath a ſpecial dominion over, and ſingular care of ſaints, and theſe who are godly, Pſal. iv. 3. *He ſetteth them apart for himſelf:* and this title hath a kindly claim unto God in the boſom of it, as well as it ſheweth what a holy King he is, who, in his ſovereignty, will acknowledge no proper ſubjects but ſaints. Hence here he is *King of Saints*, whereas, Jer. x. 7. he is *King of Nations:* becauſe there it is a fruit of common providence that he is commended from, as the giving of rain; here it is a peculiar appearing for, and owning of his church, expreſſing not only power, but holineſs in his way, and that in a ſpecial manner.

This commendation is amplified in the effects, verſe 4. ſetting out wonderfully their heightening of theſe wonderful works of God, in two expreſſions, having every one of them their reaſons.

Firſt, *Who will not*, or *ſhall not fear thee?* Were thou, and thy works, well known, are there any ſo brutiſh, or ſtupid, but they muſt needs praiſe and fear thee, and glorify thy name, and think much of thee? They do not declare the event, that every one, *de facto*, ſhall do ſo; but, *de jure*, they ſay, there is reaſon it ſhould be ſo, and hope that now much more of this ſhould be than ever before. The reaſon is, for thou only art holy; that is, thou art eſſentially, infinitely, and unchangeably holy, which no creature is; and, now, by thy owning of thy people, and executing judgment ſo juſtly, thou declareth thyſelf to be ſo, yea, *only* ſo; none in all the world could have guided things in ſuch a great confuſion ſo, and brought

them to such an holy end, as we see now thou hast done: before we were in hazard of mistaking thee, who art holy and true, chap. vi. as if thou had too long delayed it, yet now we see that in purest holiness thou hast ordered all without any wrong.

The second expression amplifying the effect, is, *All nations shall worship before thee:* The reason is, *for thy judgments are made manifest:* in a word, this glorious work will make way for bringing in nations to the church, seeing by this expression of thy holiness, thou hast manifested thyself a just God, and publicly made it appear, thou wilt be avenged upon Antichrist for all his wrongs which hath been formerly obscured; but now by taking to thee thy great power, as chap. xi. it is evident. And so from such manifestations of the holiness and justice of God in his judgments, they argue to the greatness of his praise, and the enlargement of his kingdom, which cannot but follow on such rare works of justice, seeing *God is known by the judgments which he executeth*, Psal. ix. 16.

In sum, the song saith, God wonderfully judgeth the whore, whereupon shall follow enlargement, increase and joy to the church, which shall be a ground to them of rendering praise to this purpose (though not in these very words) to God: which song would be considered in the matter of it, and in the manner, wherein exceeding high and heavenly thoughts of God appear in a heart that cannot satisfy itself in praising him.

LECTURE II.

Verse 5. *And after that I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened:*

6. *And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.*

7. *And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels, seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.*

8. *And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.*

THIS chapter, as was said, containeth the preparation to the prophesy of the seven vials, whereby the last wrath of God is fulfilled on the beast and his kingdom. The more general part of this is past in the preceding verses: these verses do more particularly set forth the preparation in these four, 1. In the rise of all, which is the *temple's opening*, or the change of the outward face of the church. 2. The description of the seven angels that were instruments, verse 6. 3. The furnishing of them for their task and work. 4. A concomitant going along with the execution of their judgment.

The first thing is, verse 5. the antecedent to all these plagues, which is the rise of all, that is, the *opening of the temple.* That this is antecedent, appeareth by the context, where this opening is observed to clear what followeth concerning the angel's coming forth, as a prior step of the narration, in order before their coming forth.

For understanding of it, we would consider that there is an allusion, as chap. xi. verse *ult.* to the Jewish church, where in time of idolatry and backsliding the temple was shut, as in Ahab's days; and in a time of reformation, when all was brought again to the rule, the temple was opened and sanctified, the sacrifices put in order, and the priests sanctified, as in Hezekiah's days. John's meaning is, before this, the temple was shut, religion, in its outward splendor and beauty, defaced by Antichrist; but now, as if he said, I saw a time of reformation, when superstition and idolatry was banished, and purity and truth preached in open view, as it was before Antichrist darkened their light. Thus, as the temple was that which most evidenced the state of the Jewish church, and the changes were most sensibly observed there; so (as many other things) that is borrowed to set out the change in the Christian church here. See more, chap. xi. verse 19. This step of preparation concerning the public breaking out of the truth, is observed for these reasons, 1. To shew, to what

time these vials belong, viz. to the state of the church after Antichrist's treachery is discovered, and God hath made some light to break out in his church, viz. to the last period. 2. To shew the connection of these vials with, and their dependence upon the blowing of the seventh trumpet, chapter xi. last verse, where this same is mentioned: now after a profitable digression, when he cometh again to the series of the prophesy, he beginneth, as it were, where he left, so to carry it on from thenceforward the more clearly.

The second thing will clear this, after this temple is opened, and religion in heaven (that is, in the visible church) is publicly professed, the Lord bringeth out seven angels out of the opened temple. These are the instruments of this wrath, mentioned verse 1. They are described by these things, 1. They are called angels: we think not properly, but figuratively, such as he had fitted for this work, and commissionated to execute it, whether ministers or magistrates. Their getting their vials from one of the beasts, and their being arrayed with girdles, seemeth to confirm this, and more especially, that they were great civil men. 2. They are described from whence they came, *They come out of the temple*, that is, (as it appeareth) they shall be members of the church, (now made patent) who are to be made use of in these judgments, to execute his wrath on the whole. 3. They are clothed with linen, either to shew the purity of their proceeding, or alluding to the priests habit, Ezek. xliv. as that of *golden girdles* alludeth to the manner of kings. So these are kings and priests, authorized and well furnished for such a work: all whom he employeth, are fitted instruments for his work.

The third circumstance of their further preparation, is mentioned, verse 7. where two things are to be observed, 1. The instrument, or means of the plagues which they had to execute them with, that is, *vials full of wrath*. Vials are great hollow vessels or cups, wide at the mouth: whereby is meant, 1. Great wrath. 2. An easy and quiet way of pouring it forth without great noise, possibly, having respect to the threatning, chap. xiv. where they are threatned with the cup of God's wrath. These are called golden vials, partly, because justice in itself is precious, and it is an excellent dignity, and honourable to be made use of in its execution, especially as approved instruments; partly, to shew God's pure proceeding, without the least mixture of any passion.

2. These vials are given *by one of the beasts*: it is like, the first beast, (as one day of the week, is the first day, Matth. xxviii.) which, chap. iv. is the type of valiant, bold and zealous misters. They are said to give these angels these vials, when by and from God's word they clear that to be their duty, and in God's authority calleth them to it. By which it would seem that God would not have kings and princes waiting for an extraordinary revelation and call to awake to this judgment, but to acquiesce in ordinary ministers, clearing his truth from his word; and thus, tho' ministers be not to execute wrath actually and immediately by fighting, yet do they, as it were, blow the trumpets, 2 Chron. xiii. and so they set up and cast down kings and kingdoms, Jer. i. and their sword slayeth more than Hazael's. Thus it would seem, when eminent men are converted and ingrafted in the church, zealous ministers do put them in mind of this duty, that God expecteth from the kings of the earth; such zealous men have been, and particularly were after the begun opening of the temple. God is said here *to live for ever and ever*; partly, to shew, that he is reverently alway to be spoken of; partly, to shew, what Master these angels had, and whose wrath they were executing: not their own, therefore they should not be in their zeal selfish and carnal, but it was God's wrath, and the wrath of such a great God; and therefore they had need to be single and humble, as others had reason to be afraid of such everlasting wrath. That denomination of God, addeth to the heightening of the wrath.

The fourth thing, which is the concomitant of these plagues, is verse 8. Containing, 1. The concomitant itself. 2. Its effect. The concomitant is, *The temple is filled with smoke:* this alludeth to God's way of old, making his presence sensible by signs in the tabernacle, when it was newly erected, as Exod. xl. and in the temple, when it was newly builded, as 2 Kings viii. 10. So here, when the gospel church shall be of new recovered, God's presence will be as sensible and great in it, as it was of old, when priests might not enter into the temple, because of the glory of it. Sometimes also this appear-

ance, is a ſign of anger, as Numb. xvi. when he appeared to take vengeance on ſtubborn offenders, and would admit of no interceſſion: theſe being not inconſiſtent, but ordinarily enjoined, viz. God's preſence, glorious and refreſhing to his own, and terrible and dreadful to his enemies, Iſa. lxvi. 5. we underſtand both here: which agreeth well with the words following, *filled with ſmoke, from the glory of God*, that looketh to his gracious appearing, *and from his power*, that holdeth him forth terrible, as now appearing to exerciſe his power for comfort to his people, and terror to his enemies. And ſo the effect agreeth to this, *there was no man that was able to enter into the temple, till the ſeven plagues were fulfilled:* which ſheweth the degree or meaſure of that glory of God's appearing: it was extraordinary, as was in theſe times, Exod. xl. and 1 Kings viii. before mentioned. It is not to be underſtood, as if none now were in the temple, (the church hath her own in-dwellers then) but that amongſt them without, againſt whom theſe plagues were directed, none of them, or few of them, got repentance to flee in for making peace with God in Chriſt. But theſe plagues, being againſt obſtinate contemners of the light of the word, now ſuch a ſpiritual ſmoke of ignorance and hardneſs of heart was on them, and poſſibly of darkneſs and contention in the church, ſo that thro' God's judgment on them, they fretted under theſe plagues, and periſhed, but repented not, as we will ſee particularly obſerved, chap. xvi. Or, none could enter, &c. that is, God would admit none to make interceſſion for preventing theſe plagues (as Moſes and the prieſts in ſuch caſes entered the tabernacle to intercede) until the wrath threatned was executed: and ſo none could enter till then, will be this, they could never enter for that purpoſe, as the word is taken, 2 Sam. vi. verſe laſt.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. XVI.

Verſe 1. *And I heard a great voice out of the temple, ſaying to the ſeven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.*

2. *And the firſt went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noiſome, and grievous ſore upon the men which had the mark of the beaſt, and upon them which worſhipped his image.*

IN this xvi. chapter, is proſecuted the execution of theſe laſt plagues, from verſe 2. In the 1ſt verſe there is the laſt ſtep of preparation for it, by commiſſionating theſe angels who were inſtruments, preſently to fall about it. The voice ſeemeth to be Chriſt's, called *a great voice out of the temple:* partly, to ſhew authority in him that calleth; partly, to ſhew his earneſtneſs in the thing he calleth unto, Whether this be immediately from Chriſt, or mediately by his miniſters in his church, which is moſt like, it is all one, ſeeing it is Chriſt's word, and hath his warrand. The commiſſion is limited, *to pour them out on the earth*, that is, ſuch a part of the world as is contradiſtinguiſhed from the church, which is called heaven; for, afterward ſome are poured on the ſea, ſome in the air, &c. For, though the Antichriſtian world be a compleat world in itſelf; yet, being compared with the church, it is but the earth: *out of the temple*, becauſe there of old God gave oracles; it is an alluſion to that. Before we ſpeak particularly of theſe vials, we ſhall premit ſome general conſiderations uſeful for underſtanding of them, or ſome general obſervations concerning them.

1. As all theſe vials ſpeak wrath, and the laſt wrath, ſo do they all ſpeak wrath principally againſt the beaſt, as the object of it, with his kingdom and followers, as theſe who have his name, mark, character, &c. The firſt vial is poured on the earth of that kingdom, and of the ſecond, fifth and ſeventh, it is clear; his wrath is perfected againſt the whore by theſe, therefore that ſong, chap. xviii. and xix. is as the reſult of theſe judgments; for, they are ſuch judgments as are not at all common to others, but peculiarly affect him and his. Therefore in

the fourth vial, it is ſaid, *The men* (*oi anthropoi*) particularly relating to men mentioned before, viz. theſe that were marked with his mark, which will afterward be more clear: yet let this have three caveats, 1. The church wanteth not her exerciſes, even in the time of theſe vials, as was clear from chap. xiv. 11. ſhe hath her enemies and battles there, but they all end in, and tend to her enlargement in the cloſe. 2. Though they aim principally at Antichriſt as the chief enemy, yet other enemies do not eſcape unpuniſhed, but are made ſharers in the judgment alſo, under them, eſpecially in the 6th and 7th vials, which are more general, as will appear, and take in more enemies. 3. It is not to be underſtood, that they ſo carry on the beaſt's ruin, as that it is alway ſenſible; he ſtill fighteth, and may have his own ſeeming advantages to harden him, as if he might recover, which yet ſhall never be, but by this God hath the more glory in renewing his battles againſt him, as he had againſt Pharaoh, by multiplying his judgments againſt him, unto which there is an alluſion here.

2. It would be obſerved, that the kingdom of the beaſt, when it is ſpoken of as the object of theſe judgments, is ſpoken of as a world having a heaven, earth, ſea, rivers, ſun, &c. as parts of it, even as it was obſerved before in the deſtruction of the heathen world in the ſixth ſeal, chap. vi. and of the Chriſtian world, chap. viii. Which obſervation is uſeful, 1. To help us to find out what thing in Popery, or, in that dominion, is meant by ſome analogy from earth, ſea, &c. in the natural body and frame of the world, to ſuch things made uſe of in that Antichriſtian world: which, in that reſpect, are earth, ſea, &c. to it. 2. It is uſeful, to let us ſee what weight religion and its change hath upon a people: it maketh it appear as another world; and therefore the ſpecial changes, in all theſe three periods, are to be ſought in the change that is on the outward frame and face of religion. 3. It is uſeful for clearing one thing by another, as what was ſea, in the Chriſtian world, will help to ſhew what ſupplieth that room, in the Antichriſtian, &c.

3. Obſerve, that in theſe vials, reſpect is ſundry times had in the expreſſion of the effects to the plagues of Egypt, Exod. vi. 7, 8. yet ſo, that as Romiſh Babylon, is ſpiritually called Egypt and Sodom, chap. xi. So theſe effects, are not literally, but ſpiritually to be underſtood, at leaſt, in a great part.

4. Take this conſideration alſo, that as Antichriſt hath a double notion and conſideration, chap. xiii. as civil or eccleſiaſtical: ſo theſe parts of him, rivers, ſun, &c. and the effects on them, may have that twofold conſideration, ſome of them on his temporal grandeur, bringing temporal plagues; ſome of them on his eccleſiaſtic frame, by ſpiritual judgments overturning that: therefore is it, that ſome of them are certainly ſpiritually, others literally, *kata to reton*, to be underſtood, ſome of them have reſpect to both, as we will ſee.

5. Obſerve, that in the order of the pouring forth of theſe vials, there is a ſpecial likeneſs and reference to that ſame order and method which was followed in the trumpets, chap. viii. The firſt vial is on the earth, as the firſt trumpet, and ſo it is with the reſt: but as the worlds are different, ſo are the effects. This letteth us ſee, *Firſt*, That as we are to look on Antichriſt's fall by the vials, ſo we are to look to his riſe under the trumpets, ſeeing the Spirit holdeth him forth in theſe two, 1. A ſuitableneſs and equality in God's juſtice, bringing him down as he roſe. 2. A ſpreading and counterfeiting nature in his errors, making a whole body, as it were, a world, in oppoſition to Chriſt's world before. *Secondly*, It helpeth, by comparing the trumpets and vials together to win at ſome clearneſs in the effects threatned. And, 3. That the ruin is as certain as the riſe of the beaſt; and as the three laſt woes in the trumpets were greateſt, ſo are the three laſt vials.

6. Conſider the time to which theſe vials relate: and although it be not eaſy or poſſible to determine the diſtance of time between them, or the preciſe beginning of every one of them; yet may ſomething be laid as certain for the riſe and cloſe of this viſion in general, which in ſhort we take to be that ſame of the ſeventh trumpets ſounding, chap. xi. after the begun change of reformation, eſpecially when reformation and religion came to be eſtabliſhed by civil authority, which will be about anno 1560. as was then more fully cleared: this is after the beaſt's kingdom is diſcovered, and a change and decay in his grandeur begun. The pouring out of the ſeventh vial cleareth, that the cloſe is the conſummating of God's wrath, as their titles bear, chap. xv. and verſe 2. and ſo endeth with time.

7. Concerning the inſtruments, called angels, obſerve, that tho' one angel only be named to every one, yet it will not exclude more agents, but that God, though he make uſe of men, miniſters or magiſtrates, (both having hand therein, chap. xiv. compared with xvii.) yet he hath it over-ruled by angels, that it be not diſappointed, and that it ſhould not fail.

8. *Obſerve*, That though there be order in the riſe of theſe judgments, and all are not poured out together; yet, as in the ſeals and trumpets, ſo here it will not follow, that the former judgment is ended, before another come, but that there is an order in riſing: yet, the firſt and ſecond plague, which are the effects of the firſt two vials, they go alongſt to the end, and have but theſe new plagues ſuperadded to them.

To come nearer, there are two things in all theſe vials obſervable, 1. The object plagued, or that whereon the vial is poured; which is, as it were, the cauſe. 2. The effect following, viz. the affecting or plaguing that object, whether that be primary or ſecondary; for, one plague may have ſundry effects following upon or going alongſt with one another. Concerning which, take theſe rules, 1. That the object denote ſome ſpecial part of the Antichriſtian frame or fabric of his kingdom, complexly taken. The judgment is primarily there; the effect again reflecteth on the perſons who are ſupporters of that kingdom, and affecteth them, as the earth, ſea, ſun, ſeat, &c. is ſtill ſomewhat of that Antichriſtian ſtate, which, being affected, affecteth his worſhippers, as the bringing down of a houſe, hazardeth theſe that are in it; or, ſomewhat wrong in a ſhip, theſe who ſail in her.

2. That this thing plagued, or on which the vial is poured, cannot be any thing meerly active in this judgment; as for inſtance, by the ſun, under the fourth vial, cannot be meant here the ſcriptures, becauſe they, as ſuch, are not proper parts of the Antichriſtian frame, but ſome other thing accounted ſcripture as to them: nor doth the affecting of the ſcriptures, by any violent handling of them, grieve them who are exceſſive in that; but it muſt be ſomething that can ſuffer by theſe vials, the ſuffering whereof may have ſuch ſuitable effects on the ſubjects of that kingdom, as the rejecting of their traditions may probably grieve the abettors of them.

3. In application either of the things plagued, or of their effects to particulars, ſpecial reſpect would be had to theſe three or four things, 1. To the analogy between ſuch a thing (ſuppoſe the earth) in the natural world, and what is called earth in this Antichriſtian univerſe; that by the ſimilitude of the one to the other, ſomewhat may be gathered. 2. What is applied, would ſuit well with the effect; for, one of them had influence on the other, and a ſuitableneſs to the other, as ſuch a cauſe may have upon ſuch an effect. 3. That there be an agreeance and reſemblance with theſe ſame things mentioned under the trumpets: the one, viz. earth, here, being to this Antichriſtian world, in place of that which was earth there to the Chriſtian world. 4. Special reſpect would be had to the ſtory of events; (ſo far as they are already fulfilled) for ſome length certainly they are fulfilled, that the application may agree with the ſeries of the event, which otherwiſe cannot be ſure.

To come particularly then to the firſt vial, according to theſe rules, the object of that plague, is the earth. 2. The effect is, *A grievous and noiſome ſore fell upon the men who had the beaſt's mark, and worſhipped his image.* By the earth, is underſtood that which is moſt firm, (it is the moſt firm part of the univerſe, Pſal. civ. *The earth he eſtabliſhed, &c.*) and moſt eſſential and neceſſary for entertaining of life. By the earth of the Antichriſtian world then, we underſtand ſuch doctrines as they lay for ſureſt, and upon which all the reſt ſtand, and without which that building cannot ſtand, and be a world, ſuch as it is, more than this world without the earth. Such is the Pope's ſupremacy, abſolute to diſpoſe of all things as he pleaſeth, (and others mentioned, chap. xiii. as characteriſtical to him.) Hence did we expound the earth, chapter viii. to be the fundamental doctrines of the Chriſtian religion. The pouring the vial on this, is the diſcovering the unſoundneſs of ſuch grounds, the rejecting and abhoring them in practice, and mens betaking themſelves to more ſolid and better principles to walk by, eſpecially when done by publicly authorized preaching.

The effect ſuit with this. 1. Theſe plagued, are ſuch as are inſlaved to the beaſt, and ſtood and fell with him in the largeſt extent of his tenets and doctrines. 2. The plague itſelf, is a boil and ſore, but ſuch as is occaſioned by the former diſcovery,

alluding to the plague, Exod. ix. 8. 11. of boils, especially on the *magicians*. Hereby is holden out a plague, 1. Painful. 2. Shameful and loathsome before others: by which we may understand, that inward envy and fretting, and outward contempt and shame that fell on Antichrist's devoted slaves, when God brought to light the vanity, blasphemy, and hypocrisy of their devised religion, and tyranny, whereby the world had long been deluded. They now come to be accounted as unsavoury salt, and false teachers, who once swayed all. In sum, this saith, that when the seventh angel shall sound, and God shall begin his quarrel with the beast, he shall, at the entry, so discover and shake the prime foundations of that Antichristian kingdom, that it shall procure much inward fretting and vexing grief (compared to pricking in the reigns, Psal. lxxiii. 21.) to the prime supporters thereof, and shall make them loathsome and abominable to the world, as were the *magicians* (opposers of Moses, and of the people's delivery from Egypt, and instrumental in hardening Pharaoh and the Egyptians) by the plague of boils, Exod. ix. 11. so as they could not stand.

In the event, this is sure, 1. That the fundamentals of the Popish kingdom were stricken at; such as the Pope's supremacy and absoluteness, the opinion of indulgencies, merits, soul-masses, purgatory, &c. Which two, Erasmus (merrily) said, were the two unpardonable faults of Luther, that he had meddled with the Pope's crown, and the monks bellies, meaning, that they would never digest it, to be touched in these, but it would gall them. 2. The contempt that followed upon that discovery, and the vexation, anxiety, terror, trouble and grief that it put that Roman clergy unto, the event and history of these times do sufficiently witness.

LECTURE II.

Verse 3. *And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.*

4. *And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.*

5. *And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shall be, because thou hast judged thus:*

6. *For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.*

7. *And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.*

THE angels proceed to execute God's judgment on the beast, *And the second poureth out his vial on the sea*, ver. 3. The effects are two, 1. *It became as the blood of a dead man.* The 2d is a consequent of this, *Every living soul died in it.* There is in this certainly set forth a further degree of Antichrist's ruin, as the second trumpet held forth a further step of his rising: in general, this extendeth the plague on Antichrist further, and bringeth it to an higher degree; but more particularly, as we conceive, is holden out God's plague upon the complex body of that kingdom, as is Antichristian; that is, both sea and land, especially their ordinances, government, superstitious forms of worship, councils, decrees, &c. whereby much of their grandeur stood: now, these are set upon, and the abbacies, traditions, indulgencies, &c. whereby they subsisted, are, in a great part, destroyed.

That, by *sea* here, must be understood something of this nature, will appear, by comparing ver. 17. and 13. of chap. xviii. together; for, this *sea* must be suitable and serviceable to these who trade in it, and these again suitable to their trade, which is the souls of men amongst other things, ver. 13. ibid. and these certainly must be their churchmen; therefore this *sea* they trade in, must be their ecclesiastic or church constitutions, forms, and ordinances of sacraments, ceremonies, masses, traditions, &c. and especially what concerneth indulgences, pardons, and purgatory, because in these their trade of souls is especially driven. This answereth somewhat to the second trumpet also, chap. viii.

God's plague upon theſe, maketh them like *the blood of a dead man*, that is, as chapter viii. verſe 8. it became corrupt, and not only uſeleſs, but deadly; ſo that, whoſoever would now follow that way, and drink of theſe doctrines, it would *kill him*. Which two effects hold out, 1. That, after God's begun quarrelling with Antichriſt, he mendeth his ſuperſtitious worſhip nothing, but maketh it worſe; ſo did the council of Trent in many articles, both of faith and worſhip. 2. That, after God's revealing and diſcovering the groſſneſs of particular errors by the former vial, he went on, and diſcovered the rottenneſs of the complex worſhip and government of that kingdom. 3. That, by this diſcovery, eſpecially their church-men were pinched. 4. That this brought the Antichriſtian ſtate lower, and made many forſake theſe rotten waters, that could not live in them; or, if they ſtaid, they were now more deadly than before this diſcovery: ſo, by dying here, may be underſtood their dying as to Antichriſt's ſtate, that is, ceaſing to be of his kingdom as formerly, as chap. viii. 4. ſo they die to him, or they are more hardened that ſtay, and become more ſpiritually dead. Thus this judgment either maketh them leave him, or it maketh their condition more deſperate; ſo that, now, none continuing to live under the full profeſſion of Popery, can get heaven, as in the former darkneſs, in ſome reſpect, it was poſſible. This, by the council of Trent, and what followed upon it, we may conceive it to have its fulfilling; ſo that now men can no more live in Popery, and own their tenets, than fiſhes can do amongſt blood; but every living ſoul that quitteth not theſe ordinances, ſhall periſh; partly, becauſe now they are worſe in themſelves; partly, becauſe the light having made the diſcovery, a ſeparation is called for.

The third vial followeth, from verſe 4. to verſe 8. containing three things: 1. The object plagued, it is *the rivers and fountains*. 2. The effect, they *are turned to blood*. 3. There is a double approbation of God's juſtice, or congratulation added, whereby ſome things may be gathered, uſeful for underſtanding this vial, which differeth not only in its object, but in its kind from the former. We may in this obſerve theſe three things: 1. That the object is *men;* not ordinances or government in the abſtract, but ſuch as ſhed blood, and can drink blood. 2. What ſort of men they are, viz. guilty of the blood of the ſaints, executioners of that whore, who is drunk with the blood of ſaints, chapter xvii. and in whoſe ſkirts it is found, chapter xviii. 24. 3. What ſort of plague is this, *Blood ſhed*, literally ſo taken: ſo, to drink blood importeth, they have ſhed blood, and are met in their own meaſure. Their blood is ſhed, and that in abundance: and the juſt proportionableneſs betwixt their ſin and judgment here, importeth this, eſpecially if we conſider, that, chap. xiii. 9, 10, that he that *killeth with the ſword, muſt be killed by the ſword*, which is the threatening, whereof this is the accompliſhment. And in this vial, and the former, there is an alluſion to the plague of Egypt, when all was blood, and the fiſhes died.

The object of this vial, is *Fountains and rivers*, viz. ſuch things as furniſh moiſture and life to the Antichriſtian world, as fountains and rivers do in this. They muſt be ſomething running to the former ſea, and in oppoſition to the truth of the goſpel, chap. viii. yet ſo as it muſt be applied not of things, but of perſons who have ſhed blood, and whoſe blood is ſhed. By this, then, it would ſeem their orders and clergy eſpecially (and all others who are prime inſtruments and ſupporters of that Antichriſtian world) with their nurſeries and ſeminaries, whereby they have filled the world with corrupt teachers, muſt be underſtood. Theſe are called *Wells* by Peter, ſecond epiſtle, chap. ii. ver. 17. (though *without water*, that is, refreſhful water.) Theſe run to and ſuit with the ſea of ordinances formerly mentioned. Theſe have furniſhed life to that beaſt of a long time, men drinking at no other fountain or river, but the writings of ſome corrupt ſchoolmen, whoſe principles and aſſertions are often more debated for than the ſcriptures; and had it not been watered by theſe, that world had run dry long ſince. Theſe mens doctrines ſhall not only by this be vilipended, but the executors and followers of theſe principles, whereby many ſaints have ſmarted, ſhall be repayed: for perſons eminently ſubſervient to Antichriſt, and malicious againſt the ſaints, muſt be underſtood here, as their ordinances were by the former.

The effect is, *theſe rivers became blood:* not only corrupt only, as in the former vial, but they became bloody, that is, had their own blood given

them to drink, and were really made liable to such crosses and executions as formerly they had made the saints liable unto: so the words after expound it; and so the church, in the second seal, is described by a red horse. But lest Antichrist's followers should glory in suffering as in martyrdom, the congratulation is added, to shew, that it was an effect of justice on them: which is commended in a double congratulation and approbation.

Verse 5. The first approbation, is by the instrument of this plague, called the *Angel of the waters*, because this was committed to him, to plague these rivers and fountains. There is here, besides God's title of eternity, (or holiness, as the last word of the three, in the original *ὅσιος*, hath it) a twofold commendation of God's way in this, with the evidence of both, shewing that is done, and that distinctly upon grounds of knowledge (as men who speak of such things should do:) and there is one from the altar, subscribing to this judgment, which we take to be the same, chapter xiv. 18. whereby we understand that perfect harmony that is between them in heaven, and these on earth, heaven and earth, as it were, rejoicing together in the execution of this judgment, as it is chapter xviii.

The first congratulation, or approbation, goeth on two things: 1. Something in God is commended. 2. There is an evidence and proof of that which is commended.

1. That commended, is God's eternity and unchangeableness; it is the same with his name Jehovah; these three syllables making up this, *which art*, and *wast*, and *shall be;* and it especially relateth to God's faithfulness, making out, now, his promises to his people; and this attribute being the same with Jehovah, is here observed as an evidence of God's faithfulness, when he is now known by that name, as he was to Israel, Exod. iii. and that other pitched upon, is God's justice, not simply, but as proportioning suitable judgments to the party plague. *Righteous art thou, O Lord:* that commended, is the righteousness and justice of God: the ground of it, *because thou hast thus judged*, or judged these things, *tauta:* there is a special justice observed in respect of the object God hath poured this vial on, as being very guilty. 2. The suitableness and equality of the judgment is commended, *They shed blood* verse 6. and thou hast given them a meeting by shedding their blood. They made all the saints a prey, and had such strict laws against them, now, thou maketh them a prey, according to verse 7. chap. xiii. by which we expound *this drinking of blood*, it being the fulfilling of that threatning evidently. In a word, they are worthy to be so dealt with, which not only looketh to the justice of the plague simply, but to its proportionableness to their sin, especially, as was said; so, it may well be rendered *meet;* for they were meet not only for wrath, but for this same very wrath, as the people of God pray, Psal. cxxxvii. and it is commanded, Rev. xviii. 6. it being God's justice to proportion, as is meet; and, therefore, to give reward to his servants the prophets, out of meetness, and not out of merit, chap. xi. and so this word concludeth no more, but God hath met these men that were prodigal of the saints blood in their own measure, though unquestionably this and much more was deserved. It is written of Cyrus, who thrifting still after more kingdoms, was at last defeated by the Massagetae, and having his head cut off, Tomiris the queen, did cast it in a vessel of blood, bidding him that never would be satiated, drink his fill; such a meaning hath the same phrase here.

The second congratulation, or approbation, is ver. 7. and it is the subscription of the saints glorified in heaven to this song, setting their seal to the former approbation, *Even so, Lord God Almighty, &c.* observing, and, as it were, preaching God's justice and truth that appeareth, now, in these plagues. This looketh like the same, who, chap. xiv. 18. put up their suit to God for this judgment, now, when it is come, he acknowledgeth it, so that as both the church-militant and triumphant longed and prayed for Babylon's ruin: now, when it cometh, they are not idle spectators, but blesseth him for it. They prayed then; they praise now: who do the former, shall have occasion of the latter, and should improve the occasion of praise as well as of prayer. If, by the first, be understood Christians active in the judgment, and, by the second, some suffering yet under Antichrist, it will be one thing, all sorts shall thus bless God, even these that are but onlookers, though, as yet, they do not share of the delivery in that measure. In sum it is, Lord, all that is said of thy judgment on thy enemies, and of thy goodness to thy people from the beginning of the world, and

particularly, all that is come, or to come on Antichriſt is juſt and true, and there is no wrong done; thou haſt keeped thy threatnings to him and promiſe to thy people.

If any aſk, why this approbation, or theſe congratulations are marked at this vial eſpecially? beſide what was ſaid in opening the meaning of the words, we conceive theſe reaſons may be given, 1. To ſhew that the work is obſervable, and ſhould be obſerved as that which hath much of God's glory ſhining in it; and ſo it telleth how obſervant God's people are, and ought to be, in obſerving his judgments. 2. It is to ſhew the greatneſs and glorioufneſs of the work of executing judgment on Antichriſt, as having much of God's faithfulneſs and juſtice ſhining in it, and of his love to his church. 3. It is, that thereby the ſtupidity and ſlowneſs of men may be checked. Men are ſlow to put out their hand againſt the whore; therefore he would let them know how glorious a work it is, that they may be ſtirred to be active in it when they are called to it, and in the mean time may pray for it. 4. Becauſe this was the ſpecial thing foretold in the xiii. and prayed for in the xiv. chapters: and they that prayed for it formerly obſerve, and praiſe for it when it is fulfilled. Watchfulneſs in difficulties will ſend us to prayer, and ſo ſhould outgates ſend us to praiſe.

Although we dare not be particular in the application of things, yet conſidering ſome remarkable overthrows of many Papiſts (whereby their own blood was given them to drink) in Holland, France, Germany, England, &c. in the proſecuting of their deſigns that were a little after the council of Trent, and to the year, 1588. which formerly, when all things ſucceeded with them, they uſed not to meet with; and conſidering the laws and acts that were made againſt ſeminary prieſts and ſaying of maſs, &c. that it ſhould be death, we conceive there is warrant to ſay, that in part this vial is fulfilled, and that there is, in that reſpect, ground for the praiſe that is mentioned here.

LECTURE III.

Verſe 8. *And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the ſun, and power was given unto him to ſcorch men with fire.*

9. *And men were ſcorched with great heat, and blaſphemed the name of God, which hath power over theſe plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.*

10. *And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the ſeat of the beaſt, and his kingdom was full of darkneſs, and they gnawed their tongues for pain,*

11. *And blaſphemed the God of heaven, becauſe of their pains and their ſores, and repented not of their deeds.*

ANtichriſt's begun ruin goeth on as his riſe did, and by the ſame degrees. The fourth angel, verſe 8. poureth out his vial, and a further degree of darkneſs cometh on that kingdom, and anxiety upon his followers, the object of this plague, is the ſun of Antichriſt's world, ſo that men were ſcorched with fire, that is the proper work of this angel: his power is by that plague of affecting the ſun to ſcorch men, that is, the men mentioned, verſe 2. That have the beaſt's mark: for they are *οἱ* in the plural, and as relative to theſe formerly mentioned. Then, verſe 9. follow three effects of this plague, 1. Pain. 2. Blaſphemy. 3. Impenitency.

The plague is declared, 1. In the object of it, *the ſun.* 2. In the nature of it in general, *he had power given him to ſcorch men with fire.* 3. This is more particularly cleared in the effects, verſe 9.

The ſun of the beaſt's kingdom, or world, we underſtand with a twofold reſpect, 1. To his temporal ſtate. 2. To his eccleſiaſtic. 1. By ſun in the world, is underſtood ſomewhat eminent, glorious and ſhining, ſo chap. vi. as the heaven is above the earth. Now, as the ſun is chief among the lights in that firmament, ſo here muſt be underſtood ſome eminent chief light in that world, as great ones, kings and princes, are glorious lights. It would ſeem the emperor, as chief among them who uphold moſt that whore, as her firſtborn, ſo is he called, the king of Spain and others may be meant, it being the ſun that giveth light, and alſo comfort and life to things here, as theſe temporal monarchs do to the Pope, eſpecially the emperor and king of Spain; or, it may hold out the Lord's withdrawing temporal powers from the beaſt's friendſhip, as it is chap. xvii. and ſeeing

they glory much in that, the making of ſuch to hate her, cannot but darken that kingdom and gall them much: and indeed as the word propagateth and defendeth Chriſt's kingdom, ſo almoſt doth external force of inquiſitions, and ſuch like, uphold the Popiſh tyranny; and ſeeing theſe go before the fifth vial, wherein Babylon is to be pulled down by ſome kings, this is not unlikely.

Looking again unto this beaſt as a whoriſh church, by ſun we underſtand the complex doctrine, rules and canons of the church of Rome, or, what is to them in place of the ſcriptures, which we expounded to be that ſun in the fourth trumpet, chap. viii. though this be not the ſun ſimply, yet to them it is ſo, and it is a ſun profitable to that kingdom, or heaven wherein it ſhineth, that we are to ſeek for here. This is done by God's making the light of his word to ſhine more clearly and convincingly to diſcover the propheſies about Antichriſt, whereby his glory is ſtained, that darkneſs and ignorance which they formerly called light, is aboliſhed now in a great meaſure; and this cannot but burn and ſcorch theſe men, as very fire. When light cometh to an height, while as the very propheſying of two witneſſes, chap. xi. ſo tormented them: for, the outbreaking of God's light darkneth their ſun, as the riſing of their errors darkned his ſun, chap. viii. but not in the ſame manner. The effects will ſuit well with this alſo. Both 1. The pain that men were ſcorched, that is, by this word convinced and ſhamed, and by the goſpel's thriving (which they could not impede) ſo fretted, as Iſa. xxvi. 11. The fire of enemies as their envy, which as fire conſumeth them. This is a further addition unto and degree of the firſt plague, verſe 2. Both theſe applications may agree with the ſcope and type, &c.

The ſecond effect is, *They blaſphemed God who had power over theſe plagues.* Where is, 1. God's ſovereignty in ordering all judgments, ſaying to one, go and he goeth, to another, do this and he doth it, Mat. viii. It is marked here to aggrege their ſin, which is the ſecond thing, that they ſhould have ſlighted God and not humbled themſelves before him who ſmote them, Iſa. ix. which was their duty, but grew in blaſpheming God, that maketh their ſin greater. By this blaſphemy we would underſtand a more violent giddy following of their blaſphemous errors, and idolatrous ways, which they fly moſt unto in their ſtraits, to wrong God more publicly: as their blaſphemy was marked in their head, the beaſt, chap. xiii. thus light doth them no good, as the third effect cleareth; *they repented not to give God glory:* where is holden out, 1. The uſe of a rod, repentance in taking with our ſin and abandoning of it: 2. The way to remove a rod, repentance and not running on in ſin: 3. A great uſe of repentance, or end of it, is to give God glory when he ſmiteth. 1. This taketh with the juſtice of the ſtroke, Joſh. vii. *My ſon,* ſaith he to Achan, *give God glory.* 2. It yieldeth to him as the greater, and will not conteſt. 3. It glorifieth him in accepting the chaſtiſement and in bringing forth fruits before others, as acknowledging its being overcome. Antichriſt's followers, even by God's judgments on him, will not be brought to repentance, ſo mad are they on their idols and ſo drunk with his deluſions.

This fourth vial, is at moſt but in the pouring forth, and the fifth is certainly to come, (yet is more plainly deſcribed than, and of, the former) and ſo we are to walk the more warily in the opening of it, ſeeing events cannot afford ſuch help.

In the fifth plague, which is in the 10th and 11th verſes, there is the object and the events. Here the object ſeemeth to be more clearly ſet down than formerly. It is *the throne* or *ſeat of the beaſt:* partly, to ſhew us it is ſomething of the beaſt's kingdom, that is plagued before, though it be not ſo plainly ſaid the ſum of the beaſt, as it is here the ſeat of the beaſt. 2. Partly, becauſe at this fifth vial's pouring out, things will be ſo clear, that they will not be vailed with types; for, it bringeth a more ſenſible ſtep of his ruin, as the fifth trumpet did of his riſe. This fifth vial foretelleth the ruin of Rome, which will make Antichriſt ſeek ſome other chair, or neſt, to ſit in. The object, is, the ſeat of the beaſt. The effects are four, not unſuitable to what went before; ſeeing there is a further plague on the beaſt's kingdom, there is alſo a further degree of rain and bitterneſs amongſt his followers.

The ſeat here, or throne (as it is in the original *Thronos*) is the ſame which was chap. xiii. verſe 2. ſpoken of the ſeat or throne of the dragon, viz. Rome. Rome was called the dragon's ſeat, or throne, becauſe although his dominion and authority did extend far, yet there he eſpecially kept his court, and from thence iſſued his com-

mands. It is the moſt eminent part of his kingdom, where his majeſty, as it were, doth more manifeſt itſelf. And, as Rome was the dragon's throne, ſo will it be found to be Antichriſt alſo: and therefore the object of this plague: 1. Becauſe the beaſt, chap. xiii. getteth the ſame throne which the dragon had, and is to emit his bulls, mandates, and orders from it, over all his dominions. 2. Becauſe it agreeth well with the ſcope and gradation of theſe vials, which bring ever the judgment nearer Antichriſt, till it make him fly, as the vial following cleareth. 3. This is clear from the explicatory propheſy of this ſame vial, chap. xvii. and xviii. where, under the name of Babylon, the deſtruction of this ſeat is ſet down, as there will be clear. 4. It agreeth well alſo with the order of the trumpets: betwixt which, and the vials, there is a likeneſs in method, as is ſaid. By the fifth trumpet, Antichriſt cometh to his throne, to get ſome public footing; by the fifth vial, he is put from it: and, ſuppoſing the Popiſh kingdom to be the Antichriſtian kingdom, and the Pope to be Antichriſt, there is no queſtion but Rome is the throne, it being from the pretended infallibility and ſanctity of that ſee that they derive their ſtate, he is now put from it. The firſt four vials as it were took in the outward, this fifth ſtormeth his caſtle, and overturneth it, which is more largely deſcribed, chap. xviii.

There are four effects: 1. *His kingdom was full of darkneſs*, when the ſplendor of his throne is deſtroyed, which they thought impoſſible. Now, there is confuſion, by the influence of that ſtroke, on all his dominion: men think leſs of it, and it is now, as it were, darkened and contemptible in a greater degree than by any former vial: even as the fifth trumpet completed the church's darkneſs, which was but partial before it, yet is not this kingdom fully deſtroyed, though darkened, but there is a Pope, and he hath followers ſtill, and inſtruments and agents to do for him, now, when he is weak. The ſecond effect is their pain, evidenced to be greater than before, in that they, like diſtracted mad men, *gnaw their tongues for pain*, it troubleth them ſo to be diſappointed in the opinion they had of Rome's ſtanding. 2. The declining of their own grandeur. And, 3. The enmity they had at the light they oppoſe, tormenteth them to ſee it thrive. Theſe are more fully in the lamentation, chap. xviii. The third effect, *They blaſpheme againſt the God of heaven, ut ſupra:* poſſibly breaking out now in open rage, as if he had not made good his ſuppoſed promiſes to the apoſtolic ſee, Chriſt's vicar and mother-church. And therefore, in this fury, they run to any inſtrument for help, as under the ſixth trumpet, like that blaſphemous ſaying, *flectere ſi nequeo ſuperos, Acheronta movebo.* Yet, 4. They amended nothing *of their ill deeds* that brought on that wrath. Repentance is difficult eſpecially to theſe in this deluſion.

LECTURE IV.

Verſe 12. *And the ſixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the Eaſt might be prepared.*

THIS vial, in its events, being wholly to come, it is no marvel there be difficulty in the underſtanding of it, ſeeing what is not paſt is not eaſy; yet we have theſe two helps to underſtand it: 1. Concerning the time, this relateth to the ſtate of the church ſucceeding Rome's deſtruction: for, as the firſt four vials begin and carry on his judgment, by diſcovering his hypocritical way, and ſpreading the light of the goſpel, and, by armies and temporal judgments, taking vengeance on his protectors, and dividing ſome, at leaſt, of the weſtern kings, that once had given their power to him, from him to be turned to hate him, chap. xvii. ſo the fifth vial lighteth on his ſeat, and he is made to quit his inexpugnable throne, and to flee elſewhere for ſhelter.

This ſixth vial holdeth forth God ſtill purſuing him; and as that beaſt uſeth new endeavours to ſtrengthen himſelf by leagues with new friends, ſo God ſtirreth up new enemies againſt him, the Jews are called, and God taketh vengeance on all his ſupporters, when he hath ſuffered them for a time to countenance that baniſhed Antichriſt, he and they are both taken and caſt into the pit; ſo that, as the fifth vial putteth him from Rome, that it is not thereafter his ſeat, though there be a Pope: this ſixth putteth an end to Popes, that there is none after that, as in chap. xix. appeareth:

and then the ſeventh vial bringeth an end to all Chriſt's enemies univerſally, and eſpecially upon any adherents or favourers that this beaſt ſhall have after that; for, it appeareth that even where there ſhall be no viſible Pope, yet ſome ſhall continue ſo drunk with his wine, as to be doting after him, and lamenting his deſtruction, even to the end, who then ſhall be remembered, when *great Babylon* ſhall get her laſt ſentence.

A ſecond help, for clearing this, is, by comparing it with the xix. chapter, which is the more clear and full explication of this: for, 1. That followeth the xviii. chapter, which directeth clearly the fifth vial, and ſo in order the expoſition of this ſixth followeth, chapter xix. 2. Here a gathering and battle is ſpoken of, but the event is not ſet down till chapter xix. when the contrary party againſt this gathering is expreſſed, and that it is the ſame gathering, appeareth, that it is here *the day of God*, there, the *ſupper of the great King*, denoting one ſingular and eminent overthrow of God's enemies. 3. Alſo that the enemies deſtroyed there, are the ſame mentioned here, viz. kings and their armies, the beaſt and falſe prophet (who are mentioned under the ſame names in both places, to ſhew the reference of the one to the other) and therefore comparing the events with the xix. chapter, it appeareth, that the firſt four verſes contain a deſirable event, having an acceſſion to the church in it, anſwerable to which is the praiſe in the beginning of chap. xix. the other expreſſeth a ſpecial deſign of the beaſt, which God diſappointeth, chap. xix. laſt part. Who theſe kings of the Eaſt are, by which ſuch an acceſſion is made, and ground of joy given to the church, will appear afterward.

In the words we have, 1. The object of this plague, *The great river Euphrates*. 2. The effects are more ſummarily and generally ſet down in two, 1. The effect. And, 2. The end or uſe of it, ver. 12. Then, more particularly, from ver. 13. to 17. In a word, there are three notable events holden forth here, 1. The Jews converſion under that expreſſion, *the preparing of the way of the kings of the Eaſt*. 2. The diminiſhing of the Turks greatneſs, by *drying up Euphrates*. 3. The laſt expedition of the beaſt for ſupport of his tottering kingdom in the reſt of the words, with its event, chap. xix. This laſt expedition is either occaſioned by the Jews converſion, who, taking him to be Antichriſt, join with his oppoſers, whereby he is put to ſee for new friends: or, theſe words may more fully explicate what by anticipation was ſet down before, namely, how this river of Euphrates was dried, viz. Antichriſt being put from Rome by the Weſtern kings, who now hate him, he hath recourſe to the Turk, and poſſibly, by alluring him, from what prejudice he may ſuffer from the Jews riſing and greatneſs, he getteth him engaged to concur with him, and many others alſo, on whom God taketh vengeance when they are gathered together, that what concerneth the Jews be not impeded.

The object is, the *great river Euphrates*: which is great; and becauſe of that, it is often called (*katexochen*) in ſcripture the *river* ſimply. Of this Euphrates we heard, chap. ix. It runneth through Meſopotamia, by or through Babylon, it divideth Solomon's kingdom from Syria, and was a great ſtrength to Babylon; and when the Jews were carried captive, they were carried beyond the river, that is, Euphrates; therefore it ſtands now in the way of their returning: this here is an impediment of their entry to the church, and of their acceſs to help down with Babylon; and, as once Jordan was dried to make way for them, ſo that impediment is to be removed (as if it were by the drying of a river) out of their way. To take Euphrates literally here, will not ſuit much with the analogy uſed in the reſt of the vials, nor with the ſcope here, (that river ſtandeth little in the way of the Jews converſion, and the drying of it will be little uſeful to the church) it muſt then be figuratively underſtood. By *waters*, ordinarily in ſcripture, are underſtood much people; and, by Euphrates in particular, theſe people that dwell about, as Iſa. viii. 7. the king of Aſſyria and his army are called *the waters of the river*, that is, of Euphrates, becauſe they dwelt about it. By the ſame reaſon, then, Euphrates, here, muſt be underſtood the people for the time inhabiting there: and becauſe not only in verity of the thing, the Turks now poſſeſs that part of the world, but alſo, chap. ix. 14, &c. of this book, theſe ſame people were marked as bound about that river; and the looſing of them, noted, as it were, the overflowing of that people's dominion like a flood from theſe parts. So there is no people that can be ſo reaſonably underſtood here as the Turks, who were alſo underſtood there, chap. ix. 14. And this ſixth vial, mentioning that river, hath a ſpecial relation

to the ſixth trumpet, where it was mentioned before; for ſo the agreement betwixt the trumpets and the vials requireth Beſide, Euphrates was both the border of the Roman empire, and alſo of David's kingdom, though of, and within neither, but rather an impediment to both; ſo it would ſeem that no people within the empire or church are meant, though ſuch enemies as border with both, may be underſtood.

The effect is, *the waters thereof were dried up*, that is, as their dominion increaſed by their overflowing under the ſixth trumpet, ſo now they decay and diminiſh, and their empire is abridged, by what mean, the Lord knoweth: but theſe who before ſeemed a great river that none could paſs, now people may croſs it, they are brought low; for, if overflowing, ſignify victory, as Iſa. viii. 7. then *drying up*, muſt ſignify diminiſhing, as is ſaid.

The ſecond part of the event, ſetteth forth the end of this, viz. *That the way of the kings of the Eaſt may be prepared:* where we are to inquire, 1. What theſe kings are? 2. What this is, *to prepare their way?* 3. How the diminiſhing of the Turkiſh power doth it.

By *theſe kings in the Eaſt*, we underſtand the Jews, who being converted unto the faith of Chriſt, are not only kings, as all other Chriſtians are, chap. i. 7. but it ſeemeth that eſpecially they when the ſcripture ſpeaketh of their converſion, are called kings. If we will compare ver. 21, 22, and 23. of Iſa. xxiv. we will find theſe things clear: 1. That when Iſrael is to be chaſtened, and thereafter reſtored, they are called *kings*, ver. 21. For it is they that are, after many days, viſited, and that is the Jews: for no other people are capable of the comfort intended in the promiſe, as Calvin *in locum* aſſerteth: for it ſuppoſeth them once to have been God's people. And, 2. For a long time to have been forgotten; and what is added, of God's reigning in *Sion before his antients*, confirmeth this alſo. 2. It is clear that that viſitation ſeemeth to relate to their laſt calling; for it is after many days, while the whole face of their land is over-run. 2. The erecting again of Chriſt's kingdom amongſt them in ſo glorious a reign, looketh to that time when it ſhall be moſt glorious, and ſo at their converſion, tho' in ſome part it may be fulfilled already under the goſpel, as all do grant, yet its higher degree of the Jews re-ingrafting followeth: and why may not that antient privileged people get names, importing a ſingular reſpect to them, eſpecially conſidering that God may at their converſion furniſh them generally with ſuch ſpiritual and royal inducements, that the feeble amongſt them may be as David, and give alſo unto them a large outward dominion? Zech. xii.

They are called *kings of the Eaſt*, 1. Becauſe in reſpect of the part of the world we live in, who, before them enjoy the goſpel; they are Eaſt to us, and ſo they are diſtinguiſhed from the native Weſtern kingdoms and kings, made alſo now to hate the whore. 2. Becauſe many of them living there (it is like ſince the firſt captivity, and laſt diſperſion) when they may be made to join againſt Antichriſt in the Weſt, which maketh him ſo afraid, their expedition will look as coming from the Eaſt, and ſo the Turks will be in their way, as Euphrates was in Cyrus' way, impeding the intaking of Babylon, till it was dried; ſo this of myſtical Babylon. 3. Becauſe poſſibly, if not probably, after the Turks deſtruction, God may give them great poſſeſſions and dominions in the Eaſt, and make them much inſtrumental for ſpreading of the goſpel to other kings in theſe parts: beſides, ordinarily any riſe of light to the church, and of Chriſt's coming, is ſpoken as from the Eaſt, ſo chap. vii. 2. and Matth. xxiv. it is like lightning, as it were, a new day or morning breaking up in the church.

2. For the next thing, what this way of the Jews is? It ſeemeth to be one or all of theſe three, 1. It is to the church. 2. To help down the Pope. 3. To their own poſſeſſion. The Turk's ſtanding marreth all, and his removing, will further all theſe.

To clear it, *That their way may be prepared*, taketh in this general, the removing of any thing which may hinder them in their way towards the church, or in the former expeditions: for, 1. Not only are they to be looked on here as coming to the true church, now ſeparated from Antichriſt. But, 2. As concurring to have a main hand in his overthrow. Hence he is ſo afraid at their converſion (for it ſeemeth, that now all true converts are to be employed in ruining him) and he hath an Hebrew name *Abaddon*, to ſhew the abhorrency of him as others do, and the place of his ruin, and the praiſe for the ſame, is in Hebrew, chap. xix. pointing at a ſpecial hand which they are to have in his laſt overthrow. And, in reference to theſe two ends of the Jews converſion, viz. of joining to the

church, and of going againſt Antichriſt, there is to them a twofold lett in their way (to forbear now their going to their own land) there is a great ſtumbling from the ſuperſtitious worſhip of Papiſts, who are called Chriſtians, and a ſtumbling at the long prevailing of the enemy of Chriſtians, the Turk, wondering, that if Chriſt be God, how he ſuffereth ſuch blaſphemy and blaſphemers.

The firſt in a great part is removed by God's judgment on the Pope, and Rome in the fifth vial. The ſecond is to be removed now by this, that no ſtumbling or lett remain; for tho' they would do ſomething, and poſſibly, now having the Pope diſcovered to them, their zeal is more hot againſt him than others, (becauſe by his means they have been much hardened) yet the Turk becoming their enemy, and being engaged to that whore's ſupport, they are impeded while the Turkiſh empire ſtandeth. This vial removeth that impediment, his power is weakened, whether by themſelves or by others, or by drawing of many to Chriſtianity from him, we are not to determine, but acceſs is given to them both to pull Antichriſt down, and probably to win to their own poſſeſſion by his ruin. And this leadeth to the third thing propoſed, viz. how the ruin of the Turks, or their weakening may be called the preparing of their way. Which is clear. 1. Whether we look to the Jews converſion, it ſtrengthens them that Chriſt is God, and giveth them hopes of coming home: on which they lay great weight. Or, 2. Whether we look to their undertaking againſt Antichriſt. Or, 3. Their return to their own land: all which three, as we ſaid, ſeem to be pointed at here. The ſtanding of the Turk obſtructeth all theſe three, and the overturning of him, will ſtrengthen all, and give them liberty without fear in the profeſſing of Chriſt.

For further clearing of this, that theſe two events, viz. the Jews converſion, and the Turks downfall, are propheſied of here, we ſhall confirm both ſeverally from theſe reaſons.

That the Jews converſion muſt be underſtood here, appeareth: for, 1. It is certain their converſion in the laſt days is ſpoken of, and to be expected, and it can ſuit with no time better than of this ſixth vial, which is after the Pope's overthrow in reſpect of his ſeat at Rome, and before the ſeventh vial, which bringeth the end. Neither is it like, that ſo great and concerning a buſineſs of the church would be omitted in this propheſy; and it can be brought in no where ſo clearly, that of the Jews mentioned, chap. vii. being nothing to this purpoſe, as was ſaid there. 2. The prophets ſeem to foretel their reſtoring in theſe ſame terms, ſee Iſa. xi. 15. and 16. which chapter ſpeaketh of the days of the goſpel, and the Jews reſtoring, ſuiting with that time, as cannot be denied.

The expreſſions in ſum are, that as God, when he brought them out of Egypt, dried up the ſea and Jordan, ſo when he bringeth them from Aſſyria (which was beyond this Euphrates from Judea) he ſhall ſmite that river, and the removing of all impediments is ſet out under that expreſſion. Neither is it for nought that drying of waters is a peculiar mercy ſhown to Iſrael in their firſt deliverances, and that alluſion is made to that in their following reſtitution, to be a confirmation to their faith therein, as Iſaiah xliv. 27. *Thus ſaith the Lord that drieth up the rivers, and ſaith to the deep, be dry, &c.* when yet no particular river was to be dried up, but thereby to mind them of what he had done.

3. If we look further to the explication of this, chap. xix. There is much joy in the church, praiſing God that he reigneth, and that in an eminent way, that his wife hath made herſelf ready, and the marriage is come, &c. And can theſe agree ſo well to any event, as to the converſion of the Jews, which, Rom. xi. ſhall be as a *reſurrection from the dead?* Or, can the joy be ſo great, or the marriage be made ready without them? eſpecially conſidering if now they be not amongſt Chriſt's friends, when in the words following he is on his march againſt all his enemies; and could the church of the Gentiles be merry, if the Jews were amongſt theſe enemies? But from chap. xix. it is clear, that there is here a notable and ſingular acceſſion to the church; and what one can have theſe effects ſo as this?

4. It is not unworthy the obſerving that here ſo many Hebrew expreſſions and phraſes are uſed, and not ſo any where elſe; which ſeemeth to plead a ſpecial intereſt that the Hebrews have in the event of this vial. 1. The place is named in the Hebrew tongue *Armageddon:* Why? Hebrews are there to put on that name, as their cuſtom was to name places from events. 2. The praiſe is in Hebrew, chap. xix. *Allelujah*, uſed frequently in the Pſalms, and not mentioned in any other ſong in this book, tho' they be frequent, becauſe there was

no conſiderable Hebrew praiſers before this: theſe brought in, are called the Lamb's wife, as in a covenant relation, even before ſhe be made ready: which agreeth to none, but to that ancient married people, unto which covenant God hath reſpect, even in their laſt calling.

If it be aſked, what we underſtand by their reſtauration, or converſion, if meerly a calling to the faith of Chriſt, where-ever they ſhall dwell, diſperſed up and down amongſt other people, or, with it, a reſtoring of them to their former land and inheritance to ſerve God there, not in a typical or ceremonial way, but as an eminent, goſpel, national church? Albeit we cannot take on us peremptorily to determine, we ſay, 1. That although the firſt be true, yet dare we not ſay that it is meerly and only to the faith of Chriſt, ſo as to exclude the other of poſſeſſing them in their own land, and that not only for the reſpect we have to the moſt able commentators on this ſcripture, and others of the prophets, but for the reaſons eſpecially which may be alledged for it, which we draw to three heads: the firſt are the ſcriptures and promiſes, ſpeaking to the reſtoring not only of Judah, but alſo of Iſrael, to return to ſerve God in their own land in one, Ezek. xxxvii. 20, 21. &c. of God's promiſing to bleſs it to them after its long barrenneſs, and their being ejected out of it, Pſal. lxvii. 7. See Jer. iii. 18. Ezek. xxxiv. 13. and xxxvi. 24. and xxxvii. 14. and xxxix. 28. which places, as to Iſrael and their return with Judah, cannot be ſaid to be fulfilled, Iſa. xi. 12. from verſe 10. That place, Amos ix. verſe 11, 12, 14, 15. ſeemeth convincing to this purpoſe, as belonging to them in the days of the goſpel, and yet cannot be ſaid to be fufilled, eſpecially in reſpect of what is the laſt verſe. And certainly ſome words of Chriſt's, Matth. xxiii. Luke xxi. 24. limiting their outward deſolation, and the deſolation of their houſes and land, to the time they ſhould ſay, Hoſanna to him, and acknowledge him, and to the time of the fulneſs of the Gentiles, do alſo ſpeak for this. Add to them Paul, ſpeaking of the reſtitution, as to a national ſtate, and of all Iſrael to be grafted in, as they were broken off, which cannot be ſo well without an outward national civil ſtate, which confirmeth the former, Rom. xi.

A ſecond ſort of proof is, the reaſons that plead for this; and in effect, what reaſons do plead for the Jews converſion, do in ſome degree plead for a temporal reſtitution; as, 1. God's electing them to be his people, and making an everlaſting covenant with them, the promiſe of their dwelling for ever in that land, which peculiarly was given to that race (in a more ſpecial manner, and by more ſingular rights and titles than any other in the world) are comprehended in that covenant: and if any ſay, that that is not a ſaving promiſe, or abſolute; ſo neither was his promiſe of continuing them a viſible church, or his people abſolute, as the events of both alike do clear; yet is weight laid on his covenant with their fathers, thus far as to make them again his people, and why not in this particular alſo? For it is not ſimply, that he covenanted with them in a covenant of grace, (for, ſo he hath done with many others) but in a covenant with ſpecial promiſes, and grounds that maketh it a ſingular tye in theſe things, beyond what others have: ſee Rom. xi. 28. Conſidering eſpecially, that ſo God's glory will the more ſhine in his faithfulneſs and goodneſs in the remembrance of his people and covenant: that work will be the more obſervable to all nations, and their in coming, which is a ſpecial evidence of God's faithfulneſs, and a great promiſe made to the church, will certainly bring forth the ends of it more obſervably thus, both as they relate to God and his honour, the church's ſplendour, and others edification, or their own conſolation. Neither can that promiſe made to Iſrael, (Deut. xxx. 2, 3, 4. &c. that whenever they ſhould repent, the Lord would gather them from the nations whither they were ſcatter'd, and return them to their own land) be tho't void and null after Chriſt's coming, eſpecially conſidering the general repentance and mourning, which is to accompany their converſion. Therefore it would ſeem by that promiſe, they may expect their own land, it being a part of God's engagement to the natural ſeed of Abraham.

A third ſort of proof is, the concurrence of God's providence hitherto ſeeming to confirm this; for, beſide that, they are ſtill, where they live, a diſtinct people by themſelves unmixed with other races, which ſeemeth to hold forth God's will, that they ſhould be ſo, and if they were converted, ſo as to live among other Chriſtians, they might ingroſs in that nation they live amongſt, and the name of that nation evaniſh, but that keepeth what befalleth them remarkable: as alſo, that although they be generally very rich, and in capacity to go on an expedition, yet, as it is reported, none of them are poſſeſſors of lands

any where to be a retardment unto them. Conſidering alſo, that God hath reſerved that land unpoſſeſſed by any Chriſtian, but ſuch men as he mindeth to deſtroy. And conſidering alſo, that the converſion of the Jews, and the deſtruction of theſe that poſſeſs now their land, are tryſted together at one time, can any think that for nought? Or, now when the Turks ſhall be expelled in this general battle at Armageddon, and that land left void, and the Jews new converted, having hand in their overthrow, will any offer to come between them and that poſſeſſion? Eſpecially, conſidering that at ſuch a time there will be, probably, a general zeal more than ordinary for the church's propagation, rather than for particular dominion: certainly their title to that land will appear more ſacred than what any other people can claim to any land or it, and who will impede it? And it is obſervable, that whoever poſſeſs that land, it is ſtill in ſcripture accounted as belonging to the Jews, and will that right be to no purpoſe? 2. We ſay to that queſtion, whatever may be doubted of their reſtoring to their land, yet that they ſhall be brought to a viſible church ſtate. 1. Not only in particular perſons here and there in congregations; but that multitudes; yea, the whole body of them ſhall be brought in a common way with the Gentiles, to profeſs Chriſt, which cannot be denied, as Rom. xi. is clear, and that will be enough to ſatisfy us in this text, tho' indeed this will ſtand alſo well with the former, and ſome way infer it.

The other thing to be cleared was, that the Turks overthrow, one way or other, is meaned by the drying up that river Euphrates: which beſide what is ſaid, is confirmed, 1. From the end wherefore it is dried up, viz. the Jews reſtoring: and however, we take their reſtoring, (as is ſaid) nothing more hindereth it than the Turks ſtanding, (the Pope being now down) eſpecially if the reſtoring them to their own land be underſtood: that cannot be without this preceding furtherance, and the removing of this impediment out of their way. 2. The fulneſs of the Gentiles goeth alongſt with, if it do not precede, the Jews calling; and can that fulneſs be, and the Turks poſſeſs ſo many nations, where the Gentiles had churches, and where there is ſo much joy in the church, chapter xix. and ſo much wrath generally on Chriſt's enemies in the end thereof? It cannot be thought that either of theſe can be, and the Turks be free. 3. It followeth natively by comparing the order and method of the vials with the trumpets. This is clear in all, that what plague cometh on the church by the trumpets, the contrary good cometh by the vials, and what advantage Antichriſt got by the one, he loſeth by the other. Now, it is certain, that as by the fifth trumpet Antichriſt roſe, and theſe Turks (before bound at Euphrates) were looſed by the ſixth, as a plague following Antichriſt on the Chriſtian world; ſo by the fifth vial Antichriſt is put from his ſeat: and therefore in order by the ſixth, the church ſhould be next freed of that enemy, which Antichriſt's riſe to the throne brought on: eſpecially, conſidering that the Expreſſions are ſo like other; in the ſixth trumpet, they are looſed, as if Euphrates were overflowing all banks. Here again, by the ſixth vial, that overſpreading is reſtrained and dried, which muſt be a drying up ſuitable and appoſite to that looſing, which was before in the ſixth trumpet. Beſide, there is no other Application probable; for to apply this to Cyrus his taking of Babylon, as if he had been a king from the Eaſt, his coming from the North will not ſuffer it, Jer. l. 41, 42, 43. Or, to call theſe Eaſterns, heathen nations, or Turks to be made uſe of to deſtroy Antichriſt, cannot be: for theſe vials are poured out by ſome from the temple, and kings that formerly whored with the whore will have a main hand in her overthrow, chap. xvii. Or, to apply it to the weakening the Pope's revenues, which as a river, ſtrengtheneth him no queſtion, he being formerly put from his throne, and theſe kings turned to hate him, his coffers will be empty before this ſixth vial come: neither do theſe prepare ſo the Jews way, nor ſpeaketh it formally ſuch acceſſion to the church as the other, which is clear to be underſtood here from chap. xix.

There are two chief objections to be removed; the firſt is, that theſe vials bring wrath on the beaſt, as the effects of them, and he is the object they pour their plagues upon; but neither the in-coming of the Jews, nor down-bringing of the Turks, toucheth him, or affecteth him. *Anſw.* 1. Tho' the beaſt be the chief object, yet not the only object, eſpecially in theſe laſt two vials; all other enemies, kings of the earth, and nations alſo are much plagued, as is clear, comparing what followeth with chapter xix. 2. In all theſe vials, two things are joined together, the ſtanding and ſpreading of Chriſt's kingdom, and

the decreasing of Antichrist's: and these two precede together; what bringeth Antichrist down, advanceth Christ's kingdom; and what advanceth his kingdom, darkeneth Antichrist's: and though directly it strike not on Antichrist, yet consequentially it doth; for, all Christ's followers are Antichrist's enemies. 3. It is not simply the Jewish nation their conversion, and the Turks overthrow, that are spoken of here; but it is the Jews conversion and union with the Gentiles, in pursuing Antichrist now discovered, (and therefore first here called the false prophet) and the Turks now apparently as united with Antichrist, (it being like, that he is among the chief of the nations, or kings of the earth, which he addresseth unto) and so both the Jews conversion, and the Turks ruin, will be of great concernment, and a heavy stroke to the Pope.

Object. 2. Can such a great accession stand with that, chap. xv. that none would enter the temple till these plagues were ended? *Answ.* 1. It cannot be meant, that no growth should be of the church from the beginning of the vials, till all were closed: for then there should never any be, for they close the last judgment, and yet every vial hath a new accession to the church, and some victory over Antichrist. 2. The meaning of that place then is, 1. None were able to stand to interceed for these who were to be plagued, but necessarily and inevitably they were poured out, and no intercession was admitted. 2. None entered of these creatures devoted to Antichrist and his destruction, they continued hardened to the last, even after Rome is destroyed, and the Popes abolished, yet some remainder there is to the very last vial.

All which should stir us up heartily to pray for these things, that sometimes will be so good news to the church, that, in due time, the Lord would perform it, and hasten it. So far may we be warranted from this place.

LECTURE V.

Verse 13. *And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.*

14. *For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.*

15. *Behold I come as a thief, blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.*

16. *And he gathered them together into a place, called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon.*

FROM verse 13. to verse 17. followeth the third effect of this vial, viz. the last great expedition of Antichrist for his support, now after Rome's fall (or at least the shaking of that dominion hugely) and before his ruin. It may either be called a third effect following on, or occasioned by the former two, viz. the first appearance of the Jews enmity against him, and the Turks decay; or, these verses may more fully explicate the manner how Euphrates (that is the Turks dominion) was dried up, to prepare the Jews way, it was by the said beast's engaging them for him, who then by the battle of Armageddon were ruined both together, and an excellent state of the church, both of the fulness of the Gentiles, and in-calling of the Jews, followed: whereupon these praises, chap. xix. are by anticipation set down before the battle: however the effects are the same.

This expedition in this chapter, (beside the event of it, chap. xix.) is set out in five things. 1. In its authors, the dragon, beast, and false prophet. 2. Its special agents, three spirits. 3. Their task, to gather the kings of the earth. And, 4. The success, they are brought together in Armageddon, verse 16. and before this, after the preparation in parenthesis, there is cast in a word both of warning and of comfort. *Behold, I come as a thief, Blessed is he, &c.* verse 15.

1. The author is designed by three names, yet is the same party under divers considerations. The dragon is the same mentioned, chap. xii. 8, 9. viz. the devil here acting not immediately, but for supporting his lieutenant the beast, to whom he gave his power, chap. xiii. leaving nothing that hell can do for that end. The beast, is the first beast named, chap. xiii. viz. the Pope, as he is head to the civil state of Rome. The false prophet, is the two horned beast, chap. xiii. 11. for, chap. xix. 20. the false prophet worketh miracles before the fifth beast, which is the very work of that two horned beast, chap. xiii. and

his place only. He is called here the *falſe prophet*, becauſe that vizorn of reſpect to the Lamb, which formerly he pretended is now taken away, and he that pretended to be Chriſt's vicar, is now diſcovered to be the great deceiver and *falſe prophet* which was to come: and, as theſe two beaſts are one, chap. xiii. as was there cleared; ſo is the *beaſt* and *falſe prophet* one here: for, chap. xix. verſe 19. The beaſt is diſtinct from the kings of the earth; ſo, ver. 14. of this chapter; yet it would ſeem that all civil powers, under the name of kings, as chap. xvii. are contradiſtinguiſhed from the beaſt and whore, as they that ſhall once ſupport her, and afterward hate her; neither can the emperor be ſecluded from that reckoning: and therefore it is no ſupreme civil power. 2. They are both caſt into the lake together, verſe 20. and the now Roman empire (likely) was either deſtroyed, or turned from the Pope to hate him under the fourth and fifth vial. 3. They both end together, and it will be hard to think that there will be no ſucceſſion of emperors, or civil ſtates, repreſenting theſe parts or powers after the Pope's overthrow: yet are they all three named diſtinctly, to ſhew what concurreth for ſupporting Papacy, deviliſh ſubtilty, temporal power and deep hypocriſy. In a word, all unlawful and carnal ſhifts, and that both civil and eccleſiaſtic are made uſe of.

2. Theſe inferior agents are ſeveral ways deſcribed: 1. In their nature they are *ſpirits:* not properly; for ſpirits, as ſuch, cannot be ſeen, neither is it ſuch that can treat with kings, and perſuade them to war, as ſent out of the mouth of the beaſt and falſe prophet. But *ſpirits*, 1. For their activity and nimbleneſs in compaſſing their deſigns. 2. Becauſe they call themſelves ſpiritual men, in oppoſition to *Laics*, ſuch as the Pope's negotiators are, as *Nuncios*, Legates, Jeſuits, &c. are exceeding meetly taken in here; for their inſtitution, oath, and way of proceeding, anſwereth well to that of theſe frogs, as ſingularly commiſſionated to ſpread themſelves through the world, to engage all kings againſt Chriſt's followers, who may alſo have lying ſpirits waiting on them, to make their embaſſage effectual, as Ahab's falſe prophets had, 1 Kings xxii. to which this may allude.

2. They are deſcribed by their qualities; they are *unclean ſpirits, like frogs:* 1. In their riſe, not of God but the devil; for they are called ſo, verſe 14. as all their orders are not of Chriſt's planting; therefore compared to locuſts, chap. ix. 2. In their ends deviliſh, oppoſite to the Lord Chriſt, as the devils. 3. In their manner of proceeding, by all means deviliſh inſtruments, &c. as murders, treaſons, lies, equivocations, &c. they care not what, if they may effectuate their deſigns for ſupporting the beaſt. 4. In their life, filthy and loathſome, like frogs that uſe marſhes, (which, in reformations, are not cleanſed, Ezek. xlvii. 11.) ſo that brood continue in theſe places, which remaineth unhealed, and haunteth ſuch company. 5. In their number, they are *three*, that is, a conſiderable number. In the xi. chapter, when Chriſt's cauſe was low, he had but two witneſſes; Antichriſt hath three, as it were; more do back him to his laſt, than Chriſt had, ſo tenacious and conſtant are men in evil, rather than good. *Three* alſo, to ſuit with the nature of him that commiſſionateth them. So ſome act deviliſhly and ſubtilly, as from the dragon repreſenting him; others by might and civil negotiations carrying the buſineſs, as ſervants to princes. A third ſort, counterfeiting religion, either by preferring many miracles to have been done by their party, or ſtrengthened by the devil, to do great wonders themſelves, for covering their hypocriſy, and ſtrengthening their cauſe: and, according to this threefold commiſſion, they act. 3. This deſign of the beaſt's by theſe agents, is more particularly holden forth in four things.

1. To whom they are ſent, to *the kings of the earth, and of the whole world*, that is, to all nations and powers, whether Chriſtian or heathen, that would join againſt the true church. Therefore, if the emperor were one of the Pope's followers, the commiſſion muſt be ſent to him, and he not be a ſender; but, as the naming of the dragon diſtinctly ſuppoſeth no diſtinct viſible power, ſo neither doth it in the other; likewiſe, by the dragon, cannot be meant heathen perſecutors; for they are ſent out by the beaſt alſo, and do not ſend: but it is the beaſt now appearing, both like a dragon, and a falſe prophet. 2. Their errand is, to *gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty*, that is, to an eminent appearing of God's, in taking vengeance on them: not that this is their intention to fight againſt God, as it is expounded, chap. xix. or to meet his vengeance, but that in God's providence this is made the reſult of all: and tho' they think it is fighting for Chriſt's vicar; yet he expoundeth it otherwiſe, as it

is, upon the matter, a fighting againſt God Almighty: for it was to oppoſe his church's riſing, and in that battle God was party. 3. The inſtruments are more clearly deſigned *ſpirits*, not of God, but of the devil, ſuiting well with ſuch a commiſſion. 4. The means how they prevail, it is by *working of miracles*, ſuch as the devil, by his natural and experimental knowledge of things, and ſpecial dexterity to do and compaſs things, can, out of natural cauſes, eaſily and really bring forth, which may be wonderful to men who can act nothing like theſe: or, by his deceit, making men believe he doth things of themſelves beyond the power of nature, which he doth not really perform, but deludeth men to believe that they are performed: ſuch are the beaſt's miracles, chap. xiii. 12. Or, by making men believe, that all their legends or counterfeit miracles are true, which they make a mark of the true church, and thus perſuade men to ſupport their Babylon.

Before he ſet down the ſucceſs of this negotiation, which is, ver. 16. he caſteth in, ver. 15. a word of warning and comfort. It ſhould be in parentheſis, as if the Lord Chriſt ſaid, Such ill days, and great temptations, to draw folks in ſnares, are coming, that many will go on in the deſigns as thinking all their own: the advertiſement is, *Behold, I come as a thief:* when they think leaſt on it, and ſeeth leaſt appearance of it, I am at hand to take vengeance on them, and to deliver the church; ſo he ſpeaketh, Matth. xxiv. 43, 44. 2 Pet. iii. 10. 2. There is inſinuated a duty ſuitable to this advertiſement, that is, to *watch, and keep their garments clean*, which was expounded, chap. iii. 3. implying, 1. Aſtrait and difficulty. 2. The only mean of being preſerved in a ſtrait time, that is, *watching*, ſeeing by it only men are kept free of ſpots in their profeſſion and Chriſtian walk. 3. There is ſet down here two excellent motives, preſſing this neceſſary duty of *watching*, 1. From their happineſs who doth ſo, they *are bleſſed*, 1. In themſelves, being kept from much ſin and wrath, which others fall under. 2. In reference to others, who being, by that deſign of Antichriſt's, inſnared, ſhall ſhare of wrath. The ſecond is, becauſe, by watching, men keep their *nakedneſs covered*, which, by ſinning, is diſcovered to their ſhame: a ſpotted garment hideth not this ſhame, but manifeſteth it. To be kept from ſin, is a great motive, and, to keep from ſin, keepeth from ſhame; for ſhame followeth ever upon ſin. And there is a *Behold* prefixed; yet readers may not paſs it, but obſerve the warning for their inſtruction in duty, and the encouragement of bleſſedneſs for their upſtirring and comfort. God's people would never look for a conſtant peace in the greateſt growth of religion, even at the Jews incoming, the church hath one of her foreſt battles. There is great odds betwixt a thriving goſpel, and the real advantage that cometh by it, and outward peace and proſperity.

The laſt thing, is the ſucceſs theſe foul ſpirits had. They gathered theſe kings, who, for many years, deſpiſed the goſpel, and never had been gathered by it, in God's judgment they are given up to yield to them. This hath theſe circumſtances, 1. The ſucceſs, *They are gathered:* And who? It is theſe to whom they were ſent, both Popiſh kings and heathen kings: it is like, the Turks, as neareſt are moſt eaſily engaged to ſet on Chriſtians; in a word, ſuch ſpecial enemies as God mindeth to be about with. 2. It is ſaid, *he gathered them*, not the *ſpirits* that is, either the beaſt who commiſſionated them, or rather God, who, in his ſecret providence, ordereth that deſign of the beaſt's, and enmity of theſe kings, for ſuch an end as might glorify him, and undo them. It is like an alluſion to the commiſſion Satan getteth againſt Ahab in perſuading him, wherein, though the devil be inſtrumental, by falſe prophets, in bringing Ahab to Ramoth, 1 Kings xxii. yet it is by God's permiſſive providence, to puniſh Ahab, that maketh him prevail. So it is here, the devil hath one deſign, the beaſt another, God a third; and he maketh uſe of both for furthering of his; he doth it when they ſeem to get moſt way in theirs; and it is but the effectuating of his; ſo God's hand is ſovereign, even in Antichriſt's deſigns. 3. Concerning the place unto which they are gathered, two things are to be enquired. 1. What this *Armageddon* is? 2. Why it is expreſsly ſaid in the Hebrew tongue?

1. *Armageddon* is not to be taken literally, as if there were ſuch a place, in which, indeed, bearing that name, that battle is to be fought in, but figuratively, it ſetteth down before-hand, from the effect and event of that expedition and battle, after the manner of the Hebrews, who called places from notable events in them, as Bochim, Achor, Hamon, Gog, Ezek. xxxix. Bethel, with many others. Now, this is two ways applicable, 1. *Gnarim*, which *Arma* cometh from, ſignifying ſubtilty and applied to the ſerpent, Gen. iii. 1. yea, ſubtil-

ty with deceitfulneſs. 2. *Geddon* cometh from a root that ſignifieth gathered together: ſo the word ſignifieth, deceitfully gathered together by craft: or the firſt root may ſignify deſtruction; ſo it is gathered to be deſtroyed. The ſecond way how it is applicable, is to take it in alluſion to *Megiddo;* ſo it will be the hill of *Megiddo*, a place in Judah, famous for two events, 1 Judges v. 19. in overthrowing Siſeras mighty army by woman's help; ſo theſe enemies brought into ſuch a fit place, ſhall be as Siſera at the river Kiſon, Pſal. lxxxiii. The other at Megiddo, by Joſia's death, is lamentable. Thus it relateth to the great zeal and repentance which ſhall be among the Jews at ſuch a joyful event, Zech. xii. 12. both, or either, will ſuit here, whatever way it be. But take it from the force of the compound word, it agreeth beſt to the Hebrews way, and that is the reaſon why eſpecially it is mentioned here expreſly in the Hebrew tongue, implying. 1. That they put that name on it; for it is not like that other nations would give it a name in a ſtrange tongue. 2. Their reſpecting the event in the name, as is their manner, as before was ſaid; thus the name ſpeaketh out the event.

If it be aſked, why the Lord delayeth ſo theſe vials, or carrieth them ſo on as the Pope getteth ſuch help, and bringeth God's church low, even when he is near to ruin? *Anſw.* 1. This way trieth the faith and patience of God's people moſt, as, *here is their faith and patience*, chap. xiii. importeth. So was Iſrael tried in their ſlow delivery out of Egypt. 2. This effecteth his end amongſt enemies more, and giveth them occaſion of kything, and, in God's judgment, hardeneth them, by hopes ſometimes to prevail, till his wrath come on them. So was Pharaoh, by Iſrael's ſtraits at the Red Sea, and the magicians counterfeit miracles, hardened: thus Chriſt coming, is as a ſnare, Luke xxi. 35. 3. It contributeth more for God's glory; he getteth them thus together to the great battle; he hath, by this means, many victories, and much glory over one enemy, as he had over Pharaoh, otherwiſe they would never uphold a conteſt with God. The Lord, in this, doth, as one ſaith, as a man, who, being to leap far, goeth a little back, to come up with the greater force.

For ſinful cauſes of it, we may name, 1. Their ingratitude, and unanſwerable walk, who receive the goſpel, which will make God remove it, and therefore alſo not to propagate it. 2. Little pity on them that lieth under Antichriſt, and little prayer for God's haſtening his judgments on him, and fitting of inſtruments for it. 3. Little ſingleneſs in any undertaking for that end, few kings mindeth it: ſelf-intereſt ſway all, and others carnally ſeek their own glory, in being inſtrumental in ſuch a thing, or, under ſuch a pretext, purſue their own more than Chriſt's; therefore they are not bleſſed. 4. Want of a powerful miniſtry, and lives anſwerable amongſt profeſſors, which maketh this truth to be loathed, ſeeing ſo many are carnal, deceitful, &c. who profeſs it. Thus many have a ſinful acceſſion to Antichriſt's ſtanding.

LECTURE VI.

Ver. 17. *And the ſeventh angel poured out his vial into the air, and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven from the throne, ſaying, It is done.*

18. *And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings: and there was a great earthquake, ſuch as was not ſince men were upon the earth, ſo mighty an earthquake, and ſo great.*

19. *And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceneſs of his wrath.*

20. *And every iſland fled away, and the mountains were not found.*

21. *And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every ſtone about the weight of a talent: and men blaſphemed God becauſe of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.*

THIS is the laſt vial: for underſtanding whereof, it will be neceſſary to enquire, whether it bringeth the laſt judgment only on the beaſt? or, if it looketh to the laſt plagues on the world ſimply, including in it the laſt judgment; which laſt, being of largeſt extent,

and including the former, we conceive to be understood, not only becauſe of the ſeries of this propheſy, which being divided into three principal typical propheſies of ſevens (whereof this of vials is the laſt) and other explicatory propheſies or viſions, both which go alongſt from John's time to the end: and therefore this vial, being the laſt ſtep and cloſe of the typical propheſies, according to that ſeries, it muſt extend itſelf to the end, which afterwards is more fully explained, chapter xx. 21, &c. as the two former vials are, chap. xvii. 18, 19. Beſide this, theſe reaſons evince it, firſt, chap. xv. 1, 2. they are the laſt plagues in which are fulfilled God's wrath, and that ſimply in the world: for here, the cities of the nations are deſtroyed as well as Babylon, and theſe plagues are to be underſtood the laſt, with reference to ſuch plagues as went before them under the ſeals and trumpets, which are firſt and ſecond plagues, and theſe are extended even to the heathen world: therefore ſo muſt alſo the vials be, and not be aſtricted to the beaſt's kingdom only, ſecondly, the ſeventh trumpet bringeth the laſt wo, which, chap. x. 6, 7. finiſheth the myſtery of God when time ſhall be no more; but it is cleared, chap. xi. that the laſt wo and the laſt plagues are one: therefore the day of judgment muſt be the period of theſe vials, ſeeing it is the period of the third wo. 3. The expreſſions of this vial are ſuch as bear it out, *It is done; a great earthquake, mountains were not found, &c.* Which ſhew another manner of change than was under the ſeals, as the particular will clear. Only take theſe two cautions. 1. Not to think it bringeth the laſt judgment immediately, as if it contained no preceding events, but only that the plagues immediately preceding that judgment, are ſet out in this vial, and that there are no ſucceeding judgments on the earth after it, but it terminateth and endeth in eternity, and God's final immediate inflicting judgment on the world of the wicked. 2. That we look not on this, or the other vials, as fully or principally holding forth the condition of the church in that time, but conſequently, for they hold forth wrath on enemies: from which may be gathered, if it be ill with enemies, it is good and well with her; but that is more fully to be ſought and gathered from the explicatory viſions reſpectively cotemporary with theſe, in which the flouriſhing ſtate of the church, and the ſucceſſive inflicting of theſe plagues on her enemies, is more fully expreſſed.

In this vial we are to conſider, 1. The object, 2. The effects. The object is verſe 17. *He poured it out into the air:* which object is of a larger extent than any of the former, and cometh nearer Satan's kingdom in the foundation and extent of it, who is, Eph. ii. 2. *Prince of the power of the air:* the earth, ſea, ſun, and ſeat of the beaſt, are deſtroyed before this is poured out into the air, as that which was only reſting, and comprehendeth what yet ſtandeth of Satan's kingdom; for the air to be plagued, hath influence on all under it, eſpecially theſe who breath in it, and leaveth nothing breathing, and ſo no living in Satan's world; yet a power he hath in it, ſo long as it ſtandeth. That thus it is to be extended, appeareth, 1. By the effects which are on the great city, i. e. what of it remained, and on all the cities of the nations, iſlands, mountains, and men that are ſmitten with it. 2. By comparing ver. 10. chap. xx. with this event, it is on the devil and his kingdom, Gog and Magog univerſally: for, two of the three grand enemies, that engaged againſt Chriſt under the former vial, viz. the beaſt and falſe prophet, are deſtroyed, chapter xix. and caſten into the lake. The third, viz. the devil, hath ſome eſſay by other inſtruments after theſe are gone, chap. xx. 10. He, by this laſt vial, is caſt into the lake, where the former two are before him. And his laſt inſtruments, Gog and Magog, are more immediately deſtroyed from heaven, as the effect of this vial afterwards cleareth. This then taketh in what dominion yet Satan had in the world, and is to overturn it, wherever it were, and amongſt whomſoever.

The effects of this vial, are three ways ſet out, 1. By word. 2. By ſign. 3. By real effects and conſequents, all ſpeaking the greatneſs of this judgment.

1. The word, verſe 17. 1. Generally, is *a great voice*, to make it obſervable. 2. Whence it cometh, *from the throne, out of the temple of heaven:* in a word, from God, to ſhew the authority of the ſpeaker, and the certainty of the thing ſpoken, which is the third thing the expreſſion itſelf beareth. *It is done;* it is like, alluding to Chriſt's word on the croſs, *It is finiſhed*, when that work was at a cloſe; ſo here, there is an end of God's plagues on the earth; and what he had ſworn, chapter x. concerning the finiſh-

ing of the myſtery, was now perfected, and what was before propheſied of the end, now they are fulfilled: which words ſuppone not an immediate, inſtantaneous fulfilling of theſe effects, but ſucceſſive, ſo as by that vial, in due time and order, they are brought about and cloſed.

2. The effect is ſet out by ſign, verſe 18. *And there were voices, thunders, and lightnings*, which as we heard, chapter xi. 19. do ſignify great and dreadful changes and judgments; and it may here include, with the laſt judgment, theſe commotions of Gog and Magog, which do next precede. 3. It is ſet out by the real effects and their conſequents, as means by which theſe judgments are produced. They are of two ſorts, firſt, *A great earthquake*, ver. 18. *And a great hail*, verſe 21. Theſe are not to be limited only to the very ſame plagues; but hold out, 1. A concurrence of heaven and earth for inflicting that judgment, as it was in the deluge, the earth ſhaketh from beneath, and the heavens throw down ſtones from above. 2. It holdeth forth the dreadfulneſs and greatneſs of the judgment of this vial. 3. The immediateneſs of it, without any inſtruments intervening, he executeth it on them himſelf, as in earthquakes and hail; ſo, chap. xx. 9. it is ſaid to be by *fire from heaven*, which is, upon the matter, the ſame. This earthquake, verſe 18. is deſcribed in its degree, then in its conſequents or effects, 1. *A great one, ſuch as never was*, far beyond that, chap. vi. And indeed the laſt judgment will ſhake the world beyond any thing that ever it felt before. *Secondly*, The effects of this earthquake are marked to be three or four, 1. *The great city*, viz. Sodom. chap. xi. where the witneſſes were killed, or Babylon *was divided in three*, that is overturned: for, a city to be divided in three parts by an earthquake, making the gapes of the earth that great and wide, and to be overturned, is one. Beſide, in plain words, it is ſpoken afterwards of the cities of the nations, that they fell, which expoundeth the former. Thus what relicks of Popery or Papiſts in any part of the world, whether at Rome, if poſſibly ſomewhat recovered, or any where elſe, (yet without the Pope) ſhall now wholly be overturned. The ſecond effect is, or on the heathens called *Cities of the nations*, and contradiſtinguiſhed from this one great city, *they fell;* all theſe ſhall be ruined alſo. 3. Babylon's judgment is enlarged and aggreged, that it reſteth not in a temporal overturning, but God *putteth in her hand the cup of the fierceneſs of his wrath*, ſpoken of and threatened to all her followers, chap. xiv. 10. Whereby it appeareth, 1. That this judgment endeth in eternity: and, 2. That it reſpecteth former threatenings.

A fourth effect is, ver. 20. ſhewing what influence this vial or earthquake ſhall have, not only on cities, but on iſlands at a diſtance, and mountains. In a word, on all the univerſe, which ſhall not only be moved as at other earthquakes, and verſe 12. chap. vi. but here they *fly away and ſhall not be found*, holding out thereby the conſummation that ſhall be at the end further expounded, chap. xx. 21.

The ſecond effect of the hail, verſe 21. is to the ſame purpoſe, to ſhew that then ſinners ſhall have refuge neither from earth nor heaven: the hail is terrible, alluding to that plague, Exod. ix. but exceedingly beyond it, never ſuch an hail heard of as this, *every ſtone a talent weight;* it is irreſiſtible, there is no fence againſt it: and it may allude to Ezek. xxxviii. 2. where Gog and Magog are to be deſtroyed by hail: the expreſſions of the judgment may be borrowed, as the names of the enemies from Gog and Magog. The greatneſs of it, is further ſet out by the effect on reprobate men who are the object of it: they now break out in open blaſphemy againſt God, ſo that the laſt wrath mendeth them not, though it be great. That exceeding greatneſs of it, without mixture of mercy, is inſufferable and inſupportable, and yet they are continued in a being after ſuch a plague. We muſt therefore look upon it as an eternal judgment, for a temporal life could not ſuſtain men under it, but in hell: although malice being now inveterate and at its height in reprobates and devils, ſo as they neither fear nor love the Lord; but do conſtantly blaſpheme as their continual exerciſe under their plagues, yet are by the revenging juſtice and power of God ſuſtained in a being for ever, for the declaration of the glory of his juſtice: and now the ſentence being paſt on them, we are to look upon this obdured, deſperate maliciouſneſs, rather as the juſt fruit of former ſins, than as having influence to increaſe their puniſhment after their final doom. It muſt be a dreadful thing to be in hell, eſpecially after the laſt judgment.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. XVII.

Verſe 1. *And there came one of the ſeven angels which had the ſeven vials, and talked with me, ſaying unto me, Come hither, I will ſhew unto thee the judgment of the great whore, that ſitteth upon many waters.*

2. *With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabiters of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.*

WE have had a little view of God's judgments againſt Antichriſt and Babylon his ſeat in the former principal, and laſt typical, propheſy of the vials, which carried it on to the laſt judgment. Now, followeth the laſt explicatory propheſy, in two viſions: wherein ſome ſpecial things mentioned in the former, more darkly and ſhortly, are more fully explained. The Holy Ghoſt aiming hereby clearly to point out what this Babylon or Antichriſtian church, and who this Antichriſt is, (the one in oppoſition to the true church, the other to Chriſt, the right head and ſovereign thereof) with a more clear deſcription of them, their actings and ruin. We are therefore to look on this propheſy, and eſpecially on this chapter, as a ſpecial key for opening the main myſteries concerning theſe things which are delivered in the former propheſy. In order to which, and for underſtanding of what followeth its general, we premit theſe things.

1. Concerning the ſcope, it is in theſe words, chap. xvii. 1. *I will ſhew unto thee the judgment of the great whore:* by which is meant not only nor mainly the laſt judgment, or laſt ſtep of her judgment under the ſeventh vial; for, all which followeth, as the deſtruction of Babylon, chap. xviii. which is the ſeat of the beaſt, belongeth not to the ſeventh, but to the fifth vial; nor the battle of Armageddon, where the beaſt is taken, belongeth not to it, but to the ſixth: and this would make the ſtory of the ſeventh more comprehenſive than it will bear. But we take in the remarkable events on the beaſt and his throne, which are by temporal judgments to be carried on by the kings, who, once having given their power to this beaſt, ſhall afterwards withdraw from her, and piece and piece hate her, and make her naked, as is clear, verſe 16. all which cleareth, that this following viſion, chapter xvii. xviii. and xix. doth belong to the fifth and ſixth vials, and not to the ſeventh.

2. Concerning the ſeries and placing of them, it is thus to be done, 1. He deſcribeth, chap. xvii. the object of theſe judgments, viz. the whore and the beaſt, and who are to be underſtood by them, with a general hint at the inſtruments to be made uſe of in their ruin. Then, chap. xviii. he more fully and pathetically ſheweth the temporal deſtruction of that city or whore, by the following lamentations of her followers: which ſheweth it not to be the laſt judgment on her, which could have nothing following; but that judgment on the beaſt's ſeat, mentioned under the fifth vial, chapter xvi. then, chap. xix. he goeth on to deſcribe the events of the ſixth vial in the battle of Armageddon, which was defective, till ſupplied there, chap. xvi. after theſe, in the laſt viſion, chapter xx. xxi. xxii. till verſe 6, 7, &c. he ſetteth out the events of the ſeventh vial: wherein Rome, is not only deſtroyed as in the fifth; and the beaſt, as in the ſixth: but the dragon in his univerſal dominion, which belongeth to the ſeventh vial. So, chap. xviii. expoundeth the fifth vial; xix. the ſixth; and xx. xxi. the ſeventh; and this xvii. chapter maketh way for all.

3. For this xvii. chap. (which is a ground well premitted to all the reſt) it hath three parts, 1. An introduction, or preface, containing the occaſion of what followeth; or, the propoſing of the ſum and ſcope of the viſion following. This is in the angel's word to John, verſe 1, 2, 2. There is the viſion itſelf, more darkly repreſented to him in types, or in a figurative viſion. This is from verſe 3, to verſe 6. 3. From that to the end, we have a clear interpretation (upon the occaſion of John's wondering) more fully expounding this than any other viſion is expounded. Concerning which, *Obſerve* more particularly.

1. That there is great odds between the figurative expreſſions in which the viſion is ſet down, and theſe by which it is interpreted. The viſion and propheſies are ſet down darkly under figures, and we muſt take them ſo; and to take them literally were abſurd: becauſe they need interpretation, but the interpretation is in plain words and more properly to be taken. Otherwiſe, to expound one allegory by another as obſcure, were no expoſition, and contrary to the angel's ſcope here, which is by this interpretation to make John and us know the meaning of the viſion, and contrary to the manner of expoſition in all other places, as chap. i. 20. the ſeven candleſticks are the ſeven churches literally ſo, and no more, as they are named. The ſeven ſtars the angels, or miniſters of theſe churches; and, chap. vii. theſe are they who are come out of great tribulation, i. e. ſo indeed. And therefore here, though in the viſion, heads and horns be not to be properly and literally underſtood, yet in the interpretation, ſeven heads are ſeven hills, or ten horns ten kings, they are literally and properly to be taken, eſpecially when the angel circumſtantiateth the hills, ſuch as the woman ſitteth upon; and the kings, by this, that five be paſt, one is, and the other is come; and the ten kings, not as yet to have received power, but to get it afterward, and ſo forth. All which demonſtrate, that the angel's purpoſe and words are to be literally underſtood. So the woman, the city, verſe 18. is ſo circumſtantiated by her dominion, as conſtraineth it literally to be underſtood.

2. Concerning this woman and whore, *Obſ.* 1. That the woman and whore are both one city or ſtate, but diverſly conſidered: for, ſhe who is the whore, ver. 1. is ſtiled and repreſented as a woman, verſe 4. and the woman there repreſented hath the whore's name, verſe 5. yet, I ſay, diverſly conſidered, for to be a whore and an adultreſs whore, ſuch as the ſcripture uſeth to mention to this ſcope: therefore this name is given to Iſrael in their defections, and not to heathens, becauſe it importeth a contract and marriage with ſome party, and a foul breach of that tie. The whore then, as ſuch, can be no city that never was Chriſtian, but ſome eminent church making defection to idolatry, and falling from the faith given to God their huſband; at leaſt, this engagement to him, muſt prevent their being accounted ſo notorious an harlot. And, 2. As the woman and whore are one; ſo Babylon (called the great city, Sodom, chapter xi. 8.) and the whore, are the ſame as appeareth by their names, verſe 5. and verſe 18. and their practices are the ſame, viz. to allure to fornication, chapter xiv. 8. to perſecute, chap. xi. and their ruin and judgment is one. Compare chap. xiv. 9, 10, &c. chap. xvi. 19. chap. xviii. 2, &c. And where the epithet great, is added to city, whore, or Babylon, the ſame ſingular party is deſcribed, but in divers conſiderations, either of her dominion as ver. 18. or whoredoms, oppreſſions, pride, or ſome ſuch thing, for which ſhe getteth divers names, and is repreſented by divers types.

3. Concerning this woman, it is by moſt of the fathers applied to Rome. *Tertulianus, lib. adverſus Judaeos, cap.* 9. *Sic et Babylon, apud Joanem noſtrum, Romanae urbis figuram importat, proinde et magnae et regno ſuperbae, et ſanctorum debellatricis*, that is, Babylon, in our John, is a figure of the city of Rome, being ſo great, ſo proud of the empire, and the deſtroyer of the ſaints. The like he hath, lib. 3. contra Marcionem, cap. 13.

Hieronymus, epiſt. 17. *ad Marcellam, nomine Pauli et Euſtochii, epiſt.* 151. *Aglaſiae, quaeſt* 11. *Comment. in cap.* 47. *Eſaiae. in lib. Didymi de Spir. ſancto, praefatione ad Paulinianum. Ambroſius Ansbertus in locum:* where he ſaith, *hoc manifeſtum eſt, i. e.* it is manifeſt. Alſo *Victorinus, Primaſius*, and others, cited by Fulk in his anſwer to the Rhemiſts, 4. Note upon the place.

Nay Auguſtine (howbeit cited for another opinion concerning what is meant by Babylon from his comment. in Pſal. 26.) doth concede what we ſay, lib. 18. De civitate Dei, cap. 2. et 22. And Arethas Caeſarienſis, Comment. in locum, granteth the ſame to be the judgment of divers: whence Fulk gathereth, that this was the common opinion of the ancient Greek fathers.

The ſame is granted by the moſt learned of the Papiſts themſelves. Baronius, (Annal Tom. 1. An. 45.) hath theſe words, *Romam, in Apocalypſi Joannis eodem nomine (ſci. Babylonis) notatam eſſe, in confeſſo eſt apud omnes, i. e.* That Rome, in the Revelation of John, is deſigned by the ſame name, viz. of Babylon, is confeſſed by all.

Bellarmine is both frequent and full in this, lib. 3. De pontif. Romano, cap. 13. Having, *Firſt*, propoſed that opinion of Auguſtine, Arethas, Haymo,

Beda and Rupertus, who, by the city, Babylon, underſtand the multitude of the wicked. And addeth, *Secundo, dici poteſt, et meo judicio melius, per meretricem intelligi Romam*, that is, it may be ſaid alſo, and, in my judgment better, that, by the whore, Rome is to be underſtood. And, lib. 2. cap. 2. he expreſly diſputeth for it; *Praeterea, Joannes in Apocalypſi paſſim Romam vocat Babylonem; et aperte colligitur ex cap.* 17. *Apoc. ubi dicitur Babylon magna ſedere ſuper ſeptem montes, et habere imperium ſuper Reges terrae: nec enim alia civitas eſt, quae, Joannis tempore, imperium habuerit ſuper Reges terrea. quam Roma, et notiſſimum eſt ſuper ſeptem colles Romam aedificatam eſſe*; that is, moreover, John in the Revelation, every where calleth Rome, Babylon: and, it is evidently gathered from the xvii. of the Revelation, where *Babylon the great* is ſaid to ſit upon ſeven hills, and to have dominion over the kings of the earth: neither was there any other, which, in John's time, had power over the kings of the earth beſides Rome; and it is a moſt known thing, that Rome was built upon ſeven hills. See alſo his 3d book, cap. 5.

The ſame is the judgment of Eſtius, in 4. Sent. Diſt. 47. Sect. 9. and of Ribera upon the place. The Rhemiſts alſo acknowledge, that Rome heathen may be underſtood here; and Alcaſar confirmeth it; alſo Cornelius a lapide, Blaſius, Viegas, and others.

Reaſons in the text do conſtrain it ſo to be underſtood: 1. Its local ſituation. This whore is a city ſitting on ſeven hills in John's time: whereof afterwards. 2. It is an empire or city, which had before that changed five ſorts of governments, had then the ſixth, unto which one other was to ſucceed, as Popes have done, who were not come in John's time. 3. It is, verſe 18. clear from its dominion, ſhe is that city, that great city, which then commanded all the kings and great men of the earth: which grounds, I ſay, make even the adverſaries apply it to Rome, but they fall into two fooliſh ſhifts, ſome applying it to Rome heathen, others to Rome under the Antichriſt, who, they ſay, is yet to come. Of theſe we ſhall ſpeak particularly in the cloſe of the chapter, and now premit.

1. That this beaſt, that beareth or carrieth the woman, is the ſame mentioned, chapter xi. that cometh out of the bottomleſs pit, and killeth the witneſſes, and the ſame with that beaſt, chap. xiii. their riſe is one with this, out of the pit, verſe 8. Their deſcription with heads, horns, and exerciſe in perſecuting the ſaints, and maintaining blaſphemies, and the time that they belong unto, will be one; that beaſt, chap. xiii. riſeth after the wounding of the ſixth head; this, when that government, which then was, is expired; yet fall they under divers conſiderations, as the two beaſts formerly, chap. xiii. The beaſt is as the huſband, or rather adulterer; the woman, the wife, or whore; the woman repreſenteth an apoſtate church, or the body; the beaſt here ſupporting her, pointeth at the head, or mungrel power ſuſtaining her, and acting her, which, in reſpect of abſoluteneſs, tyranny, and perſecution (though in a kind diſtinct from the former, yet) become they one, as we will hear.

2. *Obſerve*, That there is a great propinquity betwixt the woman or whore, and this beaſt, they belong to one time: for, the beaſt carrieth her, and they appear together. They are of one colour, *ſcarlet*, they have both blaſphemies on them and fornications (the ſame upon the matter) they both are up together, the woman is great, when the kings give the beaſt their power, when they withdraw it, then ſhe cometh down, his throne, which was the dragon's chap. xiii. is her ſeat, viz. the ſeven hills: from which nearneſs, it is evident they muſt dwell together.

3. This beaſt, then, muſt ſignify ſuch an empire and dominion as doth not only ſupport Rome, the city, but Rome, a whore, and that not as a temporal head, meerly by force, keeping down men under it, as did the old Roman empire; but ſuch a head as the world wondereth at, as is chap. xiii. and here alſo, ver. 8. and ſuch a head, as when ten kings out of the ruins of the old temporal empire, ſhall aſſume dominion and ſovereignty to themſelves, and withdraw from him, yet willingly they ſhall yield their power to be diſpoſed of by this beaſt: and ſo long as they reverence him, the whore is in no fear by them, but when they caſt him off, then ſhe is burnt. By which it appeareth, that as, by the woman, the Roman church is deſcribed, in oppoſition to the true church, chap. xii. 1. called a woman there; ſo, by the beaſt, muſt be meant, the Roman ſee, or the papal power, by which this whore is ſupported, and to whom the kings of the earth give their power, and after whom the whole

world hath long wondered, as was cleared, chap. xiii. of this ſame beaſt: and the propoſitions laid down there, are alſo to be applied here.

4. We would conſider at what time this which is ſpoken of, the beaſt and whore, is to be applied to Rome, and the powers which govern Rome, which is the beaſt, as the other is the woman. There are theſe characters to find it out by, which now at the entry we ſhall but in general propound, 1. It is the time when the beaſt ſhould appear, as he riſeth from the bottomleſs pit, verſe 8. viz. in the laſt ſtate of the empire, before his utter ruin: and ſo it is not that which was in John's time, any lawful ſucceeding power (which cometh not from the pit) but it is that which the dragon gave, chap. xiii. an authority and ſovereignty invented by the devil, and not warranted by the word, ſuch as is *univerſal biſhop, prince of paſtors, and vicar of Chriſt:* ſo it is no mere civil power, tho' perſecuting: for then, as it was in John's time, it might have been ſaid to have aſcended from the pit, and had it not been peculiar to the future ſtate of the empire, which is a foreign government of another riſe than theſe which went before, ſuch as that of the Popes, who are diſtinct and different from emperors. 2. It is Rome under the laſt head of ſeven, whereof five were but paſt in John's time, and Cæſar's were the ſixth: the ſeventh called the eighth for his twofold conſideration (as chap. xiii.) then was not come; for this laſt head is expreſsly called the beaſt, verſe 11. Therefore Rome under none of the firſt ſix governments is the beaſt here, but under the ſeventh or eighth, which in Rome ſucceedeth to emperors, or Cæſars; for this laſt is to have none after it. A third character is, to try the time by the horns, that government of Rome is to be the beaſt, which ſhall have with it ten kings reigning, which had not received their kingdom in John's time, verſe 12. Again, it agreeth to that ſtate of Rome, when other kings that have withdrawn their temporal ſubjection from the emperors, ſhall yet unanimouſly and harmoniouſly, of their own good-wills, give their power unto, and be at the devotion of this beaſt. 3. Theſe kings ſhall be eſpecially employed by this beaſt in making wars againſt the ſaints, till God diſcover the whore's rottenneſs to them, or ſome of them, ver. 14. compared with ver. 16, 17. It muſt then be applicable to that time when perſecutions abounded through all the Chriſtian world, by the laws of all kings and kingdoms, which was when the prophets propheſied in ſackcloth and were killed, chap. xi. and xiii. A fourth character we take from that, that the woman is called a whore; therefore it cannot agree to heathen Rome, for ſhe was not then married, nor ever called a whore.

5. The laſt thing we premit, is, concerning the times mentioned, as paſt, preſent, and to come: when they are particularly differenced, they are not to be confounded, yet that any thing in the viſion is affirmed in the preſent time, it will not prove it then to have been, ſeeing it is ordinary for things to come, to be repreſented as preſent, or paſt.

More particularly, we come now to the preface of the viſion, ver. 1. and 2. wherein the ſum and ſcope of the viſion is propoſed: in which, conſider. 1. The thing propoſed to be ſhown, it is the *judgment of the great whore.* 2. Some properties of that whore hinted at. 3. By whom this is revealed.

In the propoſition, the word whore (which in all languages cometh from mercenarineſs) ſhortly implieth two things, 1. An engagement on the party ſinning, there is a breach of wedlock-bond, as Ezek. xvi. 38. 2. The nature of the ſin, as inconſiſtent with the nature of that tie, viz. idolatry, &c. with which God will have no communion: tho' many other infirmities may conſiſt with that bond of marriage, yet this is particularly whoredom in ſcripture, a people's ſhameful proſtituting themſelves to idols and ſtrange worſhip, who were engaged to God. See Hoſea iv. 12, 13. with the right expoſition of that place. So here, by whore, is underſtood ſome city or ſtate, as ver. 18. yet ſuch as hath been engaged to God, and hath made defection from him to idolatry. In which reſpect, Iſrael, Judah, and Jeruſalem do get the name of harlots peculiarly, and are charged with ſpiritual fornication beyond other nations, becauſe of this their tie to God, which others had not. Beſide, this whore is painted out in oppoſition to that woman and wife, chap. xii. which evaniſhed: and this whore and ſtrumpet appeareth in her place. 2. By judgment, we underſtand her ruin, eſpecially when it cometh to her ſeat, which is the great city, and is here manifeſted to John, 1. To ſhew that it was certain, and ſo to prevent ſtumbling at that whore's greatneſs and pomp. 2. To ſhew,

that it came not by gueſs, but that God had ordered her ruin. 3. To begin this explication with the fifth vial preceding, chap. xvi.

2. The property of this whore hinted at here, is her greatneſs; thus to diſtinguiſh this corrupted church from ordinary defections, hereſies, and ſchiſms, whereby often the married ſpouſe of Chriſt hath been an harlot, and particular churches have been degenerated. This is *the great whore*, looking to the great defection and falling away, ſpoken of in ſcripture, 2 Theſſ. ii. to be in the days of Antichriſt, and the greateſt eclipſe that the light, after Chriſt's days, had to endure. This greatneſs of this whore is four ways expreſſed and proven, 1. *She ſitteth upon many waters*, verſe 1. to ſet out the greatneſs of her temporal dominions, ſhe that was a miſtreſs over people, nations, &c. verſe 15. is to be this whore, and by her whoredoms and idolatries was to keep theſe under her power. 2. She is a great whore, in reſpect of theſe who ſin with her, and ſhare of her idolatries, ſuperſtitions and errors. *Theſe are the kings and great men of the earth*, ſuch have been Popiſh for many generations. 3. In reſpect of the extent of her whoredom, or commonneſs of it: it is not only with kings, but indifferently, ſhe propoſed unto, and did bear in her ſtrumperies on all ſorts, great and ſmall; the meaneſt behoved to bear her mark, chap. xiii. even all *the inhabitants of the earth*. 4. She is a *great whore*, in reſpect of that degree of whoredoms wherewith ſhe hath intoxicated them. She hath made them *drunk with the wine of her fornications*. 1. Her ſin is fornication, which ordinarily in the Old Teſtament is applied to idolatry, in putting ſome other in God's room. Now, there is no Chriſtian church hath degenerated in this reſpect to own images and idolatry but Rome. 2. She hath enticing ways, (as poiſoned cups of wine) to allure to her idolatries: many threatenings, promiſes, and falſe miracles have been made uſe of to engage the world to this. 3. She maketh them drink of theſe till they be drunk, being through God's judgment deluded, as 1 Theſſ. ii. mad and irrationally addicted to, and bent on that way of ſuperſtition, as appeareth by the many abbacies, monaſteries, ſuperſtitious titles and ſubmiſſions given to Popes, and perſecutions againſt all her faithful oppoſers, which bear witneſs how drunk the world hath been with that conceit of the Roman church.

LECTURE II.

Verſe 3. *So he carried me away in the ſpirit into the wilderneſs: and I ſaw a woman ſit upon a ſcarlet-coloured beaſt, full of names of blaſphemy, having ſeven heads, and ten horns.*

4. *And the woman was arrayed in purple, and ſcarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious ſtones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthineſs of her fornication.*

5. *And upon her forehead was a name written*, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

6. *And I ſaw the woman drunken with the blood of the ſaints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jeſus:*——

THE viſion itſelf followeth to the 7th verſe, and there are two circumſtances premitted, ver. 3. before it be repreſented to John, as contributing for the diſpoſing and fitting of John, for the beholding of it. 1. He *is carried in the ſpirit;* which holdeth forth the frame of his mind; he was not in body tranſported, but by the ſpirit; his ſoul was withdrawn from its ordinary way of making uſe of bodily organs, to another more immediate and ſublime way of receiving impreſſions of what was repreſented, ſuch as was ſpoken of, chapter i. 10. ſignifying that it is needful to be ſpiritual, before one be capable of the viſions of God; a ſpiritual man, and a ſpiritual frame, is the beſt diſcerner of theſe, 1 Cor. ii. 2. He is taken to the wilderneſs: by that extaſy he is removed from ordinary commerce to a wilderneſs, where that whore is repreſented to him, tho' it be not her dwelling.

By this is implied, 1. That ſpiritualneſs of frame, and abſtractedneſs and retiredneſs go often together, one in the Spirit will be one often apart in private, as our bleſſed Lord was. 2. That an abſtracted, retired frame of heart, is fitteſt for diſcerning what is right and what is wrong. It is not at court, where folks come ſooneſt to diſcern the whore, the great gliſtering of that ſhew keepeth men from the right up-taking of her: but when men ſoberly retire to think of things in the moſt abſtracted manner, then what ſeemeth gold to others is often found but to be guilded to them, as here, verſe 4.

When John is thus qualified and compoſed, then is the viſion repreſented: an uncouth ſight, a woman deſcribed in four or five properties, or marks, 1. By the beaſt which ſupporteth her, verſe 3. which beaſt is in four characters ſet out. For underſtanding of which, beſide what is ſaid, *Obſerve*, That by woman, is underſtood here, the whore formerly mentioned, viz. a whoriſh church, or, a faithful city turned to be an harlot, Iſa. i. Conſider then this woman two ways, 1. Simply as a woman, ſo it is the city Rome that then was. 2. As a whore, ſo it is the apoſtatized church of Rome, which though in John's time it was not come, yet was in viſion repreſented to him as come. By beaſt in general, ſome wicked dominion or empire, as Dan. vii. muſt be underſtood.

More particularly, we may take the beaſt in a fourfold conſideration, 1. Complexly, with its ſeven heads, as in any form of its governments; ſo it pointeth out the Roman empire indefinitely, as it was before John's time under the five heads who were fallen, as it was in his time under the ſixth, and was to be afterward under the ſeventh: there is but one beaſt in all, thus conſidered. 2. We may conſider the beaſt, to ſpeak ſo, as a body, or the beaſt, without relation to any head, ſo it holdeth forth the empire, dominions, or countries, which made up a monarchy under any of theſe ſorts of governments or heads. It is a body, upon the matter the ſame, however its governments changed. This ſeemeth in the expoſition to be called the people, tongues, and languages, ver. 15. on which the woman ſitteth, and is expreſſed by many waters in the preface, verſe 1. on which the whore ſitteth, as ſhe doth here on the beaſt. 3. We may conſider the heads as diſtinct from the beaſt, and ſo they are the forms of governments which ſucceſſively guided that beaſt, and ſupported that city. And thus the laſt head, which ſucceedeth the Ceſars, which did reign in John's time, will be the Pope, or Papacy, who now hath headed that empire for many years. By the former heads, the woman, as a city, is ſupported, by the laſt as ſhe is a whore. 4. We may conſider the beaſt, as under, and acted by the laſt head the Pope, ſo by it is repreſented the Roman See, or *ſedes Romana*, which by religion, under pretext of Chriſt's headſhip, ruleth as broadly as ever any of her former ſtates did, as appeareth by what was ſaid, chap. xiii. In this reſpect it is of an eccleſiaſtic nature, to hold out a twofold reſpect in this beaſt beſide any of the former; ſo this fourth conſideration taketh up the beaſt as the authority ruling, and the whore as the city where he ruleth: for, chap. xix. he as a beaſt or governor, hath a being when the whore is deſtroyed in the xviii.

If it be aſked here, under what notion the beaſt is conſidered in this place? *Anſw.* 1. Under the laſt, as it is headed with the Pope, and under pretence of religion domineereth. *Reaſon* 1. It is the ſame beaſt, chap. xiii. but that looketh to the laſt head of this beaſt, or ſtate of the empire, as is ſaid. 2. Becauſe only the laſt ſtate of this beaſt cotemporateth with this city's becoming a whore to be ſupported by it. 3. It is the ſtate of the beaſt which then was to come, and the ſixth was then in being: therefore it is the laſt, for it is to go to perdition. 4. It is the beaſt which all wonder at, that kings give their power willingly unto, which is expreſsly called the beaſt, verſe 8. *which ſhould aſcend, &c.* and the beaſt to which the kings ſhall give their power, verſe 13. and with whom they receive power, verſe 12. which only are true under the laſt ſtate of the beaſt, it being not ſo with any of the former governments, where heads were crowned, and not the horns, chap. xii. Here the horns were crowned, chap. xiii. and are kings in reſpect of temporal juriſdictions; yet the ſame kings, under pretence of ſpiritual power, are as much keeped under the beaſt with the ſeventh head, as ever under any of the former. If it be further aſked, how the woman ſits on that beaſt? It is clear two ways, 1. She ſitteth on it, as having her ſeat in the chief ſeat of that Roman empire; ſhe ſits on that dominion, and hath the city of Rome for her neſt. Hence, ver. 9. in the expoſition its thus cleared, ſhe ſitteth on the beaſt, *i. e.* on the ſeven hills,

which is the centre of the beaſt's dominions; and on many waters, that is that ſame empire. 2. It is expounded in that word, the beaſt that *carried her*, ver. 7. that is, ſupporteth her by its authority, and keepeth that city, which otherwiſe had been deſolate, in ſome grandeur by her, as in chap. xv. even as ſhe was made famous, by being the ſeat and reſidence of theſe who formerly managed the authority of that dominion.

This then is the firſt thing whereby this whore is deſcribed, the power or empire wherein ſhe dwelleth, and whereby ſhe is ſupported, viz. Rome. or the Roman ſee, which they call the rock on which their Babylon ſtandeth, as an unerring, and an infallible foundation, at leaſt, ſo far as to diſcover her to be this whore.

This beaſt or empire getteth four marks in the text, 1. Her colour is *ſcarlet*, pointing out, 1. Her grandeur. 2. Her cruelty, as the dragon was coloured, chap. xii. 3. This beaſt is *full of names of blaſphemy*, chap. xiii. every head had blaſphemies on it, that is, was blaſphemous and idolatrous: but this, under the laſt head, is now *all full of them*, ſuperſtitions, idolatries, arrogant titles, and uſurpations were never claimed ſo much by any of the former, as by this: whereby appeareth, that it holdeth forth no Chriſtian empire, or Rome as Chriſtian, except under its defection.

The other two parts of the deſcription, viz. *Heads* and *Horns*, are ſo particularly interpreted by the angel afterwards, that we ſhall forbear till we come to it: which is the laſt part of the chapter.

The ſecond thing whereby the whore is deſcribed, is her pomp and outward gloriouſneſs, ver. 4. whereby is ſet out, 1. Their pride in being ſo arrogant. 2. Their wealth and riches. 3. Her carriage to allure to her ſuperſtition, with poiſoned cups, and ſuch deckings as whores ſet themſelves out by. 4. Yet her deckings are but carnal and counterfeit, *decked*, that is, guilded, in the original it is not gold, but guilded external pomp only, whereby the world is taken more than with that ſimplicity wherewith the woman is adorned, chap. xii. So this pomp appeareth yet more. 1. In the nature of her worſhip, in churches, altars, holydays, ceremonies and garments. 2. In the nature of her officers, great cardinals, ſtately princes, are her miniſters. 3. Their carriage is not needleſly obſerved, that their great men delight in purple and ſcarlet, is not by chance, but by providence. Baronius, as cited chap. xiii. ſaith it was, that Chriſt's prieſts ſhould be in their pomp equal to the heathenish Pontifex Maximus.

The third property of this woman, is her *name in her forehead*, verſe 5. which is not, that this whore will own ſuch a name as *mother of harlots*, but rather diſown it: but (alluding to the manner of impudent whores, who ſet their badges and names to be known over their doors, and on their heads) he would ſhew two things in the Antichriſtian church, 1. Great impudence in owning and maintaining theſe things, which are indeed great abominations, their public images and bowing to them, their diſputes for, and defences of their groſſeſt ſuperſtitions, ſo that her whoredoms need not to be ſought out by ſecret ſearch, they do it before the ſun. 2. Great evidence of guilt; ſo that, by trying her, and comparing her way with the word, it will be found clearly that ſhe is Babylon, &c. as if theſe titles and ſuperſcriptions were written on her, as her name: which name is to be gathered, not out of letters and words, as neither that of chapter xiii. ult. but out of doctrines, practices, and others her properties, by ſpiritual wiſdom, making the application of theſe deſcriptions, both chap. xiii. xviii. and here, ver. 9. For none, owning the Revelation to be God's word, will willingly take that name, which will make them paſs for Antichriſt, or his church: and, if this name be not literally taken, why ſhould the number be? chapter xiii.

The name is in three, 1. MYSTERY: which ſheweth, there is both great iniquity here, and that it is ſo put together, that it looketh like a myſtery, either to conceive it, or to diſcover by it ſuch a party to be the whore. (For which it is called, 2 Theſſ. ii. 7. *The myſtery of iniquity*, in oppoſition to *the myſtery of Godlineſs*.) In all which, Antichriſt imitateth Chriſt, leſt he ſhould be diſcovered. Or, it may be myſtically Babylon, as ſpiritually Sodom, chapter xi. Babylon, not really, which none can plead, but in a myſtery. The ſecond part of the name is, BABYLON THE GREAT: of which we have ſpoken, and applied it to Rome. It is called BABYLON, *Firſt*, For its headſhip during the fourth empire, as Babylon was in the ſecond. And, *Secondly*, For its idolatry in itſelf, and in its cruelty, in bringing and keeping at under God's people. And, *Thirdly*, Becauſe Babylon's curſe followeth it for Babylon's ſin. Of this more was ſaid, ch. xiv.

The third word is, MOTHER OF HARLOTS, AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH: which ſetteth out a ſuperiority and precedency in this Rome, in polluting the world actively with her pollutions, and that the ſuperſtitious way of the reſt of the world is derived from her; ſhe is as the mother and fountain that bringeth forth all ſuperſtitions. 2. A ſort of precedency and priority of a *mother church*, as ſhe calleth herſelf, ſhe ſhall claim not only to be the firſt church, but to be over all, as the rule and example to them. And, indeed, in reſpect of the corrupt part of the church, as it is Antichriſtian, ſhe is ſo. It holdeth forth eminently high defection, which muſt have its birth from Rome, and over which Rome ſhall eſpecially preſide. Which titles cannot agree to heatheniſh Rome, that never propagated error to others, but rather civilly, and left ſtill an *autonomia* of laws and religion to the nations they conquered. But they agree well to Rome now in its ſplendid titles, as Peter's chair, the infallible church that cannot err, the church that cannot be obſcured or ruined, catholic ſupreme judge of all, &c. and ſo hath given the riſe to all the idolatries and ſuperſtitions that have come into the church from it; and, like a kindly mother, hath alway taken the defence of theſe, and foſtered them, as her own brood, through all the world.

The laſt two properties of this whore's deſcription, viz. the fourth and fifth, we put together, as holding out her practice: whereby her inclination and guilt appeareth in theſe, 1. An enticing of others to that ſin of fornication, ſpiritually, by that cup which ſhe holdeth forth to them, with their abominations, that ſhe may entice them with theſe, verſe 4. he alludeth to what is written of the filthieſt whores, to which he compareth this harlot. 2. An humour and inclination to perſecution, ver. 6. which is three ways ſet out, 1. In reſpect of the parties perſecuted; they are, 1. *Saints*, for alledged crimes, perſecuted, and wrongs falſly imputed to them. 2. *Martyrs*, ſuch are not only ſaints unjuſtly wronged, but perſecuted on the account of Chriſt's truth, or for oppoſing her way, and witneſſing againſt her. 2. This perſecution is ſet forth by her contented manner of going about that work, *She thriſted for their blood, and drinketh it*, as with delight and ſatisfaction. 3. In the degree, it came to ſo much, that ſhe *was drunk with blood*, having thus drunk ſo much, that ſhe was loathſome under it, ſenſeleſs of it, and overflowing with the guilt of it, as drunkards are with drink, beyond meaſure. How well this agreeth to Rome, look chapter xiii. That, by blaſphemy, is holden forth idolatry, and, by whoredom, defection to idolatry, appeareth alſo, 1. It is one ſort of blaſphemy which is common to this ſeventh head with all the reſt of the heads, and theirs was idolatry. 2. By the common phraſe of ſcripture, than when Iſrael is charged with whoredom, or breaking wedlock, Ezek. xvi. and blaſpheming God, chap. xx. 27. it is expounded in the verſe following, to be their idolatry and whoring after idol worſhip on every high hill. See Ezek. xxiii. 7. and 30.

LECTURE III.

Verſe 6.——*And when I ſaw her, I wondred with great admiration.*

7. *And the angel ſaid unto me, Wherefore didſt thou marvel? I will tell thee the myſtery of the woman, and of the beaſt that carrieth her, which hath the ſeven heads and ten horns.*

8. *The beaſt that thou ſaweſt, was, and is not; and ſhall aſcend out of the bottomleſs pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth ſhall wonder, (whoſe names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world) when they behold the beaſt that was, and is not, and yet is.*

THE third part of the chapter, viz. the interpretation of the former viſion, followeth: and, before we come to it, there is the occaſion of it ſet down, and the undertaking of the angel, verſe 6, 7.

The occaſion is the effect which that viſion had on John. *He wondered with great admiration.* This wondering is not as the world wondereth, ver. 8. (which, of ſuch a one as John was, cannot be ſaid) but he wondered to ſee that beaſt and the woman ſo linked together, and deſidered in himſelf to know the meaning of it, as the angel's words imply, ver. 7. a wondering what it might mean, ſuch a type of a beaſt he ſaw formerly, chap. xiii. yet

the expoſition of ſome parts of the deſcription is left till now, that it might hence appear, that the knowledge of this myſtery ſhould not altogether, but piece and piece be manifeſted, and that the revealing of Antichriſt is eſpecially reſerved to the laſt days of his begun ruin, and therefore it is no marvel that many of the fathers ſpeak obſcurely and wildly concerning him.

The angel, verſe 7. propoundeth to clear four things, 1. The woman. 2. The beaſt that carrieth her. 3. The ſeven heads. 4. The ten horns which agree to her, as now under the laſt head. And he beginneth at the beaſt, becauſe we know by this, who that whore is, by knowing who ſupporteth her. The woman being ſpoken of laſt, we come to the firſt thing followed, verſe 8. viz. the deſcription of the beaſt in general, under the notion of his laſt head: for, John in a prophetical viſion, getteth a ſight of this backſliden church, and the empire or dominion that ſupported her, as ſhe is the whore; for that in theſe words, verſe 8. *the beaſt that thou ſaweſt:* now, the beaſt he ſaw, was that which ſupported the whore, called, verſe 14. *the eight head*, pointing at the laſt ſtate of this empire. So this anſwereth a ſeeming contradiction, how this beaſt can be ſaid *not to be, and yet to be*, verſe 8. for, it is not underſtood ſimply, that *it is not:* (for in the end of the verſe, it is ſaid, it *yet is*, which maketh the wonder the more; and, verſe 10. there was one king, head to that beaſt, even in that time) but the oppoſition is to be underſtood in ſome reſpect, that is, it was formerly a large empire, but is not the empire under that government and form which is here intended; in that reſpect, it is but to come, which is verified in the ſtate of this beaſt which John ſaw, and the angel deſcribeth.

More particularly, this beaſt is deſcribed in a threefold reſpect, 1. As to the time paſt, *it was*, that is, this is an empire which is not now to begin ſimply, but long hath had dominion in the world, tho' differing from this under the laſt conſideration; for, 1. It was under kings, conſuls, emperors, and other lawful civil governors: this aſcendeth from the pit. 2. It was a civil government, governing by power and force of arms; now it is eccleſiaſtic, bearing rule by religion and pretext of Chriſt's horns. 3. It was openly heatheniſh and idolatrous, avowedly perſecuting Chriſtians; now it is not ſo, a pretended Chriſtian, but really idolatrous, and an enemy to all true Chriſtians.

2. It is deſcribed in reſpect of the preſent time, *it is not*, that is, in reſpect of this laſt ſtate which was coming, and is oppoſed to all the former, in that reſpect it is not come, as it was to be Antichriſtian, and as the Roman city is not yet an whore; ſo this government, which is the laſt of that beaſt, is not now in the world, becauſe it is under the ſeventh head, and the ſixth was then, verſe 10. for though the myſtery of iniquity began to work very ſoon, yet this birth was not then brought forth. So it is in vain to ſeek this beaſt amongſt the forms then exiſting, tho' that ſame empire was in other reſpects in being even then.

Here alſo it would be adverted, that this *was and is not*, looketh to John's time, and is to be made a truth then, as the word in the future, but *ſhall ariſe*, cleareth: but *was, and is not*, in the end of the verſe, looketh to the time after his riſing and becoming the object of the earth's admiration, which is the curſed privilege of the laſt head that then was to ariſe from the pit.

3. It is deſcribed in reference to the time to come, *and* or *but*, as often, *ſhall ariſe:* though he be not yet come, yet he ſhall come, and becauſe there was moſt difficulty to know him that was to come, and it is moſt concerning alſo to God's people; that future ſtate is ſet out alſo in a further deſcription in theſe four.

1. In his riſe, *He ſhall aſcend out of the bottomleſs pit:* where two things are inſinuated, 1. Concerning his nature and kind. 2. Concerning his order or manner of riſing. By his original, from *the bottomleſs pit*, we underſtand the ſame thing, as chap. ix. of his being *angel of the bottomleſs pit*. His ariſing from thence, chap. xi. 7. and his getting power from the devil, chap. xiii. 5. All which imply, not only that he ſhould be of a helliſh diſpoſition, but that his power or form of it, which was to ſucceed that which then was, ſhould have a riſe, ſpecially from hell, that is, ſhould be no civil government of any ſort, (all which, Rom. xiii. are God's ordinances,) nor meerly a power abuſed by the devil, in oppreſſion and perſecution; for, that had not been any peculiar mark to this beaſt, or this ſtate of the beaſt, for all the former almoſt were ſuch, and ſo it would not reach the angel's ſcope, it muſt then be underſtood of a government unwarranted by God, and a meddling in things not put in mens power,

an office not acknowledged in the word, (such as papacy is) but in effect, a power especially plotted by the devil, and brought out of hell to supply the dragon's place, when he should be disthroned in the heathen emperors. By which it appeareth, that this is a singular dominion in respect of it rise, as being specially obliged to the devil for that, and singular in its usefulness to him, which can be spoken of no ordinary government, though the persons be sinful that are in it.

Secondly, This, *and shall ascend*, &c. implyeth, 1. A great height this beast should come to from small beginnings, as chapter xiii. 2. That *gradatim*, or piece and piece, he should come to it: not all at once at an height, but one step of usurpation after another, till the height were come unto, but in a covert way, as papacy arose: so that there seemeth to be some interval, as it were, between *the beast that was, and is*, his evanishing in that shape which he then had, and the last beast's appearing: in which respect it is said, chap. xiii. peculiarly of this change, that one head was wounded, and discerned to be so, before it was recovered by this last. For the time and manner of this rise, see more, chap. ix. and chap. xiii. Only here it appeareth, that the future state of the Roman empire, which should be in its nature and rise different from the former states thereof, is the state that is set out by this beast, and all know that this is the papacy, or pontificatus.

2. This last state of the beast, (which in this chapter is called commonly the beast) is set out in his ruin, as he was under that form to succeed what had gone before, so that there should be none after him; *for he shall go into perdition*, 1. Implying an evanishing of this beast under this head, and not only the changing of this state; for that had not been peculiar to it, but common with the former. All bygone states are comprehended in *what was;* and this future state or consideration of the beast, taketh in all which was to come of him. 2. It implieth a peculiar destruction waiting for him, different from the former. 3. A slowness in its on-going, though there be a certainty of its fulfilling, yet not at once. If papacy be this head then, we cannot look for an Antichrist to succeed it, seeing it hath succeeded to the state that then was. It may also mean an active perdition, in respect of destroying others, in which respect, chap. ix. he is called Apollyon, and 2 Thess. ii. 3. *the son of perdition:* for this describeth him best in his nature, and is like one who cometh from that fountain from which he hath its rise.

3. He is described by the welcome he should have in the world when he arose, or the effect he should have on the world, *They that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names are not written in the Lamb's book.* This setteth out the absoluteness of his reception, or the obedience that should be given him, in four, 1. In extent; *the whole world*, almost all the Roman empire, (except some elect ones by God keeped from that impurity, as also, chap. xiii.) it is as broad as ever it was in any form before. 2. There is the kind of subjection expressed by *wondering*, a superstitious subjection, to him as to some deity, and not meerly as to a civil governour, as in the former heads, (for, such subjection many elect children gave) but this is an idolatrous adoration, such as Papists give to their Popes. 3. It setteth out the degree of subjection, this of admiration is more than ordinary, and is to be wholly at the beck and command of this beast; under this consideration, it is a superstitious devotedness to him. 4. There is the motive of all this, it is willingly; they admire him, not by constraint of arms, but by a mistaken devotion, they of themselves give up and enslave themselves to him, as is said of the Kings, verse 13. they shall give their power to the beast, and verse 17. they agree to do it.

They were now out of temporal subjection, the empire having become weak, and they upon that had got their kingdom, yet this admiration had such influence on them, as to make them universally yield to this beast upon this account, more willingly than armies had made them do to the former.

The exception put in a parenthesis (*whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world*) not only holdeth forth that compliance to be an exceeding sinful defection, even such as the elect should not, yea, to the end cannot continue in it: but, 1. It sheweth, there is a difference made by Jesus Christ of elect and reprobate, as if by name they were written in distinct books. 2. It sheweth it is eternal, and so without dependence on our free wills, it is *before the world.* 3. It sheweth, that our standing and being keeped

clean, is a fruit of election, and not our election a fruit of our foreseen faith, or works. It is, *they admire not, because they are written in the Lamb's book;* and not they are written, *because they admire not.* 4. It sheweth a suitableness in the end and midses; these elected to glory are brought to it by holiness, Eph. i. 4. and sanctification, 2 Thess. ii. verse 13. in being keeped from such filthiness as others fall in, and which otherwise they would have fallen in; and on the contrary they go to destruction, falling in sins, which are the causes of their damnation, though not of their reprobation, yet the degrees in respect of their ends are not without respect to these midses, although not grounded on them.

4. And lastly, he is in this last consideration described by the ground of this admiration, which pointeth at the state it agreeth unto. This is proposed by way of riddle, *When they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.* This is to be understood with respect to the time of the beast's actual existing under the last consideration, wherein he is admired, and seen by the inhabitants of the earth, and so not only was, and is not, as in the former part of the verse when this state was to come; but now it is: so it differeth in the notion of timing it, from what it was formerly: and is thus to be understood, they see now an empire, which being before that time, was exceeding different from this, 1. In form. 2. In nature or kind, *et supra:* the heads then were crowned, chap. xii. now the horns. 1. It is not, that is, it is a dominion, but it is not the former which was, it is spiritual, and so admired. 2. It lordeth and ruleth over ten crowned kings, the former did over ten legates, preconsuls, or governors of provinces. 3. It useth not arms directly, but excommunications, censures, &c. 4. It was only heathenish and idolatrous, now it is secret under pretext of Christ's vicar, so that old form is away: for this beast may be two ways conceived, 1. In its general complex consideration. 2. More particularly, in its heads and horns. In the general consideration, he compareth the whole beast in its ecclesiastic nature complexly with the whole beast considered as a temporal empire (considered also complexly,) as under any of its first six heads; so this last beast, which supporteth the whore upon an ecclesiastic account, is opposed to its civil consideration as a civil power which went before. In this sense there are but two states of this beast, one that was present, and to pass when this last succeeded, another to come. But when he considereth again the beast more particularly in respect of its heads and horns, and compareth the governments among themselves, verse 10, 11. there are seven forms, whereof five were past, one present, and one to come. Hence it is, that he calleth this ecclesiastic state of this beast the eighth, looking to its distinct nature from the former; and also the seventh, as it is, upon the matter, the same power, continuing the dominion of Rome in one series with the former forms, even as the two beasts were distinguished, chap. xiii. upon that diverse account, though upon the matter one. So this first was, and is not, is no contradiction; for the beast, *i. e.* the empire then was, yet was not this power come as the supporter of the whore, but was to come, in which respect he is looked upon as distinct from all the other heads.

The third step is, *and yet is*, that is, though it now differ much from what it was, yet it is really that same dominion, upon the matter, by other spiritual weapons, 1. Ruling as amply as ever their predecessors did. 2. Having as full and absolute rule as ever it had. See for this, two sayings of Bellar. lib. 3. de Pontif. cap. 21. page 301. cited chap. xiii. 3. It ruleth as tyranniously as any of the former, encroaching on other liberties, till it bring them under, and when it hath done that, it exerciseth its power also cruelly, especially against the saints, as, verse 14. and chap. xiii. 4. It keepeth the former throne and seat, though under another form, it getteth the dragon's seat and authority, chapter xiii. and these people, nations and languages, and kings that formerly had the former beast for their temporal Lord, they have papacy for their spiritual. 5. In respect of its blasphemous idolatry and superstitions, which though they differ some way in kind, yet for number they are as many, for guilt as great, for effects of wrath as dangerous: so that who would compare the many images, days, and temples before applied to the idols of the heathens, which now are called and turned into images, days and temples of the saints, they might say the idolatry upon the matter is the same, though the names be changed, even as their churches are, see chap. xiii. This, upon the matter is the new formed image of the beast spoken of

there. In all which reſpects, though it might be ſaid that this beaſt is not the former, in ſome reſpect, yet materially it is in being, as the text ſaith.

Hence this argument may be formed, that government or dominion in the world, which in ſome reſpect, viz. as civil, was before John's time governing all; yet as ſuch, that is, as eccleſiaſtic and under a different conſideration, was not come in his time, but ſhortly was to ſucceed that which then was over Rome, yet as differing from it; and in its riſe and nature to be no ordinary civil power, but an unwarrantable eccleſiaſtic power, at which the world was to admire, and unto which they were willing to give a more abſolute and divine ſubjection than to any of the former powers; under that government Rome is the Antichriſtian whore, that government is Antichriſtian, and the head and ſupreme governor thereof is Antichriſt: but the Papacy is that government, which was not in John's time, yet ſucceeded to that which then was, in amplitude of government, and to which men willingly yield, and have yielded ſuch an obedience and ſubjection, which now is begun to go into perdition, &c. Therefore that church is the whore, that government Antichriſtian, and alſo that head and governor is Antichriſt: for he immediately ſucceeded to that which was in John's time, and according to Bellar. de pontif. lib. 3. ſince the goſpel came to light, goeth into perdition; and all theſe marks agree to him only. Therefore he is the ſtate pointed at by theſe. Or, thus, that form of dominion over the Roman empire, which is not in kind, one with what it was in John's time, but immediately ſucceedeth to that, and yet in reſpect of amplitude of government and degree of ſubjection to it, is the ſame with or more ample, than the former, though upon a different conſideration and account; that dominion or empire under that form, is the beaſt ſeen by John: but Papacy is ſuch a government, and the empire of Rome, alſo, under it, is ſuch. Therefore it is the dominion deſcribed by him, as the Antichriſtian kingdom.

LECTURE IV.

Verſe 9. *And here is the mind which hath wiſdom. The ſeven heads are ſeven mountains, on which the woman ſitteth.*

10. *And there are ſeven kings, five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come: and when he cometh, he muſt continue a ſhort ſpace.*

11. *And the beaſt that was, and is not, even he is the eight, and is of the ſeven, and goeth into perdition.*

THE angel proceeds to a particular interpretation of the parts, viz. heads and horns, wherein the beaſt was the moſt ſingular and remarkable. There is a ſentence caſten in, before he deſcend to it, *here is the mind which hath wiſdom*, which is ſomething like that, chap. xiii. 18. and it looketh both to what is paſt, (putting readers to conſider well of it) and to what is coming, pointing out ſomething that a man of wiſdom will not let paſs, but take hold of theſe marks for diſcerning of the whore. The words imply, 1. A materialneſs in the matter written, as conducing for the underſtanding of this myſtery. 2. A difficulty to get a mind compoſed to take it up, there will be need of ſpiritual and true wiſdom. 3. That ſuch wiſdom will find what is in it, and get ſo much gripping as to fix them in this, who is this whore and beaſt: and therefore this chapter would be the more fully inſiſted in. 4. It implieth that it is a rare thing to apply theſe marks wiſely, and that the generality of readers will not do it. And by this we may ſee, that though promiſes be fulfilled and propheſies alſo, and the expreſſions be very obvious and palpable to any that have diſcerning, yet are not ſo to theſe who have their minds blinded with prejudice and ſpiritual blindneſs: ſuch propheſies as are moſt clearly fulfilled and applied to Chriſt, to the Jews are dark: and others of Daniel and Ezekiel, which undoubtedly are fulfilled, are alſo obſcure. It is no marvel then that ſo many Papiſts, wondering after this beaſt, cannot wiſely diſcern his marks; it will take wiſdom to do that, which every one hath not: and therefore that argument of Bellarmine againſt the fulfilling of this propheſy, becauſe it is ſo obſcure to many, is of no force. He beginneth at the heads, and giveth two interpretations, or two applications of that type; or he declareth two things to be meaned by it.

1. *The ſeven heads are ſeven mountains, upon which the woman*, or chief city, *ſitteth.* 2. They *are ſeven kings.* We premit this, that all the marks after deſcribed, the clearing of what is ſignified, is to be gathered. Therefore that empire, or city, muſt have ſeven hills which have ſeven kings; and to whom the one is applied, the other is applied alſo: otherwiſe they do not ſerve the ſcope, which is by the parts of one beaſt to diſcover the empire meant by it in whole.

The firſt expoſition of heads, is by the fixed property and natural ſituation of this city or woman, viz. mountains. The ſecond is, by what is ſucceſſive, one to, and after one another. The former of ſeven mountains are cotemporary, this is ſucceſſive and in divers forms.

The heads are called mountains, becauſe in this they ſignify ſo, and we are to underſtand mountains, kings, and to be ſet out by heads and horns, in a metonymical ſpeech, the ſigns getting the name what is ſignified by it, not that really they are ſo. By theſe then, mountains are properly to be underſtood; and the number ſeven is definite alſo, as appeareth by the expoſition which followeth; for kings are properly ſeven, and the number definite, as appeareth by that, that *five are paſt, one is, &c.* and this ſuiteth with the nature of the angel's interpreting the ſeven candleſticks, and ſeven ſtars, chap. i. 20. to be ſeven churches, and ſeven angels as is ſaid in the preface. Theſe mountains then, are, 1. Deſcribed by their number, ſeven, and if the number were not definite, but put for ſeven, nine, or eleven, &c. then it could not contribute to deſign one place by another, which yet is here the angel's ſcope, who ſpeaketh of theſe mountains, as of ſeven mountains famous in reſpect of others, and ſome way peculiar to this city. 2. They are deſcribed from this, that the woman ſitteth on them. By woman, we told, was underſtood Rome, it is called a city, verſe ult. and it muſt be ſuch a city as may ſerve particularly to diſcover theſe mountains from other mountains, they are ſuch, ſaith he, as the chief city of the world ſitteth on. And then this city cannot be the multitude of the wicked: for, that could be no mark for John, or others, diſcerning theſe mountains from any other ſeven mountains. Beſide, this city is not the world, or complex body of kings, but that city that ruleth over them, under ſeven ſeveral governments, as the following words clear. And the mountains are ſuch as this woman ſitteth on: now her ſitting is two ways underſtood in this chapter, 1. She ſitteth on many waters, verſe 1. That is, *many peoples and kingdoms*, verſe 15. over whom, verſe 18. ſhe ruleth. Thus to ſit on, is to rule. 2. She ſitteth in a peculiar way in one place of theſe peoples, whom ſhe commandeth beyond other places, and ſhe ſitteth not ſo on the peoples or waters, but on the ſeven mountains, that is, ſhe hath her reſidence, pomp, court, throne and abode there, which reacheth over many people. And this agreeth well with the angel's ſcope, which being to open the events of the fifth vial, he inſiſteth on the object of it, which is the ſeat or throne of the beaſt, chap. xvi. Theſe ſeven mountains then will be ſuch as the imperial city of the world not only commands over, but is placed upon, and ſo that city will be found to be the whore that dwelleth on ſeven mountains, and this empire to be the beaſt that upholdeth and ſupporteth theſe, and governeth them, *ut ſupra.*

From which it is clear, that Rome is deſigned by the angel to be this city: for, 1. Rome is famous for its ſituation on ſeven hills, that is a peculiar paraphraſe of it both among Greeks and Latins, the ſeven hilled city, or the city on the ſeven hills, and Rome were ſtill taken as one: for, at firſt by Romulus it comprehended four, he was the firſt founder of it: after, by the ſixth king Servius Tullius, were three more added: hence was that yearly feaſt, 3. *id Decemb.* called *feſtum ſeptimontium:* and theſe ſayings of the poets confirm this. *Virg. Septem quae una ſibi muro circumdedit arces.* And *Ovid. triſt. Sed quae de ſeptem totum circumſpicit orbem. Montibus imperii Roma Deumque locus, &c.* which made it to receive theſe names, *ſepticeps, urbs ſepticollis et eptalophos, &c.* and they are thus particularly named, 1. *Palatinus.* 2. *Caelius.* 3. *Capitolius, or Janiculus.* 4. *Aventinus.* 5. *Quirinalis.* 6. *Viminalis.* 7. *Eſquilinus*, which maketh *Bellar. lib. 2. de Pont. cap.* 2. ſay, *Notiſſimum eſt ſupra, ſeptem colles urbem Romam aedificatam eſſe. Corn. a lapide, in locum*, citeth many to confirm this: and if Rome be the ſeat, the Roman church is the whore, and the Pope Antichriſt, who keepeth his court there in a ſpecial manner; though he command otherwiſe all the world

at his pleaſure; yet his chair is nailed to that ſeven hilled city, and cannot be removed.

That which is objected, may be anſwered from what is ſaid. Say ſome, this city meaneth no particular city, but the company of the wicked in general, which is clearly contrary to the angel's ſcope, which is to diſcover one ſtate and city; and to the text, which diſtinguiſheth this city from people and nations, over which it commandeth, and from kings that gave their power to the beaſt, yet are they no ſmall part of the wicked in the world. Beſides, it is ſuch a city as is ſituated on ſeven hills, peculiarly diſtinguiſhed from others, which cannot be the wicked.

2. Say ſome, *ſeven* are to be taken indefinitely, which is alſo anſwered from the ſcope, that pointeth out ſeven hills, on which the woman ſitteth, beſide others, to ſatisfy John in this, as in other interpretations.

3. Say ſome, as Bellarmine, though Rome then ſat on ſeven mountains, yet it is not ſo now, but ſtandeth, ſaith he, *in campo martio*. *Anſw.* It is granted by Bellarmine, that Rome was then the city ſignified to John; for it then bare rule, it muſt then be underſtood of it alſo now, or this one type muſt ſignify one city, or place, to John in his time, and another to us, which is abſurd. 2. It is enough, that it was built ſo in John's time; for it is the ſame city, empire, and ſeries of dominion ſtill: and tho', as he ſaith, it ſtandeth moſt *in campo martio*, yet is the ſame Rome, which before that in John's time had theſe ſeven hills in it, or elſe the Pope ſitteth in ſome other Rome, than Peter ſat on in John's time. 3. Though ſome of theſe hills be without the walls now, yet they are ſtill linked to the reſt by ſpecial privileges, all of them being ſeats of the Pope's palaces, abbacies, &c. Yet, on another occaſion, Bellarmine ſaith, *Notiſſimum eſt, eam ſupra ſeptem colle aedificata eſſe*, that is, it is a thing moſt known, that Rome is built upon ſeven hills, as is ſaid.

The angel, having, in the firſt expoſition of theſe ſeven heads, diſcovered Rome in its local ſituation, by fixed hills, he goeth on, in a ſecond application, to do it by its fleeting and ſucceſſive governments, ver. 10. and 11. In it, 1. He ſheweth what further theſe heads hold forth, viz. ſeven kings; (it may be read, they are, or ſignify ſeven kings, as before, ſeven hills;) and although one might think it hard, that one type ſhould ſet forth a *hill*, and a *king*: yet the angel's particular explication leaveth no room for that debate. Then, 2. He diſcovereth, or characterizeth theſe kings, in reſpect of time and being, that ſo John, and others, might the more eaſily diſcern what he propoſed. *Five are fallen*, ſaith he, *one is, and the other is not yet come*. 3. Becauſe the ſhot of all is, to diſcover the beaſt under the laſt head; therefore, in ſeveral characters here, the ſeventh is deſcribed in the end of the 10th and 11th verſes.

For underſtanding this, we ſhall, 1. Clear the words. 2. Then apply them. 3. Remove ſome doubts, or objections.

1. By *kings*, is not ſtrictly to be underſtood governors under that name only; but, in *ſcripture*, all governors ordinarily paſs under that name; ſo Moſes is called, Deut. xxxiii. 5. And when Iſrael wanted all government, Judges xvii. 6. it is ſaid, *In thoſe days they had no king in Iſrael;* ſignifying no governor or order; every one did what he liſted. And here, in John's time, that governor of the empire bare not this name of king, though he be called the ſixth. 2. Neither by kings are underſtood governors, perſonally, or individual men, but a ſeries or ſucceſſion under one form of government in a line, as Dan. vii. 17. the four monarchies, which were not any of them, ſave it be the third, in an individual perſon, yet they are called four kings: and it muſt mean ſo here; for, kings here, are as verſe 12. where they are called ten kings; and ſhall it be thought, that by theſe are meant ten men, who are alike, and do all that is ſpoken of them in their own time? Experience will ſay the contrary, that ſince the Roman empire decayed, and kings aroſe out of the ruins thereof, many ages are paſt; yet, what they have to fulfil on the whore, is not yet come. And, 3. Theſe kings, as is clear, are ſucceſſive one to another, and that immediately; the fifth ſucceeded the fourth; the ſixth the fifth, &c. And there are not two at once. 4. And that line or ſucceſſion of the ſeventh together, is to go from the riſing of this empire to its ruin, while this *beaſt* is an empire, it is under ſome one of theſe heads, except we imagine a *beaſt* without an head: and, conſequently, this ſucceſſion taketh in ſo long a ſeries, that five individual perſons could not fill up the time before John, nor can none make it up after him; for many days have continued ſince, yet the *beaſt* is not gone fully to perdition, though it then was in

his time. It must then be either under the head it had then; which is false, or, it must be under the seventh, which succeeded: and, however it be, it cannot be one person, who so long could continue head to that beast. 5. They must be kings or governments, that are heads to one and the same body, and sit at Rome: for the heads are kings to that same city to which the hills belong, seeing they describe one beast or empire; and they must be over many nations, verse 15. yea, the same nations; for, there is one body of this beast under all the heads, and all the heads are governors to one beast or body, and so are Roman governors, and that of a great extent. Otherwise one head were but half an head, or head to half the beast; and the setting out of both by one type confirmeth this, that they are kings and hills of one city. 6. These governors, or sorts of governments, are precisely *seven*, having one empire for their dominion, and continuing from its rise to its close; so the first government beginneth equally with the first head, and it endeth together with the seventh, and there are neither more nor fewer; for, if the hills be seven, and not more nor fewer, and if just five be past, and no more, then the seven in whole must be so, and not more nor fewer, and the one to come must be properly one also. And to say there might be another government distinct from the seven, it would also say, it behoved to be another beast or dominion: for, saith the angel, this hath but seven, the last whereof goeth to perdition, and hath no successor.

1. From what is said, it is clear, 1. That the naming of an eighth, ver. 11. is not to be understood as of a distinct head: for, 1. Then the beast would have eight kings, and so would not be well represented by seven heads, or exponed by seven kings, if there were more. 2. Then this beast, viz. the eighth, would not be one of the seven, which it is expressly said to be, verse 11. and if one of seven, it must be one of the seven formerly mentioned, and that none of the first six: therefore it must be the seventh itself, which was to come. 3. The same called the eighth, ver. 11. is all one with that, ver. 8. But that holdeth out the Roman empire under its seven heads, or, at least, under one of them; and it is the same beast that was, and is not, which John saw, and which the angel is discovering: and, if he were not under any of these heads, this would contribute little to that end. Nor would it be a discovery of the same beast. 4. The head which was to come is all one with that state of the beast, verse 8. that was to rise; for there is but one state to come, and but one head to come. Now, were there eight heads, there would be two to come in John's time, neither could one state have comprehended the whole future form of that beast, as verse 8. if it had been to be divers, and various, and under different heads. 5. If the seventh head be last, then there is not an eighth; but it is said of the seventh, it must continue but a short space, as agreeing with what is said, ver. 8. of the beast, that it must go into perdition under that form which was to come: therefore it is not said of the seventh, but *the other* (and that in the singular number) *is not yet come*, to shew there is but one to come. How this is called the eighth, we shall clear afterward.

A second thing from what is said, is also clear, viz. that we cannot put any government between the sixth head, which was in John's time, and the seventh or last, whatsoever it shall be found to be. And therefore we cannot, as some interpreters do, put in either the king of Goths in Italy, who for a time commanded Rome, nor Christian Caesars. For, 1. There are but seven in all, and none of these is last; for there is one since. 2. All these seven heads, head and rule the Roman empire, which is broader than that kingdom of Goths, which wanted a great part of Italy, and were never emperors. 3. The papacy was breeding then, after the wound which was given to heathenish emperors by Constantine, and never was healed, till by it, as was cleared, chapter xiii. But there cannot be two heads together: therefore all heads have names of blasphemy, which cannot be said of Christian emperors as such. Then, *Fourthly*, Beside if Christian emperors were an head, when ceased they to be a head; seeing they kept some name long after they went from Rome, and were weakened in their power, piece and piece.

The second thing whereby these kings are set out, is clear, that is, they are such seven forms of government, as five thereof must precede John's time; that is meant by this, *five are away*, or *fallen*, *one is*, viz. the sixth; that is one different from any of the former; *the other is not yet come*. He saith the *other*, and not the seventh, 1. To shew there was but one to come. 2. To shew

that it was to be as different from the reſt, or more than any that had gone before, and according to his manner he pointeth out this laſt eſpecially, becauſe it is the ſcope of all to clear what concerneth him. It is ſaid of him in this verſe, *He muſt continue a ſhort ſpace when he cometh:* which I take to imply two things, 1. The certainty of this other's coming, or of his continuing a time when he ſhall come. Thus, *when he cometh, he ſhall continue*, &c. holdeth forth the neceſſity of his continuance for a time, till he have his time of it, as well as any of the former, and that people would not think he ſhall evaniſh inſtantly when he appeareth. 2. It implieth, that that continuance ſhall not be long, but a *ſhort ſpace:* ſo difficulties uſed to be expreſſed, becauſe of the fainting of God's people, that they may be encouraged to bear them. Hence we ſay, it is not *ſhort*, ſimply, as if it were a little time, a year or two, &c. but ſhort, comparatively, to eternity, he will have but a little time: and the reaſons why we expound it thus, comparatively, are theſe, 2. It is uſual to the ſcriptures, to ſet out long times by ſhort, when it ſpeaketh of the godly their affliction; it is a *moment*, Iſa. liv. 1 Cor. iv. *An hour of temptation*, chap. iii. chap. xxii. verſe 7, and 10. That the conſideration of the tranſitorineſs of theſe afflictions may be comfortable to God's people under them. 2. When the ſcripture ſpeaketh of Antichriſt's tyranny, and the church's affliction under him in any definite expreſſion, as chap. xi. 12, 13. it ſpeaketh of it as ſhort; and, therefore, when it ſpeaketh in indefinite terms, it is ſuitable it ſhould be ſo alſo: yet, as the former inferreth not ſuch a ſhort time in itſelf, neither can the latter. Hence it is ordinarily ſaid in the preſent time, he goeth to perdition, yet it was not begun, to ſhew it haſtened. 3. The time equivalent to this, if not longer than this, of Antichriſt, is expreſſed in this ſame chapter by *an hour:* for theſe ten kings ariſe with the beaſt, when the empire decreaſeth; and they give their power to him, when they get crowns, as followeth: yea, they outlive him, yet it is ſaid, verſe 12. They *get power one hour with the beaſt:* which denoteth not only a cotemporarineſs of powers, but the ſhort time that they both ſhall have, and yet not ſimply ſo, but figuratively expreſſed, for the comfort of God's people, who will ſuffer much from both and this *hour* is the ſame ſhort ſpace mentioned before, and yet it is a long time in itſelf, ſo is it a ſhort time, chap. xii. after the devil's down-caſting which is long in itſelf: and, on the contrary, mercy uſeth to be ſet out in long terms.

For application, then, as the firſt expoſition of ſeven hills proveth it Rome, this of ſeven kings confirmeth it; for it is notour, that Rome, as ſuch an idolatrous empire, hath been under ſeven governments; five were paſt before this time of John's writing, viz. 1. Kings. 2. Conſuls. 3. Decemviri. 4. Tribuni militum. 5. Dictators. The ſix emperors or Caeſars, were then when the angel interpreted this; the other, viz. papacy, was not then come, but hath ſince ſitten on that ſeven hilled city, ruling amply, *ut ſupra*, in his dominion, as the palpable ſucceſſor of him who then was.

For more full ſatisfaction in this application, theſe things are to be made out, 1. That Rome hath been under ſeven ſorts of governments, whereof five preceded John, the ſixth was in his time, and the ſeventh not then come. 2. That the papacy is this ſeventh who was then to come.

The firſt muſt be made out from the Roman hiſtory, where it is clear, 1. That when Rome was builded, it was governed by kings. Romulus was the firſt, from whom were in all ſeven, until Tarquinius Superbus, who was laſt, according to Livius, in his time, for his ſon Sextus Tarquinius his violating of Lucretia, the Romans did caſt off that government, and erected two *conſuls*, and a ſenate to govern, who were to be changed yearly by election. This is the ſecond form, and continued long, till the Romans became deſirous to have all the beſt laws that could be found out, gathered into one body, and ſettled for the rule of their government: for which cauſe, they choſed ten men to collect theſe, and put them together. Theſe were called *Decem-viri*, or that government *Decem-viratus*. This is marked by Livius, dec. primae, lib. 3. to be for the third time that Rome had changed its government. But theſe ten men degenerating to tyranny, ſeeking to continue themſelves in perpetual power, and one of them, Appius Claudius, going about to defile one Virginia, a maid eſpouſed to a ſoldier. By this means they drew both the people and ſenate againſt them, and were put out when they had continued but two years. The government again returned to the *conſuls*, till, by the miſcarriages of ſome in that place they alſo became odious to the people, who thereupon conteſted with the ſenate to

have equal power in the government, (for, before no Plebeians had been *consul.*) This made the senate chuse *tribunes*, who were called *Tribuni militum.* They had consulary power, but were five, six, eight, or ten in number, as the people pleased who chused them; and it was lawful to chuse them indifferently, Decad. pri. lib. 4. pag. 99. This was the fourth government: after them there were divers contests about the government, (which again returned to the consuls) whereupon (as sometimes before, in difficult cases) they chused *dictators*, who, for a time limited unto them, had supreme power, and ruled all with much reverence: and, in a strait, that was ordinarily fled unto, yea, sometimes, there would be *dictators* for a year, and no other government for that time, as Papyrius Cursor, Quintus Fabius, Dictator, &c. This is accounted the five governments, which Julius Caesar often, before his becoming emperor, possessed, to keep the authority in himself, till afterward he was styled *Dictator in perpetuum.* These five were all fallen before John's time, and then Rome was governed by none of them; for Caesar had gotten the supreme authority after his defeating Pompey at Pharsalia, under the title of *Imperator* and *Pontifex Maximus*, by which, the consuls power was confined within the city, and the emperor sent unto the provinces whom he pleased. This form succeeded by birth, adoption, or election, afterward one after another, for a long time, and in John's time was existing in Domitian the emperor, who succeeded his father Vespasian, and his brother Titus, in the empire: this then is the sixth which then was.

This, which is more sparsly gathered out of Livius, is more compendiously set down by that famous historiographer Cornelius Tacitus, in the first words of his history, *Urbem Romam a principio Reges habuere: Libertatem, et Consulatum. L. Brutus instituit. Dictaturae ad tempus sumebantur: neque Decemviralis potestas ultra biennium, neque Tribunorum militum consulare jus diu valuit: non Cinnae, non Sullae longa Dominatio, et Pompeii Crassique potentia, cito in Caesarem: Lepidi atque Antonii arma in Augustum cessere, qui cuncta discordiis civilibus fessa, nomine Principis sub imperium accepit.* He seemeth to point out Augustus as the first emperor, because, after him, there was no essay to recover their former liberty, and he got it with the senate's good will. If any should say, there are more numbered than six by Tacitus, as that of Sulla, Cinna, Pompey, and Lepidus with Antonius. *Answ.* 1. Some of these men whom he nameth, do not infer divers governments, but the exorbitant domination of some governor, who ruled under the old and ordinary titles as Sulla, and Cinna, and Pompey were consuls, and had still that name; Caesar, Antonius and Lipidus (if we account Augustus the first, as it seemeth Tacitus doth) they were put by violence in such places, without any such consent as Augustus had afterward obtained: therefore he designeth them by their names, and not their offices, as he had done the former, or as he doth to Augustus after, by calling him *Princeps:* so this increaseth not the number. If we reckon again Julius Caesar the first emperor, as it seemeth just, Lepidus, Antonius, Octavius or Augustus, will be emperors, and to be reckoned under the sixth head: for all of them had imperial power, and governed, as supreme, such and such parts of the empire, even as often as there were sundry emperors joined, as Diocletian, Maximianus, Herculius, &c. at the same time, Constantine and Licinius agreeth betwixt themselves to divide the empire, so it was here, and it was still the same power: and this division or agreement also was only amongst themselves, without any act of the people, or consent of the senate, and was a piece of tyranny, as Suetonius and Augustus observe, and from that of Tacitus; as also it is clear, that though there were some intervals in some of these forms, as that dictators were now and then; yet, when they were, they were supreme, and had a sort of sacredness beyond any other governor or governments; and therefore justly accounted distinct. The consuls were both before the *Decemviri*, and after them, and the *Tribuni militum* also; yet all of them make up one form, which was passed before John's days, who wrote in the time of the Caesars, and so had not seen the seventh head, which was after to come.

This truth, in the matter of fact, is acknowledged by Bellar. lib. 1. de. Pontif. cap. 2. though elsewhere he would question it; for there he being to reckon the changes of the Roman government, he reckoneth, 1. Kings. 2. Consuls. 3. Decemviri: for, when he speaketh of *Tribuni plebis*, they were but superadded to the former governors, and were not supreme: therefore, without respect to them, Livius reckoneth the *Decemviri* to be the third. 4. He nameth

Dictators. 5. *Tribuni militum cum consulari potestate:* after which he addeth the *emperors* or *monarchy.* And certainly, if there had been any more changes, he would not have omitted them, it being his scope to shew the changeableness of all governments, till they resolve in monarchy.

I know also, that the same author Bellarmine, understandeth by seven heads, indefinitely all the emperors, past, and to come, in John's time: but that will not consist with the angel's dividing of them in fine, to have been before, one *present*, and but one to come: for, according to that reckoning, more were to come, than had preceded that time.

The second assertion to be made out, is, that the papacy is the seventh government of Rome, succeeding to that which was in John's time, and so is the last: which is holden forth under that type of the seventh head, which was then to come; and this being a main point, we must insist a little to confirm it. And, 1. It is clear, that the sixth government which was then in John's time, is now also fallen, and away. 2. It is clear, then, also, that the seventh must be come: what cleareth the one, confirmeth the other; for, if the seventh be come, the sixth is fallen; (because two cannot be together) and, if the sixth be gone, the seventh must be come; for there is no intermission, or interval of such length betwixt their successions.

That the sixth is gone, then, and the seventh come: these things will clear: 1. It is clear from the truth of history, and matter of fact, that the government which then ruled Rome, and that empire, was the emperors or Caesars; but, from many ages, the emperors have had no command or seat at Rome, nor any considerable command over the territories of that empire, (there being other princes since arisen, as France, Spain, &c. who command as broadly as he) therefore he cannot now be accounted a head. 2. It is clear, that that city hath been a seat of a long time to another government, which hath governed it, and (though under another pretext, and on another account) hath ruled since, as broad almost as the former. Neither in any reasonable way can that which is now called the empire, (being very inconsiderable in respect of what it then was) be accounted the same, or the now emperor, the successor of these emperors, seeing their rise is so different, as was shown, chapter xiii. And if it be alledged to continue in the emperors, then it must either be in the emperors of the East, (who in a more direct line succeeded them who then were) who now are fallen; or, in the emperors of the *West:* but neither of these can be said: for, 1. The *East* is gone; neither sat he at Rome. Nor, 2. The *West;* for he doth not sit at Rome, nor did since papacy came to its height, yea, nor many years before that: and if the emperor in the *East* was a head, he must continue so till his decay; and if the emperor in the *West* be a head, he must have been so from his rise; and so these empires, or rather parts of one empire, being cotemporary, there behoved to have been two heads at once, but then the empire was broken, it was no more one. And it is to be observed, that the first division of the empire in several kingdoms, or parts, not subordinate one to another, or combined one with another, fell out by Constantius, leaving it divided in three to his own three sons; for, though there were at one time sundry emperors ruling at once before that, yet the empire was not divided, except for particular inspection, as the consuls used to do; and every one of them was Augustus, and it was still one empire; and therefore it seemeth, from that time, emperors cannot be accounted to continue as heads, which, on chapter xiii. is further cleared.

2. It is clear, by this chapter, if that which is propheſied to succeed the time of the sixth head, and to belong to the last government be fulfilled, then the sixth is gone, and the seventh is come; but that is fulfilled.

1. Many kings that then had gotten no kingdom, have now obtained it long since.

2. These kings having withdrawn from the emperor's government, have since willingly given their power to another, viz. the Pope, and foughten for him against the Lamb: which things, as they are clearly fulfilled, so are they expresly holden forth as cotemporary with the last state of this empire which was then to come, ver. 12, and 13. For he is the head that hath the horns; and he is the seventh head that hath crowned horns or kings; now, these who bear the name of emperors, have long since lost these horns; therefore they are not a head; but he must be this head, whom these horns acknowledge; and seeing they acknowledge another now, which they did not in John's time; therefore this must be fulfilled.

And therefore we conclude, that the sixth go-

vernment, which then was, is paſt, and that the ſeventh hath ſucceeded: except we ſay, the beaſt for many years hath had no head, and it is before cleared alſo, that neither Chriſtian emperor, nor Gothiſh king, can properly be called the ſeventh head of this beaſt; yea, or a head at all.

A third thing clear is, that the Pope or Papacy may well be called a head or government of this empire; for, 1. That it is a government cannot be denied, and of a diſtinct kind from any of the former. 2. It hath its ſeat at Rome, and is a king of that ſeven hilled city, as is alſo clear. 3. That it extendeth its dominion, not only over Rome, or that part called now the empire, but over at leaſt all that was the weſtern empire, and further, for many years, and if the ſame body that is commanded or governed be the beaſt, the government that commanded it, being thus circumſtantiated muſt be the head; or we muſt ſay, that the empire hath not been under a head for a long time, which cannot be.

4. Therefore we may further argue, if Papacy be a government of that empire, it muſt be the ſeventh and laſt; which we take to be one, as is ſaid: for, 1. That was not in John's time, it is not that which then was; but that being the ſixth, and this having ſucceeded to it in its ſeat and dominion, muſt therefore be the ſeventh, that was not then come. 2. If all the characters agreeing to the ſeventh head be verified in it, then it muſt be the ſeventh; but the firſt is true. *Ergo*, &c. Theſe characters agree to the ſeventh: 1. To have ten kings out of the ruin of the Roman empire cotemporary with it, that government cotemporary with them is the ſeventh; Papacy is ſo. 2. That theſe kings give their power to it willingly. 3. That they perſecute at its direction. 4. That ſome of them hate her again: all which are verified in the Papacy.

There are two objections againſt this, the laſt whereof will lead us to open the 11th verſe. *Objection*, 1. The ſeventh head is but to continue a ſhort ſpace; but that agreeth not to the Pope. *Anſwer*, It is not a ſhort ſpace ſimply, as is before cleared; but comparatively ſhort with a ſure diſtinction, for which cauſe it is ſaid alſo of the eight, verſe 11. that he *goeth*, even from his beginning, *to perdition*. The ſecond objection, is ſeemingly ſtronger. If the Pope be the ſeventh, then who is the eighth? It ſeemeth that would agree better to him, and therefore there muſt be ſome more governments underſtood, ſeeing there is an eighth particularly mentioned. *Anſw.* 1. The Papacy is both the ſeventh and the eighth, but in different reſpects, and on divers conſiderations; for, that there are but ſeven, and that this eighth is alſo the eighth as he muſt be of the ſeven; therefore the very ſeventh, (ſix being before his riſe fallen,) is cleared before: and therefore Papacy, if it be the ſeventh that ſucceedeth the ſixth which then was, it muſt alſo be the eighth; but I ſay differently conſidered, 1. Papacy conſidered as a princedom, and the Pope as a prince, he is the ſeventh head, in that ſame ſeries with the other that went before. But, 2. Papacy conſidered as an eccleſiaſtic power (and ſo much different in nature and kind from the former) and as having a twofold relation, as a prince and as a paſtor (or prince of paſtors) ſo he is the eighth, as being ſo various from the former, that one of theſe relations ſetteth out but one half of him, yet is he even under this conſideration indeed one of the former ſeven, though by himſelf or others he ſhall be thought ſo different from them, as to be accounted both the ſeventh and eighth; for which reaſons he is, chap. xiii. ſet out by two beaſts, one holding forth his temporal power, the other his eccleſiaſtic. Again, conſider this beaſt which John ſaw complexly, as with his body whereby he carrieth the whore, he doth ſo differ from any head, even from the ſeventh, and may be called alſo an eighth, as a ſeventh. Thus being conſidered, he is a *totum*, and the head apart: but again conſidered as he governeth that body, he is of the ſeventh, (*kai ek ton epta eſti*) he is one of that reckoning, by a ſenechdoche, *the beaſt*, for that head of *the beaſt*, and ſo he is a ſeventh and eighth, as *he is not, and yet is*, in divers reſpects: and therefore is it obſerved, that though he called it *therion*, which is in the neuter gender in the *Greek*, yet the relative *even he*, *autos*, is of the maſculine, that looketh to *Baſileus*, or king, repreſented by that beaſt, that is, the king underſtood by this beaſt in its laſt head, he is both the eighth and ſeventh that is, of a twofold reſpect, and ſo differeth from any that went before him, which is added as a diſtinguiſhing mark to difference this laſt head or ſtate of that empire from any preceding. *It is to come*, and when it cometh it will look like a ſeventh, and an eighth alſo, yet really is the ſeventh under which form the beaſt ſhall go to de-

ſtruction, and not overlive that form. Therefore chap. xix. *the beaſt*, that is the body, and the falſe prophet, that is the head, go into deſtruction together. Hence this argument may be formed, if the ſeventh head here be that government over Rome, ſucceeding to that which governed it in John's time, viz. the Roman emperors, then the Pope is the ſeventh head (for he ſucceeded;) but the former is true, *Ergo*. Or if the Pope be the ſeventh government ſucceeding to that which was then over Rome in John's time, then is Rome under him, the whore, and he is the Antichriſt; but the former is truth, *ut ſupra, Ergo*.

That which Bellar. aſſerteth, lib. 3. de pontif. cap. 15. pag. 294. that Antichriſt ſhall be *ultimus Rex. Romani imperii, non tamen ſub nomine Romani Imperatoris*, and that he is, *ſupremum et ultimum caput impiorum*, &c. as he aſſerteth immediately before, alluding to this, that by this laſt head is underſtood Antichriſt, doth confirm this. And it may then from this be gathered, that the Pope is Antichriſt, thus, if the Pope be the laſt governor of the Roman empire, yet not under the title of Roman emperor, then he is Antichriſt that is granted; but that he is the laſt king of the Roman empire, &c. appeareth, thus, if the Pope or Papacy be the ſeventh government which ſucceeded to that over the Roman empire which was in John's time, yet under another name, then it is the laſt; for the ſeventh is laſt *ut ſupra;* and under it the beaſt goeth to perdition: but the Pope is the ſeventh, which ſucceeded unto the ſixth that then was, and he hath keeped the government of a long time ſince, under another title than the Roman emperor, therefore he is Antichriſt.

What is alledged by ſome, that ſeven ages of the world are to be underſtood here, or the ſeven oppreſſing monarchies where God's people ſuffered, as Aſſyria, Babylon, Egypt, Grecia, &c. That may be confuted by this argument. Such kings are underſtood by theſe ſeven heads as are governments or governors of one city, yea, of that ſeven hilled city, and commanded one empire, and do head one and the ſame beaſt; but none of theſe forenamed are ſuch. Therefore are not underſtood here.

LECTURE V.

Verſe 12. *And the ten horns which thou ſaweſt, are ten kings which have received no kingdom as yet, but receive power as kings one hour with the beaſt.*

13. *Theſe have one mind, and ſhall give their power and ſtrength unto the beaſt.*

14. *Theſe ſhall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb ſhall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings, and they that are with him are called and choſen, and faithful.*

THE angel having interpreted the ſeven heads, he goeth on to expound what is meaned by *horns, they are*, ſaith he, *ten kings:* deſcribed, beſide their number *ten* in theſe four, 1. That they were not preſently kingdoms (as the beaſt was an empire) but were to come. 2. That they were to be in the beaſt's time, that is, in the laſt ſtate of the beaſt. 3. That in their practice they would war with the Lamb. 4. In the event he would overcome them: and ſome reaſons are given of his victory that it was certain, verſe 14.

In general, remember, 1. That theſe horns are of, and belong to, the laſt ſtate of the beaſt, viz. under the ſeventh head, which ſupporteth the whore; the former ſixth head had ten horns, chap. xii. that is, exerciſed its ſtrength and malice, by ſo many provinces, or preteors, or proconſuls: but there is a difference here, this ſeventh head, called the eighth king, hath the ſame provinces almoſt, and as many, but now they are crowned, as chap. xiii. he maketh uſe of kings to do his buſineſs, to perſecute the godly, and to fight for him, as the former made uſe of their legates and officers who had no crowns, chap. xii. ſo both have governors, in which their ſtrength and help conſiſteth; but the laſt hath formal kings to be his inſtruments. This then is the character, the laſt ſtate, or head of the beaſt, ſhall have as large power as any of the former, but his vaſſals ſhall be formally kings, over whom he ſhall command as ſovereignly, and of whom he ſhall make uſe as abſolutely as the former did of their ſervants. The term of horns being borrowed from beaſts (as the whole empire is compared to one beaſt) who by their horns puſh and hurt in their fightings.

2. Advert, that there is no affinity betwixt the

ten horns mentioned here, and the ten horns mentioned, Dan. vii. 24. as there is no affinity betwixt these two beasts: for, *First*, That in Daniel there is an empire, which is to evanish at, or before Christ's first coming in the flesh. Compare Daniel vii. 26. with chap. ii. 44, 45. These here get not their power till long after. 2. These in Daniel are successive kings of the same kingdom, one coming after another, verse 24. Here they are cotemporary, verse 12, 13. These horns in Daniel are supreme kings of that kingdom, which is there set out by the beast exercising that same power, (the beast describing the kingdom complexly, and the horns the kings separately, verse 24.) But here the beast is different from the horns now, when they are crowned, as it was before they got their crowns. Hence they give their power to the beast, the beast is another king, in some respect superior to them, which is not so in Daniel; the beast there comprehendeth all these kings. 4. There is there one little horn, which is last, peculiarly spoken of, whereof there is no mention here, so that either there are eleven horns, or there is a difference among the ten, which is not here. 5. Add, that if that little horn were Antichrist, then the beast here were not Antichrist, seeing the beast and the horns differ; for all the horns give power to the beast, the seventh head, and if that little horn be Antichrist, he must do so also. 6. Here the beast, Antichrist, is not posterior to the horns, nor any of the horns to it, or to one another: for they are horns of the beast, and at the same time; there that little horn cometh last, which sheweth they are not to represent one thing. Neither can it be said, that that little horn there, and the beast here, are one: for, 1. That little horn hath not ten horns; for he destroyeth three kings, and seven are past; either then he must have but seven kings under him which are not destroyed, or only three; for a difference there must be between the three destroyed, and the other: and therefore there are not ten together. In a word, these ten horns set forth the kingdom of Syria, or the Seleucids, (of which stock came Antiochus, Epiphanes, by whom the Jews suffered much) which was past before Christ's birth. Thus the Papists by mixing these, do but endeavour to darken this scripture, and obscure the true Antichrist. But it is clear, they are not to be confounded: for these horns here do well agree with the beast, and for a time unanimously do all give their power to him; but, Dan. vii. 24. that little horn destroyeth three before he come to his power.

Beside, if that of the little horn were applied to Antichrist, then it would infer, that he destroyed the horns, whereas here the horns destroy him. Again, by that little horn, chap. vii. 23. is understood that little horn, chap. viii. 9. And therefore by the last beast with the ten horns, out of which that little one ariseth, chap. vii. 24. must be understood the same beast with the four horns, chap. viii. seeing from it that little horn descendeth as by comparing it with verse 23. is clear.

More particularly concerning these kings, *Observe*, 1. That they are not personally or individually to be understood, as if it were so many kings in one generation only; for these kings, thus characterized, take in all the ages since kingdoms arose out of the empire, which in John's time was subject to it, at least when in a considerable number they assumed dominion and sovereignty to themselves: for the empire in John's time, while these kingdoms were not, is clearly distinguished from that time and head, or supreme governor, when these kingdoms were to come, as having another face of an empire on it. Therefore seeing these kingdoms have had their rise long since out of that empire, and some things concerning them being yet to be fulfilled, it must take in more ages than one; for all that time is but counted one state of that dominion, belonging to that one last head, and opposed by these horns to the former.

2. *Observe*, That they are kingdoms of some bounds of the empire, horns now that are kings, which before were horns without crowns under the sixth head in John's time, and after yielded willingly to the seventh.

3. *Observe*, That it is necessary we understand it of a succession directly in that same line, so that it must be that same king's stock, and that same people of a kingdom, who must hate the whore, that first took to themselves sovereignty, and gave their power to the beast, it is enough that they occupy these same places and bounds, tho' not in that line, as all emperors before, however they succeed, they come in under one king, and are typified by one head, if they come to that seat of Rome.

Thus then by horns that this last beast hath, un-

derſtand ſo many kings, wherewith, as ſo many horns, he ſhall puſh, as theſe did in Daniel viii. So here, verſe 14. they make war, which is the beaſt's own war, proſecuted by them, chap. xiii.

The firſt thing in the horns or kings is, their number ten: for underſtanding whereof, it is not neceſſary, that peremptorily that number be ſtuck to, as if ſo many and no more behoved to be, (for they are not ſo circumſtantiated as the ſeven governments) it may be ſo many ſpecial horns who ſhall riſe, and be eſpecially ſerviceable to the beaſt, and be inſtrumental in his ruin, tho' there may be more, leſs obſervable, as Dan. viii. 8. the *goat* had four notable horns, becauſe they were chief, tho' there was ſome little petty governments beſide theſe four of Selucius in Aſſyria, Ptolemy in Egypt, Caſſandar, or Antipater in Macedonia, or Grecia, Antigonus in Aſia the leſs, which is called Anatolia, corruptly Natolia. Beſides theſe, there was one of Thracia, whoſe king was Lyſimachus, (to paſs eight more that minted at the kingdom) he continued forty years. 2. They may ſignify this much, that this ſeventh head ſhould have as many horns as the ſixth, and that tho' kings ſhould ſtart out from the emperor's dominion, yet the laſt government ſhould not the leſs be ſtrong by them. 3. It may be *ten*, to ſhew, that in all toſſings of kingdoms, theſe divided kingdoms, once ſeparated from the empire, ſhould continue, and be almoſt about that number of *ten*, as at the firſt they were. They are thus reckoned out by Mede, in Apoc. 8. under the ſecond trumpet, viz. 1. Of Britons. 2. Of Saxons, both in Britain. 3. Of Francks, in Gallia Belgica. 4. Of Burgundians, in Gallia Celtica. 5. Of Vicegoths, in Gallia Aquitania, and part of Spain. 6. Suaevorum and Alanoram, where Portugal is now. 7. Vandals in Afric. 8. Almans in Germany. 9. Oſtrogoths in Hungaria. 10. Of Greeks in the Eaſt. This was anno 455, or 460. ſince which time the empire hath continued divided: and though ſome nations have changed their ſeats, yet the number hath never been leſs: and by this alſo it appeareth, that neither Grecia nor Germany from this forth, (being but parts, as other provinces, and having no intereſt in Rome) are to be accounted heads, but horns with the other.

The ſecond character (or firſt, if we count not the number one) of theſe ten kings, is, from their preſent condition in John's time. *They had received no power or kingdom as yet;* for then they were under the emperor's civil government, and were not called kingdoms but provinces; they had not gotten their crowns; whereby it appeareth they are to riſe of that empire, implying, 1. That this empire was to be weakened, and that many were to withdraw their temporal ſubjection from it. 2. It implieth, that that belonged to the laſt government of that empire, (theſe horns then are to be kingdoms, which were before provinces) which is inconſiſtent with that head that then was. 3. They are deſcribed by their attaining government, ſet out, 1. In its ſhortneſs, *an hour*, that is, during the ſhort time of the ſeventh head they muſt continue: for they are cotemporary with him. This ſheweth, that tho' there be changes in governments, none is long. 2. This power is cotemporary with the beaſt, *It is one hour with the beaſt*, that is, the beaſt *that was, and is not*, which is the laſt head. The meaning is, they ſhall be in the time of the ſeventh head his coming to an height, as he groweth up to be an head, and to heal the former wound, chap. xiii. ſo ſhall they grow up to be horns to him, and ſo continue during his abſolute dominion. In a word, they are ſuch kings as were not under the ſixth head, ſo that when we ſee ſuch horns, we may know what head they grow from. They were horns before to the former head, but they are crowned horns to this. 4. They are deſcribed by the manner of their becoming horns to the beaſt, ver. 13. in two, that is, *They ſhall willingly give their power and ſtrength to this beaſt*, which is the eighth, verſe 11. They were before kept under by force unto the ſixth head; now, this is the difference, they ſhall give it, even though they have temporal dependence on none, yet ſhall they willingly be at the diſpoſal of this laſt government, and be devoted to it, as much as to the former. 2. They ſhall do this unanimouſly, *They ſhall have one mind to it*, ſo that though many provinces ſhall become kingdoms, yet all of them ſhall join upon another account to further, by their power and ſtrength, the will and greatneſs of this laſt head, or king, as if they were horns to him: and by this we may ſee wherefore they are called horns, it is, becauſe this beaſt hath the uſe and command of their power and force, and they become horns, not as kings, or when they become kings, but when they give their power to him, and as they grow, as it were, out of his head.

5. They are ſet out by the particular wherein eſpecially their power ſhall be exerciſed, and wherein he ſhall eſpecially employ them, *they ſhall make war with the Lamb:* all the heads, under whatſoever form, are blaſphemous, and ſo all the horns crowned, or uncrowned, are inſtruments of perſecution now as before. There is here, 1. Their work, it is warring, that is, a direct, though not intended, oppoſing of Jeſus Chriſt his truth, goſpel, or people, and, upon the matter, a contrarying of him, whatever they thought, as Paul did, Acts ix. and the Scribes and Phariſees, Acts v. fought againſt God, by intention of their work, tho' not of the workers. 2. Conſider the object of it, *it is the Lamb;* chap. xi. his prophets are foughten with; chap. xii. the woman and her ſeed, that keeped the commandments of God; chap. xiii. it is the ſaints; and chap. xvi. it is God's ſervants. Here the Lamb, to ſhew how Chriſt is foughten againſt, and what it is, it is in his miniſters, members and ſervants, as Paul perſecuted him, Acts ix. for all is one? Michael, chap. xii. and the woman, have common wars and enemies; he with his miniſters, ſaints and ſervants, are one Chriſt, 1 Cor. xii. 3. Conſider the actors, it is *theſe*, i. e. *the horns:* chapter xii. 7. It was the devil and his angels; chapter xi. 13. it is the beaſt, that is, the head: and chap. xviii. 24. there the blood is found in the whore, here it is in the horns. All concur, and ſhare both in the ſin and judgment, but diverſly, the devil is the fountain and root that this enmity floweth from, the beaſt is his ſpecial lieutenant and general; the horns are the more immediate actors, by which the beaſt puſheth; the whore not only concurreth, but ſhe bloweth the hatred, and puſheth on by advices, laws and edicts, tho' ſhe, as an eccleſiaſtic body, put none to death herſelf, yet do ſhe put the horns to it, who are her immediate executioners, this then is a character of theſe kings who ſhall give their power to the beaſt, theſe ſhall perſecute Chriſt's true church for a long time in favours of the whore and beaſt.

The laſt word added is, concerning the ſucceſs, the victory is on the Lamb's ſide, and the reaſons are ſubjoined. He is victor in his members and cauſe theſe three ways, as chapter xii. 1. When in their ſufferings they continue ſtedfaſt and overcome, even to the outwearying of the perſecutors by their patience, who were more inſlaved and overcome in acting than the other in ſuffering. 2. He overcometh by keeping truth, and a church in the world, in the deſpight of them, that the prophets and their teſtimony in deſpight of them, and the church ſpreadeth and multiplieth, even under them, as under Diocleſian, &c. 3. He overcometh by bringing ſad judgments on his perſecutors, and bringing his church through, and ſetting up the witneſſes, as chap. xi. when they ſeemed loweſt, and by making the world ſubject to the goſpel in the end, either by moving them to yield, or by cruſhing them, and reſtraining them from doing any hurt to it, he thus prevaileth.

The reaſons added to confirm us of the certainty of the victory, that it cannot be otherwiſe, are from two grounds, 1. From the excellency of the captain, he hath no equal: for he, even this Lamb, is *Lord of lords, and King of kings*, words ſetting forth eſpecially his Godhead, in three, 1. His ſovereignty and abſolute dominion over all. 2. His power, being able to command all: none ſo great a king as he. 3. His right; for juſtice is on his ſide: theſe titles agree to Chriſt properly as God, ſo chap. xix. and yet as Mediator in ſome reſpect, for the behoof of his church, he is made head over all things, Eph. i. 22. and hath all power over all, not as over the elect, who are in a peculiar way committed to him, but in a deputation for their cauſe and good; he hath a delegated power as Mediator, to reſtrain, puniſh, raiſe, up, or caſt down kings, or kingdoms, in the world, as he thinketh meet. The firſt eſſential to him as God, the ſecond voluntary, and given to him as Mediator.

The ſecond reaſon is from the nature of his warriors or army, none ſuch are in the world, they are ſuch ſoldiers as are all ſaints. 1. *Called*, that is, effectually ſo, from the eſtate of nature to grace, and ſo ſanctified. 2. *Choſen*, they are both choſen comparatively, and choſen and made uſe of by him, to be for the glory of his grace, and therefore cannot be overcome by any power, but be conquerors. 3. They are faithful; honeſt at the heart, and real in his ſervice, which is an effect of the former two, they ſtick conſtantly unto him; which ſheweth wherein their victory moſt conſiſteth, that is, in their faith, 1 John v. 4. though even in ſuffering, yet they quit him not: theſe are excellent qualifications. Now, if it be aſked, if there be none other on Chriſt's ſide but ſuch, what ſhall be accounted of all hypocrites, though formal

professors? *Answ.* 1. They may be for Christ in one thing, as in a point of truth, yet against him in the end; they are not for his glory; therefore are not on his side; for he that is not so with him, is against him. 2. All unrenewed men are Christ's enemies; and though they, sometimes, in some particular, side, or seem to side with Christ, yet it is not done as service to him, as in Judas who followed him for the bag, and those that preached him out of envy, Philip. i. 15. yet are they but serving themselves and not Christ, and will be ready to do him an affront when it serveth their purpose, as Judas did. He hath no followers, indeed, but where grace maketh them, nor will he count men by their practice, but by their ends and motives. Neither can one be faithful to the end, but one that is called and chosen: others are one time or another utterly foiled, to the shame of their profession, and he will own none such as soldiers to him.

Before we come to the application, two things would be cleared, 1. If this prophesy be fulfilled? 2. How it is fulfilled? Or, when? And much bustle is here made by Papists, who make their main demonstrations from this, that Antichrist is not yet come, because, say they, this is not fulfilled.

1. That this is fulfilled, may be evidenced thus. *Arg.* 1. If these provinces that were in John's time without kings, be now kingdoms, having their own governments, without any dependence on the Roman empire; then this prophesy is fulfilled; but the first in experience is truth: look through all the nations that were provinces then, not one of them is subject to the Roman emperor now, (save it be Germany alone, which yet indeed is not so) but all have their several indepedent kings now of a long time.

The connection of the *major* may be made out, thus, that change that hath since come upon the Roman empire, and the up-setting of these many new kingdoms and kings, which had no kingdom then, is either no change at all, but consistent with the head, that then was; or, it is some other change than is held forth in this prophesy; or, *Thridly*, It is the very same spoken of here; but neither of the first two can be said: not the first, that the empire is the same now that it was then; for the Spirit putteth a clear difference betwixt this last state, chap. xiii. and the first under emperors, that, in the first, the heads were crowned; here, the horns: and, if there be no difference betwixt provinces subject to one empire that ruleth over them all, and provinces made kingdoms ruling within themselves without any dependence on that head, there is difference in nothing, (for kings cannot be *horns* to the emperors, seeing they act not for him, but for another: thus the civil head hath the crown on the head, not on the horns: the ecclesiastic head hath them on the horns, it is consistent with it to have sovereigns for his vassals, which cannot be in a civil state: for so either the kings were not free *in civilibus*, or the governors that were the head, should have no power over them) and so one empire in one body, and many kingdoms in distinct bodies, cannot be one. Neither can the second be said, that that change on the provinces or kingdom (here called *horns*) is another beside this: for there are but two states of these nations, one then present, while they were subject to that temporal head, the other to come, in which they are to have dominion of themselves. There is not, again, two states of their becoming kings, but one; and the denying of the one, inferreth the other. Thus the horns are either uncrowned, that is, subject to the Roman empire; or, they are crowned, that is, have gotten a kingdom, according to this prophesy; but they are not now in the first state; therefore they must be taken in the last consideration. And, as there is no head or government intervening among the supreme governments, set out by *heads*, so must there be no intervening state of these kingdoms admitted betwixt what then was, and the fulfilling of this, whereby their future state is set out.

Arg. 2. If the kings now in being have the very characters mentioned here, then they must be the fulfilling of this prophesy: but, in the event, they answer it in all things. *Ergo.*

1. There are now many kings, which were not in John's time. 2. There are arisen out of the old provinces of the Roman empire. 3. They are under another head and governor than was then in John's time, and so cotemporary with that which was to come. 4. They have all jointly given their strength to be serviceable to the power, that is, the seventh head, which was then to come. 5. They have been making, for a long time, in all their dominions, war with the saints; therefore this must be fulfilled, seeing all things prophesied have directly come to pass.

Arg. 3. It may be made thus, if the last go-

vernment of Rome be come, which is called the eighth or ſeventh, then this propheſy is fulfilled; for they, that is, the laſt government of Rome and theſe ten kings, are cotemporary together, they receive power *one hour with the beaſt*, and give it to him; and therefore the making out, that any of them is come, is the making out that both are come: but it is cleared before, and is clear alſo in itſelf, that he is come, thus, if that government or governor of Rome be come, to whom the ſeparate kings, that refuſe temporal ſubjection to the emperor, ſhall give jointly their power and ſtrength, upon another account, then the ſeventh and laſt governor of Rome is come: for that beaſt which they gave their power unto, is the beaſt which John ſaw in the viſion (which, verſe 11. *was* then, *is not*, *but was to come.)* But truth and experience telleth us, that another governor ſitteth now at Rome, than ſat in John's time, unto whom theſe kings have given their power; therefore the laſt governor muſt be come; and ſo this propheſy, which is cotemporary with it, muſt be fulfilled.

Arg. 4. This propheſy muſt either be fulfilled, or it is to be fulfilled; but not the laſt; therefore the former. If theſe kings, or kingdoms, be to ariſe, they muſt either riſe out of the kingdoms that now are ſeparate, or out of that which is called the empire; but neither of theſe can be. Not the firſt; beſide, that there is no warrant to expect a ſecond revolution of theſe kingdoms after the firſt, which this would infer. I ſay, *Secondly*, They muſt ariſe to be in this conſideration *horns* (to the beaſt) and kings which were not kings before: now, all theſe provinces, having had this long time kings, cannot then be looked on as the ſubject out of which theſe to come muſt ariſe. Beſide, if there were a twofold ariſing of kings out of the empire, and the one not diſtinguiſhed from the other, the ariſing of theſe ten kings would not be a diſtinguiſhing character to diſcern this beaſt, and ſo to make him known by his horns, which yet is the ſcope here. And therefore this character of ten kings can agree to no other ſtate or head but this laſt.

Nor, 2. Can it be out of the bounds of that now called the empire: for, 1. There is not that extent of dominion, as to furniſh ten kings, eſpecially to make ſuch a great dominion, as Antichriſt's is ſuppoſed to be, of all people, tongues, and nations. 2. If it were no broader, then Antichriſt's might and power, by his horns, would be no greater than what is now the empire.

2. It appeareth, that ſuch muſt be kingdoms in this ſtate, as were provinces before; (the horns are the ſame, or near the ſame, uncrowned or crowned.) But Germany was never more provinces than one, or at moſt two, as was France and Spain; therefore there is no proportionableneſs here to make ten crowned horns out of that which was but one, or at moſt two before. Beſide, our reaſoning is not only, that there are now ſo many kings, but ſo many who acted as horns to another power, as the provinces were wont to do; and they are not horns to theſe called emperors; they muſt therefore be ſo to another head; and, if ſo, then this propheſy is fulfilled.

The manner of fulfilling muſt be looked in theſe ſteps, 1. Conſtantine, after the heathens are caſt down, removeth from Rome, and leaveth that ſeat void; ſo, after that, he is not to be accounted an head, as is ſaid on chap. xiii. 2. After that, anno 412, and 455, the barbarous nations, Goths, and Vandals, did over-run the weſtern empire, and ſeven times took Rome; by this the empire is diſtracted, and ſeveral provinces are either now become kingdoms, by the continuance of theſe nations in them, or by others aſſuming ſupreme power over them, without dependence on the emperor. 3. During which time, this laſt head driveth his deſign of exalting himſelf, and making an image of that empire which was fallen. 4. By the means mentioned, chap. xiii. 12, &c. all theſe kings are brought to worſhip that beaſt, and receive his mark, more or leſs, as he aroſe, till he came to that height, to diſpoſe of kingdoms, ratify elections, under the title of *Archontos tou coſmou*, as Carion obſerveth, unto which, in time, they came generally to ſubmit, and accordingly poſſeſſed many of their kingdoms. 5. When God had diſcovered him to be the Antichriſt, ſome of thoſe, who once had given their power to him, have withdrawn it; and we are to wait and pray for the fulfilling of this more, as the former of giving their power to him hath been already fulfilled.

Out of what is ſaid, we would draw three ſorts of uſes. 1. From this, lay down ſome concluſions: and the firſt is, if this propheſy be fulfilled, the Antichriſt is come, and not to be looked for to come; for, if the horns be, there is the head, and if the head be, then is the beaſt; the one is not

without the reſt: but that is verified, *ut ſupra. Ergo.*

Bellarmine de Roman. Pont. lib. 3. cap. 4, 5. alledgeth, that this is not yet fulfilled, becauſe, ſaith he, the ariſing of theſe ten kings ſuppoſeth a dividing among them of the Roman empire, wholly to its annihilating, which, ſaith he, is not yet done, ſeeing there is one who is called and acknowledged Roman emperor. *Ergo.* Antichriſt is not come, ſeeing he is not removed out of the way, who then did let, 2 Theſſ. ii. as he expounds that place. *Anſw.* There is a twofold removing of the Roman emperor to be conſidered, 1. Wholly, in deed and in name, ſo as not to have ſo much as a ſhadow. 2. In deed, though not in name, yet full as to the removing of him from being head to that empire which was, and ſo from being the ſixth head; this far is neceſſary; for two heads cannot be together; and, ſo long as he ſtood as a head, he ſtood in the way, and was a let to the coming of the ſeventh; but that there ſhall be no name, that is not neceſſary; for, when the emperors, the ſixth head, came, conſuls were in name at Rome, but were not heads, becauſe they wanted the former power, and were ſome way ſubject to another head; and, therefore, though the name of emperor be, yet if he be not now head to that empire, if the horns act not for him now, but acknowledge another head, then he is not head, if he have not that ſeat, Rome, nor command not that ſeven hilled city, he is not head, nor can he be, who wanteth the horns. But that there be not the name of an emperor, (if he be not an head, but rather a horn, giving his power to this head, or beaſt, with the reſt, and as uſeful to him as any) this far, the removing of the empire out of the way is not neceſſary; but the former is: and that this is fulfilled, appeareth in three ſteps concurring to it, 1. That the blaſphemy of the Roman emperors, as ſuch, is ceaſed. 2. That the ſeat of the Roman empire is paſſed from Rome. 3. That the command of the provinces, as it were his horns, is plucked from him: for theſe three qualifications, (viz. to have a name of blaſphemies, to ſit at Rome, and to act the provinces as horns) are neceſſary to a head of this beaſt. And that all theſe are removed from the Roman emperor, is clear in experience, and granted by Bellarmine, as lib. 3. de Pont. Rom. cap. 5. and elſewhere. 1. That the emperor hath no command over Rome, but that the Pope exerciſeth there both ſwords, civil and eccleſiaſtic, of a long time. 2. That the force of his power, or of that empire, is alſo broken, he aſſerteth, lib. 2. cap. 2. de Pontif. (*Praedicit enim Johannes hanc Babylonem ruituram, quia Romanum Imperium delendum erat, id quod jam fere factum eſſe cernimus: an non enim Gothi, Vandali, Longobari, Romanae urbis Imperium fere ad nihilum redegerunt?* proving Babylon, here ſpoken of, to be Rome, he giveth that for one reaſon, that it was brought down, as is propheſied in this chapter. If then by him the Goths invaſion was the fulfilling of this propheſy in that part, then one utter aboliſhing of the name of emperor is not neceſſary; for then it was: and if that be the fulfilling of this propheſy, and ruin which was to come, then it is not now to come: and if that ruin be not the thing propheſied here, then doth not that event contribute to prove this Babylon to be Rome, on whom that event fell, which is yet Bellarmine's ſcope; but, indeed, upon the matter, we will find this emperor but an horn, whatever his name be thus. If he command but a province of the Roman empire, which was before ſubject to the governors of Rome, and have no command at, or over Rome, or any other province, then he is not an head, but an horn; but that is truth.

2. If he himſelf be acted by a power that now reſideth at Rome, as other kings are, then he is but an horn to that head, and not an head himſelf; but that is clearly true in many experiments, whereby the emperors have been commanded by Popes. See Platina in vit. Greg. 9. He commandeth Frederick the emperor to go to the war, under pain of excommunication; and this is after done: yea, in providence, we will find no province have more dependence on the Popes now of a long time, 1. They have deſpoſed them, and transferred their crowns. See in the life of Greg. 7. called Hildebrand. 2. They have waſted their lands; and the order of election by electors is attributed to them, 3. Particularly, their election dependeth on their ratification, and he is not emperor, but king of the Romans, till he approve it. Hence, in the decretals, it is ſaid, *Papa habet poteſtatem a Chriſto, Imperator vero a Papa.* 4. They have employed their ſtrength for the Popes, and for perſecuting the church, (as Sigiſmund in burning John Huſs, Hieronymus of Prague;) therefore, if they be horns, they are not heads, if another be head, and acknowledged by

theſe kings the horns, then the emperor is caſt off, and hath caſt himſelf off from the dignity of being head and ſupreme governor of that empire, which only was neceſſary. In a word, then the removing of the Roman emperors from being head to theſe kings, is neceſſary; for they cannot be horns to him and another beaſt alſo, and thus far it is fulfilled: but the burying altogether the name, which hath not, nor pretendeth to abſolute power over theſe kings as the former did, that is not neceſſary. And thus far the emperors weakneſs and inability to head the beaſt, and the Pope's authority and dominion to do it, is confirmed by what Bellar. aſſerteth, de Concil. lib. 1. cap. 12. where (having laid it down as neceſſary, that the Popes muſt call general councils, becauſe only his dominion is of that large extent) he addeth this laſt, *non poteſt hic*, i. e. *Imperator, viz. cogere Epiſcopos unius provinciae venire ad concilium: nam neque Itali, Hiſpani aut Galli, Imperatori ſubjiciuntur, ſed ſuos habent reges aut principes:* which is enough to clear what we aſſert: and in his 3. lib. De tranſlatione imperii, it is his work to prove the emperor to be the Pope's vaſſal, as holding all his authority from him: and indeed that this keepeth the name of an empire, and which now is, it is merely from their bulls and conſtitutions, if their hiſtories be true.

A ſecond concluſion we may draw from it, is this, that the Pope is Antichriſt, thus, that ſupreme power of Rome which ſhall govern it after the temporal empire is broken, and the provinces become kingdoms, and to which theſe kings ſhall give their power, and act in perſecution of the ſaints for his behove, that is Antichriſt; but the Pope or Papacy is that power, that now ſince the fulfilling of this propheſy hath born rule over Rome, and to whom theſe kings have given their power. *Ergo.* he is Antichriſt: and this far it is fulfilled in him.

A third concluſion is, that Rome, under the Pope, is the whoriſh church here meaned and ſet out, thus, that Rome which is ſupported by the beaſt with the ten horns crowned, or to whom ten kings that ariſe out of the Roman empire give their power, after the emperors ceaſe to be an head to them, that Rome, or Rome ſo conſidered, is the whore, for the beaſt and the horns are cotemporary, as the head of which they grow, and the beaſt and the whore are cotemporary, as the rider and the beaſt which carrieth her: if therefore the horns and beaſt be cotemporary, ſo muſt the whore be with them alſo: for *quae conveniunt untertio conveniunt inter ſe;* but Rome or the Romiſh church, for theſe thouſand years paſt, is the Rome governed and ſupported by that power, or beaſt to whom theſe kings have given, and, for a great part, do yet give their power, therefore this Romiſh church is the whoriſh Antichriſtian church deſcribed here. And that which Bellar. ſaith, de pontif. lib. 3. cap. 5. confirmeth this, that theſe ten kings, which to him are yet to ariſe, ſhall hate Rome and burn her, *&c.* for what Rome ſhall they burn? Is it not Rome the whore, called ſo, verſe 17. Therefore it is not heathen Rome, but Popiſh Rome that is the whore, for ſhe is the whore whom they ſhall deſtroy; and when they ſhall deſtroy her, viz. her, to whom for a time they have given their power, after they have withdrawn it from the emperor who formerly had it.

A fourth concluſion is, that Antichriſt is no ſingular perſon, and is to continue longer than three years and an half, thus, if that beaſt or power, to which the kings that have received power and kingdoms out of theſe provinces, which were once ſubject to the Roman empire, ſhall give their power, be Antichriſt, then he is no ſingle perſon, or of ſhort continuance, the connection is clear from this, becauſe that power or government, which hath theſe kings for horns, hath already deſcended for many ages, and through many generations, and there remaineth yet ſome things to be fulfilled before the final overthrow thereof; but the former is truth, that beaſt is Antichriſt. *Ergo,* Or thus, if the ſeventh head that ſucceeded to that government of the Roman empire which was in John's time, and acteth the kings that have ſince gotten power) be for more generations than one or two, then Antichriſt is not of ſo ſhort continuance; neither is that defection, whereof he is head, ſo ſoon to paſs, (for, Antichriſt is that laſt government) but experience telleth the former is true, that another power than what was in John's time hath ſitten at Rome, and ruleth it, and acteth theſe kings that once were of it, for more ages than one. *Ergo. &c.*

A ſecond ſort of uſes are, to retort or wipe away ſome objections of Bellar. againſt this, whereby he would prove that Antichriſt is not yet come, and therefore that the Pope is not to be accounted this head, for, this is the ſureſt way for them to guard him, for no other can be imagined to be here underſtood but he, if he be come. 1. He doth therefore

lay down ſix demonſtrations, as he calleth them, to make out this, that Antichriſt is not yet come. The firſt, lib. 3. de pontif. cap. 4, 5, &c. is this, the goſpel hath not as yet been preached through all the world, which, ſaith he, muſt be, before Antichriſt come. Therefore he is not to come, the place cited, is, Matt. xxiv. 14. *Anſw.* This goeth upon a twofold wrong ſuppoſition, 1. That all the world is to be taken there collectively, *i. e.* for every nation, and not diſtributively, *i. e.* for many, or moſt nations, as is uſual. So, Rom. xi. 18. *Their ſound is gone out to the ends of the earth.* The ſecond is, that it ſupponeth that (whatever it be) to be ſpoken in reference to Antichriſt's coming, which is expreſsly ſpoken of in reference to Chriſt's ſecond coming (which is long after Antichriſt) or before the end of Jeruſalem; which two ends are only ſpoken of there.

His ſecond demonſtration, which is the main, is taken from that, that the Roman empire by Antichriſt, or before him, is utterly to be aboliſhed, 2 Theſſ. ii. ſo he that letteth muſt be taken out of the way; but, ſaith he, this is not done. *Anſw. Ut ſupra*, concluſion, 1. The Roman emperor muſt be taken from ſitting at Rome, and from governing over the provinces as an head of that empire; that is granted: that is, the ſixth head muſt be removed out of the way, before Antichriſt the ſeventh come; but this is done long ſince. There is no emperor at Rome, nor that hath any dominion there, nor hath any horns or kingdoms now under him; he is therefore no head to this beaſt, therefore this will not prove that he is not come: for it is one thing to be called a Roman emperor, another to be indeed a head to this empire, as it is repreſented by this beaſt; this muſt head the ſeven hilled city, govern over the provinces, as having ſo many horns to ſerve him, and have names of blaſphemy upon them; whoever ſitteth at Rome thus qualified, whatever his name be, he is head: for we try the changes of theſe heads, neither by name only, nor by the ſeat only, but by the thing, that is, by power and dominion over theſe provinces, exerciſed from Rome as the principal ſeat of that government: and although the want of Rome will not prove one to be an emperor, (which is Bellarmine's argument) yet the want of it will prove him to be none of the heads here repreſented, even as the having of Rome will not infer it, except there be alſo dominion over the provinces, (for which cauſe we did formerly deny the application of this to the Gothiſh kings) now, it being clear in itſelf, that the emperor's power extendeth neither to Rome, the head, nor to the provinces, the body of that empire; and it being clear alſo, that both theſe agree to the Pope (though upon a different account, as the place formerly cited from Bellar. de Con. lib. 1. cap. 12. confirmeth) it muſt therefore follow, that the emperor, notwithſtanding of the name, is not to be accounted head, but the Pope who poſſeſſeth the thing.

His third demonſtration is, that the two witneſſes, Enoch and Elias, are not yet come, who muſt propheſy under Antichriſt, and be killed by him, as chap. xi. *Anſw.* Beſide what is ſaid there to that fable, it is confuted here, thus, theſe are the witneſſes that teſtify againſt Antichriſt, and ſuffer by him all the time of the reign, (as verſe 6. they are martyrs, &c.) But many, ſince his appearing, have teſtified againſt him, and ſuffered under him, therefore they, and not Enoch and Elias, are the witneſſes intended; and ſo they are not to be looked for.

His fourth demonſtration is refuted by this alſo, Antichriſt ſaith he, ſhall raiſe great perſecution, but that great perſecution hath not come as yet; for theſe that ſuffer by the Pope are but few, and by one puniſhment, viz. fire. *Anſw.* If this of the kings making of war againſt the ſaints be fulfilled; then that perſecution is fulfilled; but that is cleared to be fulfilled, chap. xiii. by the Pope and his horns.

For the greatneſs of a perſecution, we may conſider it in theſe four, 1. In the cauſe wherefore, when not only, the full omitting of truth, but the leaſt oppoſition to error or abſtaining from their idolatry, or countenancing, or performing any allowed duty, is a ground of perſecution, that is a great perſecution, but never were there leſs cauſes laid hold on than have been by the Papiſts and Popiſh kings, as the having of a New Teſtament in a known tongue, queſtioning any of their ceremonies, eating fleſh in lent, yea, not anſwering clearly to their queſtions, witneſs the rules of inquiſition of Charles the V. his edict, and Francis the I. with all their proceedings in Germany, England, France, &c. 2. We may conſider a great perſecution in the effects of it, that is, the number and kind of theſe perſecuted. Hath there been more than in the wars of Bohemia againſt the Waldenſes; in Holland,

England, France, &c. againſt old and young women, and ſucking children, ſick miniſters, judges, &c. Bellarmine himſelf, de notis Eccleſiae, lib. 4. cap. 18. reckoneth 100,000 Waldenſes ſlain at one time, and many battles wherein alway, ſaith he, Papiſts prevailed. 3. If we conſider perſecution in reſpect of the cruel acts of it, can there be more and greater than the bloody maſſacre in France, the fifty thouſand that were put to death in Holland, cities burned? &c. Read that ſentence of the parliament at Aix in France, executed by the lord Oped againſt Merindol, and others in Provence, as Sleidan hath it, lib. 13, et 16. what hath the inquiſition done? The king of Spain to cut off his own ſon, and Philip the II. the confeſſor of his father Charles the V. and burning him when he was dead (as is uſual to them) breaking faith from thirſting after their blood, as at Conſtance in the caſe of Jerome of Prague, and John Huſs? When the emperor had given them a ſafe conduct, what horrible cruelties and villanies have been uſed, caſting their dead bodies on the ground, abuſing women, ſpoiling, baniſhing, ſtarving, and tormenting, is known to theſe who have read that hiſtory of the perſecutions? 4. It is great, in reſpect of the heat and malice it cometh from, and is to be reckoned by that: if they put a few to death, it is either becauſe they know them not, or were by God and external cauſes reſtrained: but their attempts and laws (as that of Alphonſe his making of it treaſon to deny the Pope or converſe with a Lollard) bulls, incitements and promiſes to engage others to deſtroy Proteſtants, do hold out their humour. Now, laying all theſe together, we will find no perſecution hath been longer, ſorer, or more cruel than this. This demonſtration therefore is full, and proveth him come, as all the reſt, and may be retorted, if this perſecution be fulfilled, then he is come. More may be ſeen on chap. xiii.

The fifth and ſixth demonſtrations are alſo found faulty by this; the fifth aſſerting that Antichriſt is but to continue ſuch a ſhort time, three years and an half, and the ſixth, that the end of the world is to come forty-five days after his ruin: both which are falſe, not only from what is ſaid, but from this, this propheſy holdeth forth ſundry things to be done after his ruin, which in ſuch a time cannot be done; yea, all a thouſand years, chap. xx. are after his begun height. See chapter xx. verſe 4. and therefore his time is not to be of ſo ſhort continuance. And if that reckoning were true, then at that time any that could account Antichriſt's riſe or end (which to them is palpable) might know the preciſe end of the world before it came, which is falſe: and whereas he, lib. 3. cap. 8. de pontif. maketh the continuance of Antichriſt longer than the preaching of the two witneſſes, to reconcile that of Dan. xii. of 1290 days, (which ignorantly he applieth to Chriſt) is manifeſtly falſe: for, the term of forty-two months, is, chap. xiii. ſet to the beaſt, as 1260 days are to the prophets, the one is bounded with the other: therefore that place belongeth not to this. Beſide, if he continue a month longer, (as that count maketh him) then it ſhould not be juſt three years and an half; and ſo themſelves add a month more, and break the time which they call definite.

Thus theſe demonſtrations rightly followed, will not only make out that the Antichriſt is come, but that the Pope is he.

A third ſort of uſes are practical. And, 1. See here changes of kingdoms, and the ſhortneſs of them, and God's ſovereignty in timing them, and ſtinting them, even thoſe who are moſt oppoſite to him. 2. Our Lord, the Lamb, verſe 14. is an excellent and glorious perſon: it becometh us to have high thoughts of him, to tremble before him, and to be comforted in him. 3. It is comfortable that this perſon owneth his people, ſo that they have common cauſes, friends and adverſaries, he and the choſen are on one ſide. 4. Our Lord Jeſus getteth always the victory, the ſide he is on loſeth never in the end; and as to his end, whatever it ſeemeth to be before men, it is good to be on the Lamb's ſide, the victory there only is ſure. 5. The weight of the victory lieth on Chriſt's concurrence, becauſe he is on that ſide; he is the great Captain by whoſe conduct the victory is allenarly attained; his ſoldiers need not fight, but ſtand and behold his ſalvation, as chapter xix. they follow in white, not fighting but triumphing; it is the Lamb that overcometh all enemies, and therefore only is armed.

LECTURE VI.

Ver. 15. *And he ſaith unto me, The waters which thou ſaweſt, where the whore ſitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.*
16. *And the ten horns which thou ſaweſt upon the beaſt, theſe ſhall hate the whore, and ſhall make her deſolate, and naked, and ſhall eat her fleſh, and burn her with fire.*
17. *For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beaſt, until the words of God ſhall be fulfilled.*
18. *And the woman which thou ſaweſt, is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*

THE angel having deſcribed the beaſt, proceedeth to interpret the *woman*, which was the other part of the viſion, ver. 3. and of the angel's undertaking, verſe 7.

This *woman* is deſcribed by three things, 1. By her greatneſs, ver. 15. 2. By her ruin, verſe 16, 17. 3. By a more particular character from her preſent ſtate, and the ſtate of the world then; ſhe is a city that ruleth over them, ver. 18. The firſt expoundeth that, ver. 1. of *many waters*. The ſecond, her judgment, which he undertook. The third pointeth her out, as it were, with the finger. Other circumſtances of *colour*, &c. are clear from the ſcope, and need no interpretation; therefore are omitted.

The woman (which is called *a city*, verſe 18.) hath her *ſeat on many waters*, verſe 1. that is, not on floods, ſaith the angel, but *they are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues*, that is, many divers nations, and a large dominion: ſhe is ſaid to *ſit on theſe*, not as ſhe ſat in a peculiar manner on the ſeven hills; but, 1. By commanding and ordering theſe; it is called, verſe 18. *a ruling over the kings of the earth*. 2. By her gathering treaſures and ſtores from theſe, whereby the pomp and greatneſs of that city is ſupported. 3. She maketh uſe of them for upholding of her pomp; and this is applied to a *city*, becauſe her rulers that ſit in her did ſo command, and it was by their commanding and ruling, that this affluence did redound to her; and becauſe the ſpecial ſupreme court ſitteth there, as it is ſaid of Babylon, that ſhe *dwelleth on many waters*, Jer. li. 13. which is expounded, in part, in the following words, by her *abounding in treaſures*, people and nations are compared to *waters*, 1. In that they are of a flowing, changeable, and unſtable nature, like water, Gen. xlix. And, 2. In that they are an unſure, though a promiſing-like ground to build a ſtate upon: Babylon hath theſe, that is, many nations for her foundation.

The ſecond character, is the ruin of this whore, which is ſet forth in theſe three things, verſe 16. and confirmed by the anticipating of an objection, verſe 17.

1. This ruin is ſet out in the degrees and greatneſs of it, *They ſhall hate her, make her deſolate, naked, and eat her fleſh, and burn her with fire:* which words ſhew not only indignation at her in the inſtruments, but hold out the particular ſteps it ſhould proceed by, 1. To *hate her;* the love and reſpect that once they bare to her ſhall now be turned to hatred, as is ordinary after luſts, as in Amnon to his ſiſter Tamer. 2. They make her *deſolate and naked*, that is, diſcover her ſhame, and withdraw their former ſupply, whereby ſhe was ſupported in her pomp. 3. By executing judgments in a moſt vindictive and horrible manner, *eating her fleſh and burning her with fire*, which importeth her utter ruin.

2. This ruin is ſet out by the actors in it, viz. the *ten kings*, formerly deſcribed, and ſet out by *ten horns*, even theſe who once committed fornication with her, and did partake in her ſin; theſe, or ſome of theſe (as it is ſaid of the thieves that were crucified with Chriſt, they caſt the ſame in his teeth, *i. e.* one of them) ſhall be the performers of this judgment: for ſome of them continue to lament her ruin, chap. xviii.

3. The time when they ſhall do it, it is implied to be *after they had given their power a long time to the beaſt*, and committed fornication with this whore, they ſhall begin to withdraw from her, and perform this execution on her. This is gathered, 1. From the ſeries of the ſtory; theſe ten kings, firſt, when they got kingdoms, gave their power to the beaſt, and make war with the Lamb, at that time they love the whore, and do ſin with her; but afterwards they change, and withdraw:

for, it is not done in the time of their giving power to the beaſt (for they cannot give their power to the beaſt, which ſupporteth the whore, and make deſolate the whore that the beaſt ſupporteth, at one time.) Neither do they fight with the Lamb and whore at one time, but when God draweth them from their firſt practice of adoring this whore, with whom at firſt the kings did commit fornication; then this is done. 2. It is drawn from the 17. ver. where theſe kings, in giving their power to the beaſt, are limited unto that time, in which God ſhall have performed his word, of this whore's deluding the world, and then he who put that argument in their hearts to the one, is to make the alteration and change to the other.

The confirmation of this, or the anticipation, is, verſe 17. where it may be objected, how can theſe kings be inſtrumental in her ruin? Are they not ſlaves to the beaſt? And hath not the beaſt and ſhe one ſtanding, ſo that, who ſuſtaineth the one, muſt alſo ſuſtain the other? Or, how can it be expected, that they who have been ſo long, and ſo much drunk with her fornications, ſhall, after this, abandon her?

The angel, removing the objection, addeth a confirmation, thus, it is true, they ſhall give their power jointly to the beaſt; but, 1. That is not for ever, but *till God's word be fulfilled*, which is the word of the great ſpiritual deluſion that was to come, 2 Theſſ. ii. during Antichriſt's height, and his continuation for ſo long a time, but no longer, when that is fulfilled, the caſe will alter, as the word *until*, Gen. xlix. 10. implieth the removing the ſceptre from Judah then; ſo this *until* importeth a change, when the propheſies foreſaid are fulfilled. 2. That *giving* of ſuch a joint *power willingly*, is not by accident, nor is it of itſelf ordinary for ſo many kings to give their power to another: but, ſaith he, even this is of God, who, in his ſecret wiſdom and juſtice, that he may bring about what he hath determined on an unthankful world, and might puniſh both kings and others that received not the truth, and received it not with love, 2. Theſſ. ii. Thus far he gave up, and ſhall give up, theſe kings to that delution, ſo to do till his ſpiritual plagues be at an end. And he that made them ſo extraordinarily do the one, can, and will, make them alſo do the other: and, therefore, as we have ſeen the one part fulfilled, viz. God's putting it in their hearts thus to agree to be his ſlaves; ſo may we be confirmed to expect the other, and take the one as a pledge of the other, (though it be unlikely) that is, that the ruin of Antichriſt and Rome then, (which is the object of the fifth vial) ſhall be, by that part of the world, kings and nations over which he longeſt had his dominion. By which it is clear, 1. That Rome's fall is by ſuch kings, (or thoſe who, by God's providence, ſhall be rulers in theſe parts) it is not unlikely alſo, of theſe races or lines that have been deluded, becauſe in that, God's power (who ſwayeth kings, to love or hatred, as he pleaſeth, Prov. xxi. 1.) is moſt remarkable thus, and their remembrance of their former deluſion wakeneth that hatred moſt. 2. It is clear alſo, that that ruin is after their partaking of her ſin. 3. That ſinning with Antichriſt, is a ſpiritual plague, and judicial ſtroke from the Lord. And it would look otherwiſe exceeding mad and irrational-like, to conſider what ſlavery many kings, emperors, &c. have been put unto by Popes, if the Lord's righteous judgment be not conſidered; which ſheweth the riſe of this deluſion. 4. That the Lord hath a ſpecial hand in executing ſpiritual plagues, as well as bodily. This, as here it is ſet down, is ſinful, and the elect are kept from it, verſe 8. And it is called committing fornication ſpiritually, yet the Lord putteth it in their hearts. There is more here than a bare permiſſion, *He giveth up to a reprobate mind*, Rom. i. 26. thoſe that abuſe nature's light, and ſo to deluſion, 2 Theſſ. ii. 11. thoſe who abuſe the light of the goſpel, which is as a plague inflicted by his juſtice; and, till it be at an end, there is no off-bringing of theſe kings until he doth it, who putteth them on. This his *will is fulfilled*, 1. In puniſhing the world by this Antichriſtian whore, till ſhe be at an height. 2. In puniſhing her, in both which, theſe kings are inſtrumental, and he over-ruleth them in both, but diverſly: in the laſt, which is good, he formally inclineth them to it, and effecteth it: in the former, which is evil, 1. In his providence, he not only ſuffereth ſuch objects, and temptations, as induce to that ſlavery to occur, but actively bringeth about many things in outward diſpenſations, which being of themſelves good, are yet ſtumbled on by them in their corruption, ſo as they are furthered thereby in this enterprize. 2. He withdraweth grace, courage or means, to oppoſe that temptation, and ſo they yield. 3. He over-ruleth their blindneſs and corruption, ſo as to accept of, and fol-

low this temptation, rather than another, and ſuffereth it to come to ſuch an height, and at ſuch a time, and not at any other. 4. As they would not be ſubject to him, ſo he giveth them up, and judicially (as that ſlavery is a puniſhment) hardeneth them, and dementeth them in that ſubjection, (as Nebuchadnezzar was put to live with beaſts) and give them up to the hand of that deluſion, as to an executioner of his juſtice, till what he intended to be accompliſhed. If it be objected that this, *to give their power to the beaſt*, is ſinful, and therefore cannot be attributed to God. *Hugo Card.* anſwereth, that it is pleaſing to God, not of itſelf, but by reaſon of its conſequents, viz. the many advantages that he bringeth out of their malice.

The laſt thing whereby the woman, or whore, is deſcribed, is, by her preſent dominion: it is, ſaith the angel, *that great city that beareth rule over the kings of the earth.* Where, 1. This woman is, that is, repreſenteth a city or town literally and properly, ſo, even as in the angel's expoſition *horns are kings, heads are hills, and candleſtics are churches*, chap. i. &c. For the angel being now to cloſe the characters, he giveth the cleareſt laſt, thereby to difference this city from all others, which is the ſcope. 2. It is that great city, that city which for greatneſs, power, ſplendor and dominion, was then eminent amongſt all the cities of the earth, from which others, in all places, thought it a priviledge to be called citizens, eſpecially in Judea, viz. Rome ſtiled alway with the epithet *great*, or *that great*, &c. pointing out a ſingular city, known for eminency to be ſo. 3. It is more particularly characterized by its preſent condition, it is the city that ruleth in the preſent time, not only over provinces and common ſubjects, as verſe 15. but over kings, depoſing, forfeiting, making and unmaking, at their pleaſure, kings and tetrarchs; and that not any great city, but that city, which moſt ſingularly was acknowledged to be ſo: which words ſet out ſome city eminent for a preſent, large, ample and ſovereign dominion beyond ordinary, in this time when John wrote: which, by theſe characters, joined with the former, and the angel's ſcope, which is to make this whore known to John, maketh evident, that Rome is hereby deſigned, being that city, which, in its governors, and by its authority, then ruled over all the world, (as it was called, for its greatneſs, *orbis Romanus*) See Luke ii. 1, 2. Auguſtus commanded all the world to be taxed. At this time ſent they armies through Europe, (almoſt all) and a great part of Aſia and Africa, as they did their proconſuls, governors and legates in their name: for the empire, after Auguſtus until Trajan, was in its greateſt height, during which time, viz. in Domitian's days that preceded Trajan, John ſaw this viſion. At that time they uſed to put up kings, and transfer kingdoms, as they did *Herod the great*, Matth. ii. and *Herod the tetrarch*, Luke iii. *Agrippa*, Acts xxiv. beſide what is recorded in human hiſtory. So that no king about them durſt declare an heir or ſucceſſor, but by their conſent, or proſecute any war but as they permitted. But ſometimes they would make a word make the greateſt kings deſiſt, as C. Popilius Laenas his word to Antiochus lying at Alexandria, when he had required him to ceaſe from that war in name of the Romans; and when Antiochus ſaid he would adviſe, he drew a line about him, and command him to anſwer before he paſſed it, which he did, and removed.

From what is ſaid, we conceive it clear, that all theſe characters do evidence Rome to be this city, and that it cannot be a city figuratively taken for a multitude of wicked. The adverſaries *ut ſupra*, have confeſſed it, lect. i. For it is called a city in the angel's interpretation, (which muſt be properly taken) it is qualified by ſuch circumſtances as difference it from other cities, and pointeth it out to be properly applied, as a diſtinct city from other nations of the wicked, over whom ſhe commandeth, and ſo muſt be Rome.

2. That by this apoſtaſy or whore, cauſing others to drink of her fornications, alſo is underſtood the grand apoſtaſy or falling away under Antichriſt, 2 Theſſ. ii. or the Antichriſtian kingdom (at leaſt the chief ſeat thereof) cannot be denied, ſeeing it is the moſt ſingular defection that was then to come, ſuch as Antichriſt's is, and ſuch a defection as is ſupported by this beaſt, whom all adverſaries acknowledged to be Antichriſt. Therefore that defection is corruptly applied by Bellarmine, to the Jews rejecting of Chriſt, which preceded Paul's writing of that: for, 1. He ſpeaketh of it as a falling away yet then to come; otherwiſe his argument, that the day of judgment was not ſo near, becauſe that was not come, would be of no force. 2. He ſpeaketh of it as a falling away,

which ſuppoſeth them once to have had the profeſſion of Chriſtianity. 3. He extendeth it to be univerſal upon all that received, not the profeſſion of the truth, but received not the love of the truth. 4. That it hath a ſpecial relation to Rome, his expreſſing the Roman empire, as that which then letted, (and that under an obſcure name) doth evince; and what can that deluſion then elſe be, but what is *admiration* here? They muſt therefore both relate to the ſame Antichriſtian defection, ſeeing there are not two, but one.

3. Here it is alſo clear, that this beaſt (in the laſt notion, viz. the eccleſiaſtic) is the Antichriſt: for he is the head of this great defection, and ſupporter to it, and ſupreme ruler of this apoſtatizing dominion, which can agree to none other, but to him: and, ver. 11. he is *autos*, an eminent perſon, or ſucceſſion of perſons, as the reſt, as he is called *o antichritos* elſewhere.

The ſcope being then, 1. To point out Antichriſt. And, 2. His kingdom, or worſhip-church, or congregation. Out of all that is ſaid, we may, by reſuming theſe characters, gather theſe two concluſions.

1. That the church of Rome, for theſe many years paſt, hath been, and preſently is, the whoriſh church aimed at here, and Antichriſt's ſeat and kingdom. 2. That the Pope, or who poſſeſſeth the papacy in his complex dominion, is the very Antichriſt particularly characterized here.

The making out one of theſe, maketh out both, they are ſo linked together: for, if the beaſt repreſent the Pope, then certainly the whore muſt be that church, which is ſupporteth by him, and whereof he is head, *et contra;* if Rome be the whore, he that is head to her, muſt be this beaſt and Antichriſt. I ſhall make out both, by reſuming the character and properties applieth to both, thus, if the characters be ſuch that are given to this beaſt, as are peculiar to Antichriſtian; or, if the properties whereby this woman is deſcribed, be ſuch as are peculiar to his kingdom, then the Pope is Antichriſt, and the Romiſh church the Antichriſtian church and his kingdom: becauſe (which is the reaſon of the connection) all theſe agree only to them; but the firſt is truth. *Ergo.* Or, if all the characters, ſpoken and propheſied of concerning this beaſt and whore, do belong to, and be fulfilled in, the papacy and the Romiſh church, then is he Antichriſt, and ſhe the Antichriſtian kingdom; but that theſe properties agree, and are to be applied to them, may be made out, 1. By induction and recapitulation of the properties themſelves, which belong to Antichriſt and his church ſeverally. Then, 2. By pointing out the time or ſtate in which they are applicable to them.

Antichriſt getteth theſe characters here, 1. That he ſhall be a Roman governor, and govern the ſeven hilled city, and that many nations and kingdoms of the earth beſide ſhall give him reverence, verſe 7. Compare verſe 8, 9, 10, and 11. 2. That he was not then in being in John's time, verſe 8. 3. That he was to ſucceed to that government which then was, viz. the emperor's and Caeſar's at Rome, verſe 10. 4. That he was not to have any new ſtate of empire, but to continue that which was, but in another form, verſe 9. Therefore was he, in ſome reſpect, before John's time, verſe 8. 5. Though he be to ſucceed to the ſix governments, and in ſome reſpect, (as to the abſoluteneſs and ſeat of his dominions) is to be one body with the Roman empire, yet is he not to be ſo upon a civil account, but on an eccleſiaſtic, in which reſpect he is another, not yet come, getting admiration, or adoration, having kings under him, who hath abſolute temporal power of themſelves, which they could not have, were he a civil prince, verſe 8, 9, 10. So this empire is two beaſts on this ground, and the laſt head two in this reſpect, yet, indeed, but one. 6. This Antichriſt is too much reverenced, and that in more than an ordinary civil worſhip, verſe 8. 7. He ſhall be no ordinary civil power, nor warranted eccleſiaſtic power, neither in name nor thing, but ſhall ariſe out of the pit, verſe 11. 8. He ſhall have kings devoted to him, and to be at his beck, yea, ſuch as were not kings then, but ſince have gotten kingdoms out of the ruins of the old Roman empire, verſe 12, 13. 9. He ſhall eſpecially make uſe of them to perſecute, ver. 14. 10. When his fall approacheth, ſome of theſe ſhall be his enemies, and God will make uſe of them for his ruin, verſe 16. 11. The fountain of that dominion, and ſeat of that governor, ſhall be the chief city that then ruled over all, viz. Rome, ver. 18, &c. 12. She carrieth all with much ſtate, pomp and profanity, verſe 4, 5.

Theſe are the properties aſcribed to Antichriſt

whereby he may be diſcerned, 1. In his nature, he is eccleſiaſtic or mixed. 2. In his riſe, unwarranted of God. 3. In his welcome, with great reſpect in the world. 4. In his ſeat, Rome. 5. In his dominion, nations, and kingdoms. 6. His different and twofold conſideration of authority, civil and eccleſiaſtic, whereby he is ſet out as a twofold head, and by a double type.

Theſe things being clearly properties of Antichriſt; and uncontrovertably applicable to Rome, the queſtion is, whether to Rome heathen before Conſtantine, (as Bellarmine and Alcaſar ſay) or, to Rome, under the Antichriſt that is to come, as Ribera, Viegas and Cornelius a Lapide ſay, or, if it be applicable to Rome preſently, as of a long time it hath been?

For fixing on the time or ſtate, whereto this, that ſhe is Antichriſtian, and her governor Antichriſt, may be applied, conſider theſe, 1. This muſt be true of Rome, after, and immediately after the ſixth government that then was, ceaſeth to be a head to Rome, and a ſeventh ſucceedeth to that which then was. 2. It is when kings, which were not then, ſhall riſe out of the Roman empire, that is, when provinces ſhall withdraw their civil dependence from Rome, and have kings of their own. 3. When Rome hath turned from a church, to be an whore. 4. It is before its fall, and while the kings, or any of them, giveth him their power, that is, while he is an head. But all theſe agree well to the Pope and Rome, and are fulfilled in them, as they have been now for many years paſt, and cannot be applied to Rome heathen, nor can be expected to be fulfilled afterwards.

The application is made out in the expoſition of the words. There are three things I ſuppoſe, which eſpecially will ſtick, 1. That, I ſay, Antichriſt is not properly a civil prince, but hath other pretences, and upon an eccleſiaſtic account or pretext aſſumeth this greatneſs: which is clear, 1. Becauſe he headeth the whore, which is not a civil body, but a degenerate church and whore: and, therefore, he muſt be ſuch a head as ſuiteth that body, and carrieth on that defection. 2. He ruleth over kings, without infringing, as they think, their temporal dominion, which ſaith, that he muſt do it on an eccleſiaſtic account. 3. From this proceedeth the admiration the world hath of him. And, 4. This ſheweth, why, in this laſt conſideration, he is looked on as two beaſts, and two heads, becauſe he is formally eccleſiaſtic, but really civil. And, in this reſpect, is not only a diſtinct head, verſe 1. but a diſtinct beaſt, verſe 11. which could not be, if he had not an eccleſiaſtic conſideration differing from theſe who went before him.

The ſecond objection is, that Rome is not Antichriſt's ſeat, becauſe, ſaith Bellarmine de pont. lib. 3. the kings that are Antichriſt's vaſſals deſtroy it. *Anſw.* 1. Then Rome is the whore at that time; for they deſtroy her not till ſhe be the whore; and ſo muſt it not be Rome heathen that is the whore? for they deſtroy her not till the beaſt's ruin be advanced to the fifth vial, as is ſaid, chapter xvi. and in the xvii. until ſhe be a whore. But that Rome is his ſeat, appeareth: for, 1. He headeth Rome, ſitteth on, and ruleth as the ſix heads, or governments, before him did; but they ſat at Rome, and had it for their ſeat. See chap. xiii. 4. He got the dragon's ſeat, and ſo it is common with the reſt to him to be king of that city. 2. He ſitteth ſo as by him, and in him, Rome keepeth up her former beauty, and rule over all the nations about, during his being governor: but that cannot be but by his ſitting at Rome. 3. There is no other reaſon can be given, why in Antichriſt's deſcription there ſhould be ſo much mention made of Rome, and ſuch particular deſcriptions of the ſibneſs between him and her, except that he is head to her, and ſupporteth her, and ſitteth eſpecially in her, and that Rome the prime ſeat is named for all the body of the kingdom, as metropolis thereof, as afterward. 4. That Rome is great during his time, is clear, but no other way but this of his keeping court there, can be imagined, as that way whereby ſhe ruleth over nations, and propagateth abominations to them, but that in him, and by him ſhe did it, as by her former governments in part, who ſat there before. Add, 5. That Rome is ſome otherwiſe his ſeat, verſe 7. than other nations are, over which he governeth; and what can that be but this. 6. What other reaſon is there, why Rome is more plagued, as ſharing deeplier in Antichriſt's ſin than others, chapter xviii. but this, that it was his ſeat? And, 7. Why would the fall of it be ſo much lamented, as ſpoiling all their former market, and ſcattering their court, if it had not ſitten there? chap. xviii. Beſide, Bellarmine's argument miſtaketh; for it is the kings, who once were Antichriſt's followers that deſtroy Rome, but

not while they are ſo, do they it, but when Antichriſt is diſcovered, then is his ſeat hateful to them, whereas his followers lament it, chap. xviii. and, therefore, have no hand in it.

The third objection hath more ſhew of difficulty, that theſe cannot be applied to the Pope, becauſe he *aroſe not from the bottomleſs pit*, i. e. unwarrantably, but hath God's warrant, as they alledge, by being Peter's ſucceſſor, *Ergo*. For anſwering this objection, we are not to inſiſt in ſcriptures, whereby the dominion and office uſurped by the Pope is overturned, nor on vindicating of theſe ſcriptures which they make uſe of, in pretending that: (let that be ſought from common places) it ſhall ſuffice us to aſſert, that, in ſcripture, there is no warrant, 1. For the titles or names that he aſſumeth to himſelf, there is no ſuch order or officer mentioned by Jeſus Chriſt, in his houſe, as Pope *Pontifex Maximus*, *Vicar of Chriſt*, *Univerſal Paſtor*, *his Holineſs*, *Biſhop of Biſhops*, &c. there is no ſuch ſhadow in the word, as may warrant theſe.

[This word *Papa eſt vox ſyracuſa*, ſay divines *idem ſignificans quod pater*, *a pappas:* it was in old given to all eminent biſhops, as to Alexander and Athanaſius, biſhops of Alexandria, apud Athanaſium; to Auguſtine, by Jerom in his epiſtles to him; and to Cyprian, epiſt. 3. where Pamelius ſaith, It was a word of honour amongſt heathens, as was that of Pontifex Maximus: whereof was ſpoken, chap. xiii. See alſo Ruffin. Symb. and Pamelius on him.]

2. We may aſſert, that for the matters wherein they exerciſe this power, as to diſpenſe with oaths, and obligations of men to others, to diſpoſe of, and transfer kingdoms, crowns, titles, &c. to diſpenſe with unlawful marriages, conſtitute new holy days, and change worſhip, ſend to purgatory, and bring from it, as they imagine to indulge and give pardon even for ſins to be committed, to abſolve and forgive magiſterially ſins (without reſpect to the qualifications laid down in the word, but) to ſuch as perform ſuch ſuperſtitions, and obey ſuch and ſuch orders; to canonize ſaints, (and thereby, as it were, to create gods to be worſhipped) and many more ſuch things which cannot be reckoned. All theſe being contrary to the word of God, and for the moſt part not committed to any, but reſerved to the Lord as his own privilege, we may clearly aſſert that power in ſo far to be from the pit, ſo as if an angel would profeſs it, or preach ſuch doctrine, we might account him accurſed; yet ſuch is the power pleaded for in the Pope. And in many of theſe things is acknowledged to be but *ex communi conſuetudine*. See Azor, Inſtit. moral. lib. 6. pag. 561.

3. If we conſider it further, in the ſpecial properties, wherewith they qualify the Pope's power, as it is eſſential to his threefold crown, twofold ſword, and keys, we will find it of the ſame nature: as, 1. That it is extenſive and univerſal over heaven, by opening it, ſetting up ſaints to be worſhipped, commanding angels (as ſometimes they have done in their bulls) over purgatory, and the whole world; over the dead, to torment or relieve them at their pleaſure; and over the living in all things, ſpiritual and temporal; in order to theſe, over perſons eccleſiaſtic, as they call them, and civil, as kings, emperors, ſtates, to command them to war or peace, as they pleaſe, and to carry as ſupreme to them all, ratifying emperors and elections or not, and diſpoſing of their crowns to others; yea, over conſciences they uſurp a dominion. 2. That it is abſolute, ſupreme, and independent, not only of all kings, but of all councils and decrees to which he giveth authority, or not, as he pleaſeth, and they are of authority, or not, as he confirmeth them; yea, to all traditions, and even to the ſcriptures and word of God, without which the ſcriptures would not be by them accounted ſo, as Bailius, Catech. part 1. quaeſt. 12. *Aliter non magis fidem adhiberet Matthaeo quam Tito Livio*, that is, otherwiſe he would not give more faith to Matthew than to Titus Livius; and generally all affirm, that being their maxim, that the church giveth authority to the ſcriptures as to us, and that no decree of the church hath authority but from him. Hence, according to the plenipotentiary power, doth he conſtitute ſuch books to be ſcripture, or not, and hath added many to the former canon, which preceding councils have not acknowledged, and he doth confirm traditions and fables to be accounted truths as he pleaſeth; and yet, in all this, ſo ſovereignly, as none may ſay to him, what doſt thou: *Vid. gloſſ. in Extravag. Joan.* 22. *De conceſſione praebendae, &c. tit.* 4. *cap.* 2. *Papa gaudet plenitudine poteſtatis, nec eſt qui audeat dicere, Domine, quid iſta facis?* But, 3. All this he doth, ſay they, not only authoritatively, but infallibly, as being free from eating: for his determination is the firſt rule: and it is ſo, becauſe he hath determined ſo, and this

determination is not only extended to matters of faith but of fact, as the canonization of saints, confirming of traditions, &c. in which, say they, he cannot be mistaken.

Now, all these being pleaded for, as essential to this power, without which, they say, he could not be Pope; and so essential, that they make them, for the most part, fundamental to Christianity, (at least to the members of that church) and yet they being clearly, not only without scripture, but against it; yea, to the overturning of scripture, (for it were of no great consequence to have scriptures or not, if all these were true) and it being true, that the Lord hath never committed such unlimited power to men, (no not the high-priests under the Old Testament, who were singularly types of Christ) there is strong presumption here, that the power founded on such pillars must not be of God; for, if no such power be committed to any, then there can be no Popes warrantably, because these are essential to him; and indeed, except it were received to be so, his power has fallen long since; for, no commission can be shown for many of his practices, but tradition and constant custom of their Popes, as their casuists must confess. Hence it is, that generally in their schoolmen and casuists, the authority by which they determine their conclusions, is often not scripture, but such a decree of such a Pope, and the like.

4. If we consider their outward grandeur and pomp, that emperors and kings must kiss their foot, hold up their stirrup, walk at their foot, give them homage, that they must be so waited on and carried, that they should be covered while others bareheaded, &c. All which can have no shew in the word, nor example in Christ, nor his apostles; but being (as Baranius granteth in the place cited, cap. 13.) derived from the heathens, and the manner of their Pontifex Maximus; it must be looked on as coming from the pit, as its pattern did: which is our fourth assertion.

5. If we will consider that office, by which the Pope of Rome pretendeth jurisdiction over all the church, suppose it but in ecclesiastic lawful things, whereby recourse ultimately is to be had to him, as the only exercised of that power and office; we may assert, that there is no warrant in scripture, that such power as an universal jurisdiction over all the church on earth, should be given or doth belong to the Pope of Rome; I mean, even a supreme power in lawful things, (laying aside their infallibility, and absolute unlimited power in all things, which yet in this case cannot be separated) there is no warrant in scripture expressly, or that can be drawn from it, to prove that there is such a power of due belonging to the bishop of Rome, so that whoever shall come to possess that see, shall be invested with this catholic charge. And if it be not warranted in scripture, it is not a plant of our heavenly Father's planting, but must have its rise from the pit, that without his warrant will meddle so liberally with his matters, and in such a manner. Neither can it be thought that the scriptures, which are full in the enumeration, qualifications, ordinances, callings and directions, &c. of pastors, yea, of deacons, in particular charges, should yet be altogether silent in this supreme officer, wherein, as to them, as Bellarmine saith, the ground of Christian faith is contained, (Praefat. ad lib. de Pont. de summa rei Christianae agitur) and there applieth what is spoken of Christ, as the corner-stone of the building, Isa. xxviii. 16, &c. to the Pope.

We shall therefore endeavour to make out, that as his power is not warranted by the scripture under the former four considerations, so neither is it in respect of this, viz. of the person that assumeth it: and therefore, as to him, must be still from the pit, seeing he hath no warrant for it, even as they would suppose it in the bishop of Constantinople, or any other, if they should assume this power without just title. This we should hold at, only that the scripture giveth no power to the Pope of Rome, or warranteth not him to exercise that absolute and universal dominion, civil or ecclesiastic, which he pretendeth unto, and this will be sufficient unto our purpose: for, if it fall, as to that person, all that pretended power will fall; for, the question is, if the Pope be Antichrist? and therefore we are to enquire particularly, if they, for their deep medling in Christ's affairs, as his vicar, can give any warrant to bear the truth of that conclusion, viz. that he hath right to it: it is not needful simply to enquire, if there be any such at all? it is enough if it be not competant to him, then he usurpeth: and seeing, as Bellarmine asserteth, no other can pretend warrant to that power, then if it fall in him, it will fall altogether, seeing Christ hath not shown his will to whom it is due; and we are not to account so of any without his warrant, which

cannot be produced, &c. and therefore this aſſertion hath more in it than at firſt appeareth. For, if it be an office of Chriſt's inſtitution, then he hath determined, who is to be accounted ſo, for warranting his people's obedience; but this he hath not determined. *Ergo.* &c. And on the contrary, if he hath given in the ſcripture no denomination of the office, nor qualification of the officer, no limits to the power, no rules of election and ordination, nor grounds whereby the church may diſcern who it is to whom ſuch obedience is due in particular, and to none other, then it cannot be warranted by him, (who hath done it in all other officers fully, and was not inferior to Moſes in ordering the affairs of his Father's houſe) but according to this aſſertion, the former is truth, the Pope can give no ſuch evidences either as to the office, or the perſon exerciſing it. *Ergo.*

In proſecuting this, ſeeing we have the negative, the probation is incumbent to them, and to make out the affirmative, that not only there is ſuch a power, but that the Pope hath gotten warrant for him to exerciſe it; and it will not be ſufficient to argue, no other can claim it, therefore it belongeth to him. We would deſire to know from ſcripture, what more juſt title he hath to it than others: otherwiſe any biſhop might ſo argue, no other can claim it, therefore its mine. This will ſerve rather wholly to overturn it, as is ſaid; and till from ſcripture they make out their affirmative, the aſſertion will ſtand good: yet we ſhall a little deſcend to conſider their grounds and conceſſions in this point, and we will find that the weight of their concluſion, that this power doth belong to the Pope, doth reſt upon traditions, fathers, councils, and eſpecially the Pope's own determination.

That the ſcripture giveth ſuch a power to the Pope of Rome, before it can be believed as of divine authority, theſe three muſt be made out by it. (See *Greg. de Val. de objecto fidei, diſp.* 1. *punct.* 7. *part.* 37.) 2. That Peter not only as an apoſtle with the reſt, but as head and ſupreme over all the apoſtles, was furniſhed with, and eſtabliſhed in that authority by Jeſus Chriſt, over them, and the catholic church, as their head. 2. That Peter ſat, and had this authority, and exerciſed it at Rome, as peculiarly the ſeat of his authority, and that this ſupremacy in Peter was no extraordinary privilege to his perſon, but to be derived and continued in his ſucceſſors to the end of the world. 3. That only the Pope of Rome is Peter's ſucceſſor in this ſupreme power, and that by divine authority it belongeth to that ſeat, and to him who ſhall ſit there.

To paſs the firſt two (which yet can never be made out by ſcripture) the third alſo muſt be made out, or it will not bear this concluſion, that it is of faith to believe, that the Pope is inveſted with this power; but now there is no ſhadow of this in ſcripture; and therefore when Bellarmine cometh to make out this, he foundeth it on theſe four, viz. 1. Apoſtolic tradition. 2. General councils. 3. Popes decrees or ſtatutes. 4. Fathers and antiquity; but none of theſe are ſcripture: and in effect, all reſolveth on this, the Pope appointeth himſelf head and ſucceſſor: *Ergo*, He is head, &c. For it is well known, nothing is received as apoſtolic tradition, but what he decreeth to be ſo. Nor are any general councils accepted as infallible, but ſuch as are approven by him, and ſo far as approven, See Bellarmine de authoritate Concil. lib. 2. cap. 1. And Gregorius de Val. caſteth traditions and ſcripture, but as owned by his authority, much leſs then will they admit any father that differeth from him. Hence ſundry councils and acts (as that of Chalcedon and Conſtantinople, in theſe acts wherein Conſtantinople was equalled to Rome) are rejected by them on this ground, becauſe they were not approven by the Pope. So it runneth in this circle, whence hath the Popes this power; or whence is it clear to us, ſo as to warrant our faith, that they have that power? They anſwer, in ſum, from themſelves, or from ſuch grounds as reſolve on themſelves, becauſe, ſay they, their power is ſuch as determineth all theſe things.

If it be aſked further, how getteth theſe Popes power to determine ſo; and what warranteth us to reſt on their determination? Say they, becauſe they are Peter's ſucceſſors in that univerſal office. If it be aſked again, how is that made out, that they are his ſucceſſors? Say they, by ſuch determinations, we know him to be ſo. In a word, theſe determinations give him power, and he giveth them power to do ſo, and ſo about: yet this is the main thing, viz. the application of this power to Rome, and particularly to the biſhop thereof, that is here queſtioned: and though poſſibly it were not requiſite that all the ſucceſſors ſhould be

otherwiſe known than by hiſtory; yet the *ratio ſucceſſionis*, as Bellarmine calleth, it, viz. why the biſhop of Rome hath this peculiar authority beyond others, that would be known if it be either of divine or catholic faith: which two are ill diſtinguiſhed by Bellarmine.

If it be objected to them, Theſe cannot ground a divine warrant to make a thing be believed to be *jure divino*, or of divine authority: becauſe, to make a thing certain to us, *certitudine fidei*, and to be believed as ſuch, there is a twofold certainty required, 1. An objective ſureneſs or certainty in the thing itſelf. 2. Subjective, in them that believe, that is, ſuch certainty as proceedeth from ſuch grounds as cannot cauſe a miſtake, or fail in any; which no human teſtimony can bear out: and, therefore, only God's teſtimony can give warrant for this. Bellarm. de Pontif. lib. 2. cap. 12. ſeeing this, doth go about to diſtinguiſh between a divine warrant, or elſe, *de jure divino*, and to be of catholic faith: and ſaith, though it be not the firſt, (*forte*, ſaith he, as loath to ſpeak it out) yet it is the ſecond, and to be believed under pain of damnation, upon the grounds foreſaid. His words are, *Succeſſio eſt a Chriſto, qui uno actu conſtituit Petrum et ſucceſſores ejus in Pontificatu ad finem mundi; ratio ſucceſſionis, i. e. cur Papa ſuccedit, quia eſt Romanus, non eſt ex prima inſtitutione Chriſti (quia alibi potuit Petrus fixiſſe) ſed ex facto Petri;* and calleth it not improbable to be ſettled at Rome by Chriſt's command. But our queſtion is, how it is evident, that this Pope hath ground to claim that ſucceſſion? Or, *Quomodo conſtat eum Petri ſucceſſorem eſſe?* To which this ſaith nothing: therefore, addeth he, that though *forte Papa Romanus, quia Romanus non ſit jure Divino, tamen ſi quaeratur, Si Romanus Pontifex jure Divino ſit caput omnium Eccleſiarum? Omnino* (ſaith he) *reſpondendum eſt, quia nihil aliud requiritur quam ut ipſa ſucceſſio ſit jure Divino*; yea, there is more required before that ſucceſſion can be believed to be peculiar to that ſee, ſeeing they go together, and this would be evidenced to be ſo: for, we aſk not now, if there be ſucceſſion, but why the Pope carrieth himſelf as ſucceſſor, and where is his warrant? At laſt it reſolveth in traditions and councils, which are ſo, and to be eſteemed ſo, becauſe he decreeth them ſo; and this is the ground of this article of their faith unto them, notwithſtanding that the ſcripture is ſilent in it: which yet containeth all things needful to eternal life, John v. 39. xx. 21. And, for that inſtance that Bellarmine giveth of a catholic faith, as diſtinguiſhed from a divine faith, viz. whether Paul left a cloak at Troas or not; it is true, this was a truth before Paul wrote that epiſtle, and is yet a truth, not ſimply neceſſary to ſalvation in itſelf; yet, conſidering it as revealed in the word, the believing of it now is of divine authority, and hath a divine warrant, which it would not have had, if it had not been in the word, although it had been a truth in itſelf.

So that, when it cometh to this, that the Pope is ſucceſſor to Peter, that is only eſſayed to be proven by authorities. See Greg. de Val. diſput. 1. De objecto fidei, punct. 7. pag. 35. and 36. Cajetan Tom. 1. de primatu Rom. Eccleſ. all of them abuſing ſcripture, to prove that Peter was univerſal biſhop, and that this office is to continue: yet, for the third, that this office belongeth to the Popes of Rome, they can ſay nothing, but from ſuch grounds as Bellarmine aſſerteth, or, at the moſt, as Gregor. diſp. 1. puncto. 70. pag. 35, 36, 37. teſtimoniis omnium locupletiſſimis, &c. For, as Cajetan obſerveth, theſe four things muſt concur to make out this ſucceſſion of the biſhop of Rome to Peter, 1. That Peter himſelf was at Rome. 2. That he was at it, not as Paul was, in the capacity of an apoſtle, but as ſettled biſhop of that ſee of Rome peculiarly, and as head of the church. 3. That Peter lived in that ſeat, and died there. 4. That he willed his ſucceſſors in that particular ſee and dioceſs of Rome, to be his ſucceſſors in the headſhip of the whole church, and ſo that by his deed he annexed his catholic power unto that particular ſee, that whoever ſhould ſucceed in the one, ſhould alſo be inveſted with the other, (beſide what is needful to be cleared concerning every biſhop, that he was lawfully choſen that ſucceeded in that ſeat.) Now, there is none of theſe four that is hinted at in ſcripture. Therefore they come to ſay, as Cajetan, ibid. that this is not *ex Evangelica Inſtitutione*, but atteſted unto by Peter's deed in dying there, and confirmed by an hiſtory (or fable) out of Egiſippus, who ſaith, that Peter going out of Rome to eſchew martyrdom, did meet Jeſus Chriſt, who told Peter, that he was going again to Rome to ſuffer, from which Peter drew, that Chriſt willed him to return to die at Rome, which he did: from whence riſeth the ſtrength of all the arguments of Papiſt's for the biſhop of Rome's ſucceſſion to him, as builded

on a ground of faith, becauſe this ſtory holdeth out Peter acted by Chriſt: and it is a tradition confirmed by the Pope, as they are alledged by Greg. de Val.

From this unclearneſs it ariſeth, that it is very hotly diſputed, even amongſt the learneſt of the Papiſts, whether this concluſion, that the Pope of Rome naturally is Peter's ſucceſſor, be *De jure divino*, or *jure humano eccleſiaſtico:* and *Dominicus in ſota*, in 4. *ſent. diſt.* 24. *queſt.* 2. (others alſo are of this mind) by many reaſons aſſerteth the laſt. And when Greg. de Val. condemneth it, he doth it but on theſe grounds, becauſe the fathers and the Popes have not left that undetermined until now, and that ſuch an opinion as that of Soto doth ſuppoſe them to have determined nothing, he ſaith, *vetus patrum traditio videtur*, and when it is but *videtur* in tradition, what certainty is there? which determination, as is ſaid, reſolveth ſtill on the Pope himſelf: and ye may ſee more directly this queſtion handled *apud Greg. de Val punct.* 7. page 37. 39. where he doth ride the circle clearly, ſaith he, how know we this particular Pope to be Peter's ſucceſſor? he anſwereth, by his determinations in faith and manners. If ſecondly, it be aſked how we know his determinations to be right? *Anſw.* Becauſe he hath that privilege, who is Peter's ſucceſſor; for Peter's ſucceſſor hath only that power to determine ſo. From which it appeareth, that the authority of this Pope, which is pleaded for as neceſſary to ſalvation, not being from the word, muſt be from the pit, and yet looſe; or, queſtion this ſucceſſion, and all faileth, it is ſo eſſential a ground of Popery, that is thus ſupported. And though there be uncertainty ſufficient from unclearneſs in all theſe four, which Cajetan laid down; yet if we add a fifth principle of theirs, viz. that before we acknowledge the Pope's conſtitutions, or the force of his deeds, we muſt know that that particular biſhop of Rome hath lawfully ſucceeded to Peter; for as Gerſom ſaith, and Greg. de Val granteth, they ſupponed this, *talis papa rite ſucceſſit petro per electionem.* And here the certainty is as Greg. de Val ſaith, *certudine morali, et non fidei*, and as Gerſam, *hoc eſt humana cognitione ſolum cognitum;* yet if this fail, the obedience cannot be claimed, becauſe if he be an infidel or woman (as once there was, as Platina their own writer, *in vit.* John 8. teſtifieth) ſuch are incapable of orders, or if the election be unlawful, it is nul, they have no promiſe of aſſiſtance, in which caſes, obedience is not due; or if there be a ſchiſm (as for 70 years there was between two Popes, one at Rome and another at Avignon, and neither of which had a ſucceſſor, but a third was choſen, while both theſe ſees were filled,) it will ſtill be uncertain in ſuch a caſe whom to acknowledge, or how to account of their determinations, while this be cleared, ſo intricate is this great ground of their faith.

If any ſhould ſay, this ſucceſſion is but a matter of fact, and needeth no more but human teſtimonies of hiſtories? *Anſw.* It is not queſtioned only about perſons or facts, but the *ratio* why, or fact that maketh Rome have this precedency; and if the concluſion be of faith, the premiſes that is drawn from it muſt be ſo alſo; or if the premiſes be human, then they can bear no concluſion of faith: for the concluſion muſt be ſuitable to them.

Again, 2. It is ſuch a fact as groundeth our faith, as to them, and can any human ſtory work a divine faith, ſuch as the hiſtory of Moſes and the acts of the apoſtles do? And therefore if the ſtory of that fact, in its matter, had been of divine faith, neceſſarily to be believed, our Lord would not have neglected it. 3. It is ſuch a fact as the clearing whereof groundeth this ſupreme officer to them; and take away that fact, and he is away, he dependeth ſo on it; and ſo a deacon or paſtor, ſhall give more warrant for this place from ſcripture than the ſupreme vicar, which is very unſuitable: and yet without ſuppoſing it, their Pope is not Peter's ſucceſſors. Such then as is the proof of the fact, ſuch is the ground of this concluſion. 4. There being (as all the forecited authors ſay) an identity now between the biſhop of Rome and the head of the church, that who is the one, he neceſſarily, and no other, is alſo the other, then whatever authority is given for appropriating that privilege to the ſee of Rome, there muſt be that ſame authority for the continual ſucceſſion of Peter (ſeeing they are one, and the one deſcended by the other;) but that being ſuch, as is before ſaid, neceſſarily then the ſucceſſion, which is his only and allenarly, and hath never been pleaded for (as they ſay) by any other, muſt then be of that ſame authority, reſting on the ſame grounds of councils, fathers, Popes, cuſtoms, &c. which can never give a dying warrant. And whatever be truth of Peter's being and dying at Rome (which certainly in a great part was fulfilled before Luke

wrote the Acts) yet is it not for nought that the Lord hath left it unrecorded, that we might thereby know it was not neceſſary to be believed: and therefore any concluſion which ſuppoſeth it to be neceſſary to be believed, is not neceſſary, except we rub on the wiſdom of God, who recordeth leſſer things than this. And therefore a thing may be truth, and yet not being written, is not neceſſarily to be believed, but with a human faith, as other hiſtories at the moſt, whereas no article of faith, is thus grounded: becauſe the object of our faith, or the *ratio*, why we believe ſuch a thing, is not ſimply becauſe ſuch a thing is truth (for many facts are truth, which we are not obliged to believe) but becauſe God hath revealed ſuch a thing, and teſtified it to be a truth, faith reſting on that teſtimony and giving credit to him that teſtifieth.

The other concluſion, viz. that the church of Rome, for theſe many years paſt, and preſently, is the whore intended here, the ſame argument will make it out. If the Rome that is preſent, be the Rome unto which all the properties here mentioned do agree, and at this time, then this Rome is that whoriſh church: but unto the Rome that now is, and hath been this many generations paſt, agree both the properties and time in which it is to be fulfilled. *Ergo.* The properties given to this whoriſh church are four, 1. That ſhe hath her court at Rome, and ſitteth on the ſeven hilled city, yet alſo exerciſing dominion over many other nations, verſe 15. but differently, ſo as Rome is here peculiar in another manner, the fountain and ſplendor of that kingdom. 2. That it is Rome turned a whore, and fallen from the ſimplicity ſhe had, and to ſuch an apoſtaſy of which Rome is the head and chief ſeat. 3. That it is Rome claiming a ſuperiority over all thoſe of her aſſociation or apoſtaſy, and driving her errors to them, and they keeping a dependence on her, ſhe is, (and it is when ſhe is) *mother* and metropolis of all, verſe 5. 4. It is Rome then when the emperors hath ceaſed to command it, and another government or governor hath ſucceeded him there. 5. It is when ten kings are withdrawn from the empire, and have given their ſubjection to Rome on a ſpiritual account. She that is Rome in that caſe is the whore: but all theſe properties agree to Rome, not as heatheniſh but as Popiſh, and to the Pope as head thereof: and therefore this is neither to be applied to Rome heatheniſh, nor to an Antichriſt to come, but to that which is. And it is not unobſervable in God's providence, that conſidering the ſpecial ſibneſs, that is holden forth here, both betwixt this city Rome, the woman, whore and beaſt, that yet the Popiſh church ſhould glory in that title of the Roman church; and many of them diſpute that it is impoſſible to ſeparate their Pope from that very city, or that elſewhere he might chooſe to ſit and continue Pope; and thoſe who in this grant moſt, do affirm, that he muſt and would ſtill be Roman biſhop, and that the church would ſtill be the church of Rome, although that city were poſſeſſed by Turks. By this all may the more eaſily diſcern what church or defection they are, who have ſuch relation to, and dependence on Rome at this time when this propheſy is fulfilled, *ut ſupra.*

Before we leave this chapter, it may poſſibly not be unmeet, that *(coronidis vice)* we conſider how the Popiſh writers do interpret and apply it, wherein they are wonderfully ſtraitened and perplexed. It was their common opinion to underſtand by this city or whore, the city or multitude of the wicked generally. This is followed by Thomas Aquinas, Hugo Card. Lyranus, Haymo, and many others: but the latter writers, ſince reformation brake forth, have been conſtrained to caſt that opinion, becauſe this city is ſo particularly circumſtantiated, as to point at an individual city (to ſpeak ſo) and ſhe is contradiſtinguiſhed from many nations and kings, who yet are certainly a great part of the wicked in the world; and alſo chap. xviii. when ſhe is deſtroyed, there are many wicked, living and lamenting her deſtruction, and ſtanding at diſtance from her.

Upon theſe, and the like grounds, the moſt learned of them are generally, ſince that time, brought to expound it of Rome, and as Viegas ſaid, *impellimur aliam interpretationem excogitare:* and Ribera ſaith, *Interpretes coguntur &c. Alcaſar in locum* (all whom, with others, we cited before at the beginning of the chapter) interpreteth it ſo and citeth twenty authors of their moſt eminent men for it. Alſo, Corn. a Lapide, who addeth many to theſe cited by Alcaſor, amongſt whom are Sarez, in 3. part. Tom. 2. diſp. 5. Sextus Senenſis, lib. 2. pag. 88. Pererius, Salmeron and others. All which take Babylon, in all this propheſy to hold out Rome; and in this they and we agree, as to the general.

2. There is again difference amongſt themſelves

how to conceive Rome here, ſo as to ſave their Pope and the preſent Rome from this application.

Hence, ſome (which is moſt received) apply it to heathen Rome. Others, as Riberia, Blaſius, Viegas, and Cornelius a Lapide apply it to Rome under Antichriſt, who therefore ſay, that at or before his coming, Rome ſhall turn heathen, and deſert the Pope, and be deſtroyed by Antichriſt, or by the kings before his coming. Their reaſons are, becauſe it looketh to ſuch a ſtate of Rome, as then was to be fulfilled in John's time; and therefore cannot be underſtood of heatheniſh Rome, but becauſe this opinion ſuppoſeth Rome to be involved in defection, which cannot ſtand with her infallibility, and would ſhake all (ſeeing ſome plead ſo much for Rome's eternity) and make all ſuſpicious; for if Rome fall then, may it not be fallen already?) Therefore others caſt it, (as Alcaſar and thoſe named by him) applying it to what heatheniſh Rome ſuffered at, or before, Conſtantine's time, or after by the Goths, and Bellarmine ſeemeth to favour this, lib. 2. cap. 2. de pont. Rom. Thoſe who take it thus, expound the ſeven hills literally, but in other things they differ.

1. Some take the beaſt for the devil; but others conſidering that the devil and the beaſt are differenced, and that this beaſt is caſt into the lake long before the devil, and that the ſcope is to point out ſome eminent oppoſer of the church for ſome particular time, therefore they do in general apply it to Antichriſt, as alſo that firſt beaſt, chapter xiii. (and ſome make the laſt a falſe prophet that maketh way for him) ſo do they, of that beaſt, chapter xi. 7. and expreſly ſay, he is one of the ſeven heads here mentioned, and alſo called the eighth, becauſe his nature differeth from them and his hurt to the church exceedeth him.

2. Concerning the ſeven heads they differ, ſome applying it to the ſeven tyrannous kingdoms or empires, Egypt, Aſſyria, Babylon, &c. or, to the ſeven ages of the world. Others do caſt that as Bellarmine, &c. and do underſtand by the ſeven kings all the emperors indefinitely.

The reaſons that do caſt the firſt opinion, are, 1. Theſe kings here are ſuch as command Rome, they being governors of that city (therefore the ſeven hills, and the ſeven kings, are ſet out by one and the ſame type) and it is brought in as a character to difference and diſcern this city mentioned here from others; and the applying of it to ſeven monarchies, agreeth to none of theſe, nor to the angel's ſcope, which is to point out ſomething to come, and to help to diſcern this city by its heads, when he expoundeth them to be kings, as well as when he expoundeth them to be hills, there is but the ſame ſcope.

If they ſay, they are heads of the beaſts, not of the woman, *Anſwer*, It is true, but the beaſt being the empire that ſupporteth Rome, they muſt be heads of that empire, and ſeeing they are all heads of the ſame beaſt, and it being certain that the ſixth and ſeventh are of Rome, the reſt muſt be alſo. Beſide, how can either tyrannous kingdoms, or ſuch ages of the world be called heads to the beaſt? If the devil be the beaſt, he rather headeth them; if Antichriſt be the beaſt, he was not then in being to be headed by them; if the multitude of the wicked be the beaſt (which yet their former reaſons will caſt) how will theſe ages or kingdoms of the world differ from them? This conceit then is juſtly caſten. Beſide, the heathen emperors being to them the ſixth head, and Antichriſt to come but three or four years before the end of the world, to be the ſeventh, three would be too great an interval here, and the beaſt would be without a head ſo long, which agreeth not, 1. With the ſcope here, which is to ſhew the ſucceſſion of one to another: nor, 2. With the proportion of time that is amongſt the firſt ſix heads: nor, 3. With reaſon, as if the church were to want oppreſſors, for ſo many hundred years. Beſide, this application, being ſo general, cannot agree with the particularneſs that is in the reſt of the interpretation, eſpecially to the other of the ſame type, viz. of ſeven hills: and there can no reaſon be given for making the number of the ages of the world or tyrannous kingdoms, *ſeven*, more than five, eight, nine, or eleven, &c. except as men ſhall be pleaſed to name them: and can ſuch an uncertain rule be the ground of ſuch an application? Therefore they muſt be kings that relate to that body; for it is of that, and not of all the wicked that ever were, that the angel is ſpeaking.

The other interpretation that thinketh to evite theſe conſiderations, by underſtanding all the Caeſars and emperors of Rome indefinitely, or all the perſecuting emperors as Alcaſor doth, will not be conſiſtent either: for, 1. Theſe kings are ſuch as five had preceded, and one was but to come; but

that cannot be ſaid of the emperors either way conſidered. 2. They are kings, the firſt five whereof had fallen, which muſt be underſtood not of perſonal death, but of a politic change of government. 3. They are ſuch kings as in that one's time that was to come, Rome was to be the whore, and to be otherwiſe ſupported than by that king, which then was, or by thoſe that had gone before him; but that cannot be ſaid of heathen emperors or any of the Caeſars, or perſecutors: it is therefore ſome power of greater ſibneſs to Rome, after its defection. And ſo it muſt remain, as we interpreted, that by them are underſtood divers changes of government, whereof the laſt ſhould be Antichriſt, the ſame with the beaſt, conſidered as he was to come.

And from both theſe conſtrained interpretations, we may gather this conceſſion, that Antichriſt needeth be no individual perſon without a ſucceſſion: for, according to the firſt, theſe firſt ſix perſecuting kingdoms were not in one perſon: therefore neither ought the ſeventh which they apply to Antichriſt be reſtricted to one.

If according to the ſecond, by the one head or king that was to come after John's time, be underſtood all the following emperors. Then by one beaſt or king, may there not be as well underſtood a ſucceſſion of Popes?

Concerning the deſtruction of Rome, they that conſider Rome here as under Antichriſt do agree, 1. That it is yet to come, and that this part of the propheſy is to be fulfilled: Alcaſor and others, who affirm it to be fulfilled, ſay otherwiſe: but the nature of the deſtruction and overthrow, threatened to Rome here, will not admit of that application. 2. That it ſhall be a great deſtruction. But here they differ whether the Pope ſhall be neceſſitated to flee from it or not, but the expoſition of the ſixth vial of the xix. chapter will clear us. Beſide, when, chap. xviii. Rome after this becometh only a cage for unclean birds, they may conſider if they will place him amongſt theſe. That which occaſioneth this debate, is, that they think the ſupremacy ſo linked to Rome, that they cannot be ſeparated but by an immediate warrant from heaven, and yet God's people are called to come out of her, chap. xviii. 4. If then the Pope be not capable to give obedience he is not to be underſtood among that number. It is true, Domin. a Soto and Anton. Card. Gaſper Cuſal. Valdenſis and Alphon. Mendoza (whom Cornelius a Lapide citeth as of one judgment) and any other who hold the ſupremacy to be due to Rome, but jure humano they are not preſt with this conſequent; yet, the generality of them, who maintain theſe to be inſeparable jure divino or ſuch (as Corn. a Lap.) who ſay, whatever may be diſputed de jure of the Popes removal, yet they are ſure de facto it ſhall never be, theſe will find more difficulty in this caſe.

3. They expound theſe kings, to be the kings that ſhall be in the world at Antichriſt's coming, and that theſe ſhall be inſtrumental in Rome's deſtruction; as alſo, that this deſtruction ſhall be caſually procured to Rome for the old blood-ſhed of the former emperors, which is then to be repaid, with her late guilt of forſaking the Pope.

But in theſe they differ, 1. That ſome ſay, the kings ſhall deſtroy it before Antichriſt come, becauſe there are ten kings at the deſtruction of it; others ſay by Antichriſt, after theſe kings have ſubmitted to him. The occaſion of this difference is the confounding of his chapter with that of Dan. vii. where it is ſaid, that the little horn, applied by them to Antichriſt, ſhall ſubdue three kings, and therefore there will be but ſeven that yield to him: but of this, is ſomewhat ſaid before, that theſe propheſies are diſtinct; and this cleareth it; the kings here willingly give their power to the beaſt, and continue to reign with him cotemporally: there, the ſtanding and riſing of one, ſuppoſeth the overthrow of others; we do thus far agree with them, that, 1. Rome's deſtruction, propheſied of here, is to come, 2. That it ſhall be great. 3. That it ſhall be by kings or governors, ſuch as ſhall then be in Antichriſt's time.

Further, we may obſerve from theſe interpretations. 1. What inconſiſtency there is in them with reaſon: for, if all they ſpeak of Antichriſt were laid down, it would look as if we imputed fables to them. 2. With one another, each differing opinion ſtrongly confuting another, becauſe none aſſerteth what is right; and it is the ſtrength of the one opinion, that the oppoſite is abſurd. 3. It is inconſiſtent with their own way, ſometimes they take things exceeding literally in darkeſt propheſies, (as about the time of Antichriſt's continuance) ſometimes in the interpretation, which is plaineſt, they excogitate myſteries, as in the expoſition of that, *the heads are ſeven kings*, that is, ſay they, ſeven ages, and

ſo give a new expoſition, overturning what the angel giveth. 4. It is inconſiſtent with the fathers: ſometimes they ſtick to them (when they ſpeak of Rome, before it become Antichriſtian) yet their expoſition overturneth many aſſertions of the fathers on this chapter. All the reaſon is, becauſe the difficulty is great, to grant that this is Rome, and yet that the Pope is not Antichriſt. And indeed, that being the ſcope, and intent of this part of the propheſy, it is impoſſible to wave it, and not to miſs the mark. Neither can this confuſion and darkneſs of theirs be any evidence that this propheſy is not fulfilled; that is an unſafe ground to argue from, that all propheſies, however formerly dark, yet do become clear at their fulfilling (which is a main ſubterfuge of theirs in this caſe:) for, 1. Do we not ſee the plaineſt truths of doctrine dark to theſe, whom the God of this world hath blinded? 2. Do we not ſee many propheſies of Ezekiel, Daniel, &c. which certainly are fulfilled, yet to be obſcure to many? and who will deny, but many propheſies concerning Chriſt's death, birth and ſufferings, &c. are clearly fulfilled? yet generally, to the Jews they are as a ſealed book, becauſe the vail is not taken off their hearts, although the word be clear, 2 Cor. iii. yea, if we look to the ſtrain of this Antichriſt all alongſt, we will ſee it is ſtill to many as hereſy and blaſphemy, to apply it to him: elſe, would ſo many worſhip him, when this propheſy concernig his coming is fulfilled? and when Babylon is deſtroyed, chap. xviii. yet are there ſtill many that were drunk with its abominations that lament it, and, chap. xix. many ſhall ſide with the beaſt, even until the battle of Armageddon make an end of him. We ought not therefore to marvel that Antichriſt's worſhippers diſcern not that the Pope is he, or that Rome is his ſeat. If they ſo did, then this propheſy of their admiring of him, adhering to him, and periſhing with him, would not have been fulfilled; but we would rather acknowledge the juſtice of God in the thing, and obſerve his truth and omniſcience in foretelling it, even as the event is found to be.

Although we have formerly ſpoken to many things in the opening of the chapter; yet, having propoſed their opinions, and finding the great weight and ſtreſs to lie in theſe four, 1. If Rome's deſtruction, which is threatned here, be to be executed by Antichriſt, or the kings while they befriend him; or, if by Antichriſt's enemies, while his kingdom is in deſtroying?

Concerning this defection, for which Rome is to be deſtroyed, if it be the ſame very defection, whereof Antichriſt is the father, as it were, and here ſhe is to be the mother, verſe 5.

If that defection, whereof both are guilty, be a falling away from the profeſſion of Chriſtianity to heatheniſh idolatry, refuſing worſhip to the true God, or Chriſt, directly and expreſsly? or, if it be a defection and corruption in Chriſtianity, and ſuch as is inconſiſtent with a profeſſion thereof?

4. If all this defection be to be confirmed within three years and an half continuance, which they make the duration of Antichriſt, and the expiring thereof in Antichriſt's ruin, ſhall be but forty and five days before the end of the world and Chriſt's ſecond coming? or, if it ſhall precede, the end of the world many generations, and ſo to be in the world already? And conſequently if this Rome, as it is to be the whore, and the Pope who is preſent head thereof, be Antichriſt? Seeing therefore much weight lieth on theſe, and if one of theſe pillars be ſhaken, their doctrine concerning Antichriſt will ruin. We ſhall therefore ſhortly propone theſe aſſertions, or conſiderations: and, 1. We ſay the actors or inſtruments in this deſtruction of Rome, are not Antichriſt, or kings befriending his way, neither is this overturning of Rome an advantage to his kingdom; but the actors are oppoſite to Antichriſt, though of theſe who once gave their power to him. And this deſtruction of Rome is a main victory of Chriſt over the beaſt: for,

1. Rome is the ſeat of this Antichriſt (as upon the fifth vial, chap. xvi. and above in this, and in chap. xviii. is ſhewed) and this whore, being, as it were, the adultereſs, and Antichriſt the adulterer, he muſt certainly have his reſidence where ſhe dwelleth, ſeeing he ſupporteth this city by dwelling in it, even as its greatneſs was ſupported by the former heads, by their dwelling there: Its overthrow therefore muſt be near to him. Its, 2. While theſe kings give their power to Antichriſt, Rome is the pomp, and is ſupported by him; for, while he is great

ſhe is ſo too; and he is great ſo long as the kings give him power, therefore it is not while they continue friends to the beaſt, but when they become enemies. 3. This deſtruction is the perſecution of one of the vials, we ſay, the fifth, all which purſue the beaſt's kingdom to deſtroy it. 4. This is marked as a main victory of the Lamb over Antichriſt who for a long time had made uſe of theſe kings againſt him: it can be therefore no victory to Antichriſt for which the ſaints thus rejoice, chap. xviii. 5. Add, that, chapter following, all Antichriſt's followers are lamenting: and would they lament the deſtruction of Rome, if it were procured by themſelves? and yet ſuppoſing, as they do, that then Antichriſt commandeth all, can there be ſo many kings and great men, &c. elſewhere to lament that ruin? 6. Could Rome be charged, as mother of harlots in the earth, and yet to have no ſhare in Antichriſt's defection? yea, it is a fountain of it, therefore its ruin muſt have influence on the weakening of his kingdom.

2. We ſay, That the defection whereof Rome is found guilty, and whereof ſhe is thus plagued, is the very ſame with Antichriſt's: which thus appeareth, 1. Rome's defection is ſome ſingular defection very general and extenſive, and is every where propagated to others, chap. xvii. 5, 6. and xviii. 9. but there is no other ſuch apoſtaſy that is univerſal, ſpoken of in ſcripture, but Antichriſt's, which ſingularly is the *falling away*. 2. All the characters of Antichriſt's defection agree to this Rome, 1. She commandeth over nations, ſo doth he. 2. Both ſpread far and wide. 3. Both are guilty of the blood of ſaints and great perſecution. 4. Theſe who give their power to him, commit fornication with her. 5. They belong to one time, and the beaſt Antichriſt ſupporteth this city while it is a whore, and therefore he muſt be thought to ſtrengthen her in her whoredoms. Beſide what was ſaid, that Rome is Antichriſt's ſeat, doth clear this alſo: and wherefore ſhould Rome periſh in Antichriſt's ruin (which is carried on principally by the vials, chap. xvi.) or be lamented by his friends, chap. xviii. if ſhe did not partake deeply of his ſin? neither could ſhe be called *the mother of abominations in the earth*, if yet ſhe ſhould have no hand in Antichriſt's abominations, whereof the world will be guilty at the time of her ruin, as the moſt learned of themſelves grant. And, to what end ſhould there be ſtill ſuch connection betwixt Rome and Antichriſt all alongſt, if an eſpecial relation, between Rome and that defection, were not demonſtrated by it?

3. We ſay, that this defection, whereof Antichriſt and Rome are found guilty, is not a total falling from Chriſtianity in the profeſſion of it, but ſuch, as, failing in the matter, and corrupting the principal truths of Chriſtianity, ſhall yet ſtick boldly to a proud profeſſion of Chriſtianity, as claiming a ſpecial relation to Chriſt above others: For, 1. Antichriſt's defection is ſuch, as we ſhew, chap. xiii. and they are one. 2. This great Antichriſt is ſome way proportionable to the petty Antichriſts that were in John's time, and were his forerunners; but theſe were not ſimply heathens, but ſuch as under the name of Chriſtianity, and pretended to be eminently for it, (ſo as to cry down true apoſtles) did wrong Chriſt. 3. It is that defection ſpoken of, 2 Theſſ. ii. which is a giving up *to believe lies*, even while he ſitteth in the temple of God, and boaſteth of being a prime inſtrument in the church. 4. His defection is ſuch as was letted by the ſtanding of the heathen emperors, whereas if heatheniſh idolatry were his ſin, Antichriſt's deſign had not then been working under ground, but had been palpable in them. 4. It is obſervable, that whenever the ſcripture ſpeaketh of Antichriſt's defection, it diſtinguiſheth it alway from heatheniſh idolatry, and ſpeaketh of it as of another thing; ſo, 2 Theſſ. ii. Antichriſt's myſtery of iniquity is oppoſed to that that was then among heathens for the time: and by comparing the laſt part of chap. xii. of this book, with chap. xiii. it will appear that Antichriſtianity ſucceedeth to Paganiſm, as a new deſign of the devil's, to recover what he loſt by the fall of the former. Add, that here it is called whoredom, which ſupponeth it to be againſt a marriage-tye, Ezek. xvi. 36, 38. which could not otherwiſe be. Again, if Antichriſt's, or Rome's defection, were thus groſs, why ſhould it be called a myſtery, 2 Theſſ. ii. and here, verſe 5? and what need were there of ſo many marks to diſcover Rome under that ſtate, what deceivableneſs would there be there? the ſcriptures inſiſting ſo much in this, is certainly to make believers wary, and to ſhew there will be need of ſpiritual wiſdom to diſcern her, or him. *Laſtly*, It is ſaid, that *all the world* (except the elect) *wondered after the beaſt:* and can it be thought that all Chriſtians ſhall turn Pagans, ex-

cept the elect, and that there ſhall be no hypocrites in the church? Yet this contradiſtinguiſhing of Antichriſt's followers (not from the church viſible, but from the elect, who inviſibly are ſo,) ſaith, that this defection will make a narrower ſearch in the church than Paganiſm can do.

We do therefore take this aſſertion for truth, that Rome's defection under Antichriſt is a ſpreading of lies under the pretext of Chriſtianity, not ſimply ſtriking againſt God, but againſt Chriſt in his office, as Mediator, and the end of them, and derogating from them; in the ſpreading of which the city of Rome, as a mother, hath a ſpecial influence and claim.

4. We would ſay concerning the continuing of Antichriſt, or this defection, and the time of its cloſe, that it is not to be confined to one perſon (and that within three years and an half) and to finiſh but fortyfive days before the end of the world, but is to take up a longer time. Of this we ſpoke ſomewhat, chap. xi. and chap. xiii. and alſo before on this. And now we further add, that Antichriſt hath a proportionableneſs in his continuance to the great effects which his dominion hath on the world; but that cannot be within three years and an half. 2. Antichriſt is one, as the ſeries of the heathen emperors was one; for he is the head next ſucceeding, and he is oppoſed to him, 2 Theſſ. ii. *He that letteth muſt be removed before he* (that is, Antichriſt) *ſhould come.* Now, ſeeing he that letted was not an emperor perſonally, but the ſeries and time of them in their continuance, therefore Antichriſt, who ſucceedeth as the other, was removed, is not one perſon, but a ſucceſſion: and would the ſcripture ſo frequently and preſſingly ſpeak of Antichriſt's kingdom, and that defection, if it belonged only to the caſe of the church for three years and an half immediately before the end of the world? Certainly many other trials of the church had been of greater concernment: beſide, Antichriſt's hurt being principally to ſouls, it cannot be effectuated ſo in ſuch a time, which can have influence, at moſt, but upon ſome of one generation.

For that part of their opinion, that ſaith that Antichriſt's coming is but to precede the end of the world three years and ſeven or eight months, and Rome's deſtruction to be within that time of his reign, there is for this no probable ſhew: for, 1. Are there not many that lament Babylon's ruin, and rejoice over her? And will that be but for a year, or ſuch a time? 2. Is not the battle of Armageddon, chap. xix. poſterior to this, where the beaſt is taken? Again, is not that overthrow of Gog and Magog poſterior to that, chap. xx. when they are caſt in the lake where the beaſt is, before they come there? Beſide, is it probable that in the end of the world, when all, eſpecially the Jews, ſhall give themſelves to Chriſt, that univerſally they ſhall again make defection? And doth it not appear, that a glorious church ſhall be on earth after Antichriſt's height? I deſire it may be conſidered, that the Jews are, in the body of that nation, generally to be converted after their blinded eſtate; which is yet to be fulfilled. Now, when ſhall that converſion be? It muſt either be before this Antichriſt, or after his deſtruction; but neither can be ſaid: it cannot be before his deſtruction; for, 1. Then they would not be ſo ready to receive Antichriſt and follow him (which yet they pretend) to Jeruſalem. 2. Where is there a falling away of the Jews for the ſecond time ſpoken of? But on the contrary, the Lord's promiſe looketh otherwiſe, Rom. xi. which importeth ſuch a reingrafting as not to be broken off again: and conſidering the tenderneſs that the Jews ſhall have after their reingrafting, Zech. xii. 10. For ſo much wrong done to Chriſt formerly, can it be thought that they ſhall be the prime inſtruments of promoting Antichriſt again, even after ſo much mercy is ſhown unto them, and that ſo ſuddenly? Neither can any ſay that the Jews converſion is to be ſuſpended till Antichriſt's ruin, upon their principles, becauſe, ſay they, there are but forty-five days to the end of the world: either therefore Antichriſt muſt precede that time allowed him by them, or the propheſy concerning the Jews converſion muſt be ſhaken.

From this it will neceſſarily follow, that the coming and revealing of Antichriſt in the world, muſt neceſſarily precede that time; if his ruin be ſooner, and his continuance longer, his riſe muſt be proportionable: and conſidering that the apoſtle ſpeaketh of the working of that myſtery in his time, it muſt either be ſaid, that it hath left off working (which agreeth not to his ſcope) or that it hath continued working for many hundred years, and hath made no progreſs (which were abſurd to ſay) or, we muſt ſay, it hath already come to an

height, and we are to look for it in the generations preceding the end of the world. 3. To what end were the many exhortations to watchfulneſs that are propounded, even to the Chriſtians that lived in the firſt ages after the apoſtles days, if they belonged only to the Chriſtians in the laſt four years? Yea, 4. Seeing, from chap. xii. ult. and chap. xiii. 1. it is clear, that Antichriſt's riſe is the ſecond great deſign which Satan driveth to overthrow the church after the overturn of heathen emperors, or Paganiſm, ſhall it be thought, that, for ten or twelve hundred years, he hath had no ſucceſs in it? Or, that the church hath been ſo long free from a public oppreſſor? Add, that he being at a height before the firſt vial which beginneth his ruin, and there being a long time to the pouring out of all, before the end, it muſt be thought that his riſe and growth to his height, was proportionable in length of time: and, therefore muſt precede for many generations. Again, the world, that is overturned by the vials (being the world of the beaſt) is that ſame world which increaſed under the trumpets, the increaſe of it is under the one, and the ruin of it under the other; and, ſeeing the trumpets will riſe that high, as to ſucceed the ſeals, which contained the firſt period of heatheniſh perſecution, it will follow therefore not only, that this defection will, and muſt, be long before the end, but alſo that it is already come into the world.

If we can then make out this, that this defection hath already ſeized on Rome, and that ſhe muſt, before this time, be infected with it, there will be a ſhort way to looſe all the former queſtions, which may thus clearly be made out:

We have four characters to evince it, in this chapter: 1. If the ſixth government over Rome, which was in John's time, be now ceaſed from ruling that city, then this defection muſt be come; for ſo the angel fixeth that time; and, 2 Theſſ. ii. the apoſtle timeth Antichriſt's revealing, and the coming of that falling away, ſpoken of there, at *his* removing, (viz. the heathen emperors) who then did let.

2. If the ſeventh head or government over Rome be come, which then was to come, and be acknowledged, as is ſpoken of in this chapter, then the apoſtaſy cotemporary with it is come alſo.

3. If there be ten kings ariſen, to be ſupreme independent governors over provinces of that empire, which, in John's time, had not power in themſelves, but were dependent on the empire, as parts of it, and have given their power to a new head, upon a new account, then this is fulfilled; but all theſe three, in the former expoſition, are made out; therefore this defection, which is ſuppoſed in all theſe changes, muſt have its beginning alſo.

4. If ſome of theſe kings that once acknowledged this ſeventh head, be withdrawn from it, then the defection muſt have been at its height, for, their withdrawing ſuppoſeth them once to have been involved in it, as the context cleareth. But, in experience, it is evident, that ſome of theſe kings have withdrawn, and ſo, in part, this event, propheſied of, is fulfilled: therefore, what it preſuppoſeth, muſt be fulfilled alſo: for this their withdrawing muſt either be that propheſied of here, or ſome other thing; but it can be no other event: becauſe, 1. The kings that riſe, are the firſt that ſhall riſe ſo qualified as here: and ſo, 2. The withdrawing of theſe kings that withdraw, is the firſt withdrawing of theſe kings upon this account of hating Rome, as the whore. For the context and ſeries will clear this, the ſcope being to deduce Rome's future remarkable changes without intermiſſion; as, 1. Then heathen Cæſars did govern all. 2. He ſhall be removed, and that empire ſhall be weakened, and not have the dominion that it had in the world. 3. Out of it ſhall ariſe ſo many kingdoms, which ſhall be independent as to it. 4. There ſhall ſtep up a government from the bottomleſs pit of another nature than the former, that ſhall govern Rome. 5. Theſe kings that withdraw from the former head, ſhall willingly give their power and homage unto this government upon another account. 6. Theſe kings, (or ſome of them) again, out of hatred to Rome, and that governor, ſhall withdraw from it, and hate her, and diminiſh her greatneſs. Theſe ſteps go in a ſeries ſucceeding to one another immediately, and cannot be interrupted by the riſing of any other kings, or their withdrawing after it, without confounding this propheſy, and darkening the angel's interpretation, and quite overturning of the ſcope, no more than we can ſay there may be other cities with ſeven hills, &c. to which what is ſaid of this can agree, ſeeing he pointeth in this interpretation at as particular and ſingular events in reſpect of what was to come, as in reſpect of what then was preſent.

5. We may argue from chap. vii. 1. thus, that defection, mentioned chap. vii. of the *winds* which then were to blow, is this apoſtaſy of Antichriſt; but that defection is already come. *Ergo*, &c. That it is Antichriſt's defection, appeareth, 1. From the ſingular hurt of it; it is the great defection that the church was to be troubled with after heatheniſh perſecution. 2. It is the defection of the fifth trumpet, and the ſame that is mentioned, chap. xiii. as was ſaid on the place; but that that muſt be come, this will clear it, that it immediately ſucceeded to the ſeals, and was immediately to follow upon them, and the angel's haſte to ſeal the elect evidenceth it, which is more fully opened there. Now, the ſeals having their cloſe at the overturning of the heatheniſh empire, this then which immediately ſucceeded, muſt long ſince be in being.

6. We may gather it thus, this defection is cotemporary with the prophets propheſying in ſackcloth, the woman's fleeing to the wilderneſs, chap. xii. and is the ſame with the Gentiles treading the outer court, chap. xi. But both theſe are begun, even at the child's taking up to heaven, which is the cloſe of heathen perſecution, (yea, and is cloſed as to the days ſet there;) therefore this muſt be of a long time ſince in the world alſo: both theſe propoſitions we cleared on chap. xi. And all theſe arguments that prove the cotemporarineſs of the beaſt and Babylon with the trumpets, and the ſucceſſion of both to the heatheniſh perſecution, and that immediately, as on chap. vi. lect. 1, and viii. chap. vii. lect. i. chap. ix. lect. i. chap. xi. lect. iv. chap. xii. lect. i, and iii. &c.

7. This defection is the ſame with Antichriſt's, as is ſaid: now, his defection is long ſince begun, and hath its riſe from the healing of the head, which was wounded, chap. xiii. as there was made out: therefore this is not come.

8. We may have ſome light from chapter xx. where this will be clear, that Antichriſt's defection muſt go before the thouſand years there mentioned, becauſe it ſuppoſeth ſaints to have been killed by the beaſt, who are there brought to reign; but we cannot look that theſe thouſand years are wholly to come, and his perſecution to go yet before it alſo, (that would take longer time to the fulfilling of all events, than in reaſon any will allow, yet to be running to the end of the world.) This concludeth the more ſtrongly, becauſe, generally, not only our writers, but even the Popiſh themſelves, grant this, that it is not to come, but that they are begun, if they be not finiſhed, ſo do Corn. a Lap. Viegas, Alcaſar, the Rhemiſts, and others, who, though they ſenſelesly apply it, and with contradiction, as their manner is; yet agree in this, that long ſince they are begun. And although there ſhould be difficulty to ſhow when this defection began, and how, (becauſe much of that riſeth from human hiſtory) yet theſe characters prove it muſt be in being, and before this time begun; and that is ſufficient to us. All theſe arguments begin it (almoſt after the cloſe of the heatheniſh perſecution, whereof we ſpoke more on chapter xi.

We may add an argument or two further, thus, if every condition of the viſible church be either cotemporary with the ſeals, that is, the heatheniſh world, or with the Antichriſtian world under the trumpets, wherein Antichriſt cometh to an height, or with the vials, wherein is his declining; then this apoſtaſy muſt be come, becauſe we are not now under the ſeals; that period is paſt: we muſt therefore be under one of the following two, ſeeing theſe three propheſies carry on the ſeries to the end; but, if we be under the vials, then Antichriſt is not only come, but is already at his height: and, it is not like, that there being ſo many hundred years ſince the ſeals ended, and the trumpets began, that ſtill they be running, at leaſt, in the firſt ſix: for, the ſeventh comprehendeth the vials.

Again, if the properties, concomitants and characters, and events given to diſcern this defection be fulfilled; then this defection of Antichriſt muſt be come, ſeeing theſe characters can agree to no other; but we will find the firſt true, as the former expoſition of chap. ix, xi, xiii, and xvii. will clear. *Ergo*. Taking this for granted, then, that the Antichriſtian defection is a long time ſince come, and alſo, that when it cometh, it continueth until Rome's deſtruction, which yet it is not fulfilled: it muſt therefore follow, that it is in being for the preſent in the world, and hath been ſo for a long time; and therefore we ought to look where it is for the preſent.

This is certain, that it is not to be ſought amongſt Pagans or Turks, but amongſt profeſſed Chriſtians. 2. Not among antient heretics that now are not in being, or ſuch as have no pomp or ſplendour in the world: this being ſo eminent a kingdom, cannot be applied to them. It muſt there-

fore be either in the Roman church, or amongſt us, who are called Proteſtants; it can be attributed to no third now in being: but for us, they themſelves will abſolve us; for, we have neither the ſeat of this defection, nor a head or monarch, as is over this kingdom, &c. This curſed privilege therefor belongeth to them who have both, and glory in them.

2. Again, If theſe be truths, that Rome is infected with Antichriſt's defection while it is in the world, and is the whore ſpoken of after its appearing till ſhe be deſtroyed: then it will follow, (laying aſide other arguments from other circumſtances) that Rome as it is, and hath been, for many years, is the whore here ſpoken of, which is guilty of the Antichriſtian defection; (and this conſequence will ſtand good till the antecedent be overturned) but the former is truth, from the former arguments, and from their conceſſions that grant that this deſtruction is not yet come. *Ergo.*

3. We may therefore reſume our arguments confidently. If all the characters applied to this whore, be verified in Rome now preſent, and as it hath been for many years, and in its governor the Pope, then is this Rome the whore which is to be deſtroyed, and the Pope Antichriſt, and no other is to be looked for; but the former is truth, they are fulfilled, and in them. *Ergo*, We may warrantably conclude that ſhe is the whore, and he the Antichriſt.

It is a wonder to conſider how little the moſt learned adverſaries have to ſay to this, except what evidenceth the force of the wine of her fornication on them: for if Antichriſt be come, there is no way to vindicate Rome and their Pope from this charge, it ſo natively followeth. Again, there is no way to evite this, that he is already come, but by pointing out ſuch another imaginary Antichriſt as ſhall never come, and thus to bind him up to the three or four laſt years of the world, contrary to the whole ſtrain of this propheſy, in ſome part following the way of the Jews, who, to evite the fulfilling of the propheſies concerning the true Meſſias, do fabulouſly inquire for a Meſſiah contrary to the ſcriptures, with ſuch wars and effects of his reign: which, becauſe they are not fulfilled, therefore tenaciouſly they adhere to this, that the true Meſſias is not yet come, which way, as is juſt with God in both, thus to plague their rejecting of clear light, ſo ought it to work humility and commiſſeration in us, conſidering how unreaſonable the wiſdom of man is in the things of God. They ſay, 1. It cannot be the church of Rome, but the city. *Anſw.* But we have ſhown it is not the city ſimply, for then it had been a whore long before John wrote; for there was a city) but it is that city once a church, and afterward degenerating. Then, ſay they, Peter, and the martyrs under the heathens, are to be reckoned of this defection, for they lived there. *Anſw.* No: for then that city was not become an harlot, neither is it ſimply Rome that is the whore, but Rome degenerated, ſuch as ſhe was foreſeen to be after the heathen emperor's removal out of the way, which was not then fulfilled. Nor is it ſimply living there, but as a member of her that maketh one guilty, except it be made ſinful by other circumſtances. *Laſtly*, They ſay, Rome cannot be the whore becauſe, forſooth, of her holineſs. And what is that? There are ſo many abbacies, mortifications, holy churchmen, relicts and temples of ſaints, many maſſes, and ſuch like there, &c. All which ſerve not to prove this concluſion, that ſhe is ſo. And it is not unobſervable, that immediately after this anſwer, Corn. a Lap. profeſſor at Rome, doth juſtify the toleration of ſtews and brothel-houſes in it, as a thing tending to prevent much ſin, and becoming a well ordered common-wealth; and when this is mentioned by them as a piece of Rome's holineſs, we may the more eaſily judge of the reſt.

We may add yet one argument more for confirming of our application, which eſpecially is binding from their own principles. The Rome that is deſcribed here to be the whore, and as ſuch to be deſtroyed, is either Rome heathen, which is paſt, or under Antichriſt, which is to come, or Popiſh under the Pope, which is preſent: for, (as Alcaſar, Diſp. 1. in hoc caput. aſſerteth) there is no other Rome which it can be applied unto, but neither of the firſt two can be ſaid, therefore it muſt be the Rome that is preſent. It cannot be Rome heathen, which is paſt; for ſo the arguments urged by Viegas, Ribera, and Cornelius a Lap. againſt it, are unanſwerable: ſome whereof are formerly touched in general.

Arg. 2. If it be the deſtruction of Rome heathen, then it muſt either be (as Bellarmine and ſome others make it) the deſtruction which Rome ſuffered by the Goths, Vandals, &c. and the reſt of

the barbarous nations; but that cannot be: for, 1. That is not done by Antichriſt, the beaſt, or kings befriending him, as they ſay, not for that guiltineſs, as we and the text ſay. 2. Rome was not then the whore, neither upon that account did theſe purſue it. 3. That deſtruction was not unrecoverable, as is here propheſied of. And, 4. It is not ſuitable (as Alcaſar urgeth) to puniſh Rome heathen, by the overturning of Rome Chriſtian, and now become ſo holy: it cannot be this then. Or, 2. It muſt be the overthrow which Conſtantine gave to the heathen emperors, (as Alcaſar aſſerteth it) but that cannot be, 1. That was not of Rome the whore, which had once made defection. 2. That was not a deſtruction of Rome, much leſs a total overthrow, as is implied in chap. xviii. but was rather a liberation of Rome; for even Rome the city had much freedom and glory by this, which is contrary to the ſcope of this chapter, and the chapter following: therefore this opinion is not only called *(ſingularis)* a ſingular opinion, by Cornelius a Lap but by Alcaſar himſelf, (Not. 11. proemiali) is ſuſpected to be accounted a paradox: It is true, that was indeed the wounding of one of the heads, mentioned chapter xiii. But it is one thing to wound the head, another thing to deſtroy the city itſelf, the government had been often changed before, yet the city ſtood. Now, this deſtruction is not any ſuch, which was to come on its governours only, but on the city itſelf; and that a total ſtroke: therefore this cannot be intended here, but is juſtly caſten, and that unanſwerably by the authors aforeſaid, eſpecially the laſt. This then cannot be underſtood of heathen Rome in any ſenſe. Nor, 2. Can it be underſtood of Rome, as under a defection yet to come ſo immediately before the end of the world: for 1. It is not agreed amongſt themſelves, if it be poſſible that Rome can fall into ſuch defection: yea, others as Alcaſar, (Diſp. 1. in cap. 17. and Notat. 11, and 13. in proemiali.) doth by many reaſons oppoſe this, and with many authorities and propheſies, as one of St. Benedict. cited out of Gregorius, whereby it was ſtill taken for truth, that Rome ſhould never again be heathen. And he ſaith, this opinion is *(nova et quae anſam haeriticis prebet et omnino improbabilis, &c.)* new, improbable and favourable to heretics, giving them ground to alledge, that ſeeing Rome hath now ſo many images, &c. that it hath already fallen to that defection. And altho' his authorities be not much, yet the argument that he draweth from the ſeries of the propheſy againſt it, whereby he ſheweth, that this propheſy relateth to events long before the end of the world, and the other events, as that of Gog and Magog, and others, muſt follow it, are convincing and unanſwerable. For confirming whereof, we add theſe conſiderations further, 1. That by this propheſy the ſtate of the true church is holden forth to be the moſt glorious, immediately before the end: therefore it cannot conſiſt with ſuch an univerſal defection as this. This will bind the more, if we take in the conſideration concerning the Jews coverſion formerly mentioned, which hath with it the fulneſs of the Gentiles, as its companion. 2. It is certain, that the ſeven vials have the laſt plagues, chap. xv. and alſo, that theſe ſeven vials bring judgment on the beaſt, or Antichriſt, (who is ſingularly the beaſt and the object of the judgment of the firſt vial, chap. xvi. 1, 2. and ſuppoſeth this defection to precede.) Now, it cannot be ſuppoſed, that all theſe vials are to be bounded within ſo ſhort a time to the end of the world, eſpecially conſidering the enlargement of the church, which by theſe cotemporary propheſies is clearly intimated to fall under them. Therefore that application unto any future ſtate of Rome, cannot ſtand: and ſeeing by themſelves neither of theſe can ſtand, it muſt neceſſarily follow, that the third is a truth, and that Rome, as here conſidered, is the Rome now in being. And if any ſhould ſay, that *Theologica ſymbolica* is not *argumentativa*, and therefore no ſolid argument can be drawn from this propheſy: Alcaſar anſwereth, *ubi ſupra*, that tho' this or that particular expreſſion will not bear an argument in ſuch ſcriptures; yet, ſaith he, (and that truly) where the ſcope and ſeries agree jointly in a concluſion, it muſt be of force, ſee it is ſcripture, otherwiſe no ſafe interpretation might be drawn from any prophetical or enigmatical ſcripture. And therefore, before the adverſaries can exempt Rome preſent, or the Pope, from this charge, they muſt not only anſwer what we ſay, but muſt more ſatisfyingly anſwer what one of them oppoſeth to another, which can never be done until they agree with us in the concluſion.

We have been the longer in this, becauſe it is indeed the great ſcope of this propheſy, to make this whore diſcernible, and it is their great work to diſguiſe her ſo, that ſhe be not diſcerned. And

this chapter is acknowledged by all to be the main ſeat of this controverſy, and the chief key, yea, as ſome call it, the caſtle of this propheſy, (*Arx Apocalypſeos,*) the opening and taking in whereof, doth both confirm what is paſt, and make way for what is coming.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. XVIII.

Verſe 1. *And after theſe things I ſaw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightned with his glory.*

2. *And he cried mightily with a ſtrong voice, ſaying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul ſpirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.*

3. *For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.*

4. *And I heard another voice from heaven, ſaying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her ſins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*

5. *For her ſins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembred her iniquities.*

6. *Reward her even as ſhe rewarded you, and double unto her double, according to her works; in the cup which ſhe hath filled, fill to her double.*

7. *How much ſhe hath glorified herſelf, and lived deliciouſly, ſo much torment and ſorrow give her: for ſhe ſaith in her heart, I ſit a queen, and am no widow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow.*

8. *Therefore ſhall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and ſhe ſhall be utterly burnt with fire: for ſtrong is the Lord God who judgeth her.*

BY the vials, chap. xvi. a general view was given of the deſtruction of Antichriſt's kingdom, eſpecially by the laſt three. Chap. xvii. verſe 1. the angel propoſeth a more particular expoſition of that judgment in an explicatory viſion: and, for the greater clearneſs, he 1. Deſcribeth that kingdom, which is the object of theſe plagues, under the title of a *Whore* and *Babylon*, pointing her ſo out, as it is evident to be Rome in the latter times. 2. He deſcribeth Antichriſt the head, under the appearance of a beaſt which ſupporteth that whore. 3. He doth thereafter point out the principal ſeat of that dominion. 4. He giveth a little general hint at her deſtruction: all theſe were chap. xvii. He proceedeth now to explain more fully that deſtruction, 1. Of the whore Babylon, or Rome, in this xviii. chap. 2. Of the beaſt or head, chap. xix.

This chapter belongeth to the explicating of the fifth vial, as appeareth, 1. That vial is on the ſeat or throne of the beaſt, this deſcribeth Babylon's deſtruction, which, in chap. xvii. we heard to be the beaſt's ſeat and throne. They therefore deſcribe the judgment of the ſame thing, viz. Rome; and if Rome were not Antichriſt's ſeat, but to be deſtroyed by him, why then would Antichriſt and his followers ſo lament and regret her ruin?

2. The deſtruction here deſcribed of Rome or Antichriſt's kingdom, is not that of the laſt vial; for that hath nothing here in time behind it, and cometh after the battle of Armageddon, where the beaſt that ſurviveth the deſtruction of his ſeat, is taken as is clear, vial 6. But this deſtruction is ſuch, as after it, both many of Rome's friends (eſpecially kings, who under the ſixth vial will adhere to the beaſt) lament that deſtruction and many of the ſaints do rejoice over it, and its irrecoverable ruin; yea, ſuch a deſtruction, as precedeth the Jews calling, and the battle of Armageddon, which is in the ſixth vial, as is clear from chapter xix. which followeth. Therefore the great deſtruction of Rome, here inſiſted on, muſt be the very ſame, chapter xvi. under the fifth vial, which being the moſt remarkable ſtep of the overthrowing

of that kingdom (which the other two vials do perfect thereafter) is the more largely insisted on.

This destruction of Rome, being styled Babylon, is set out in expressions borrowed from the prophets concerning the destruction of old Babylon, whereby its ruin is set down in the certainty, greatness, terribleness, justice, and irrecoverableness thereof. And that by the voices of three several angels (if the second be an angel) one after another. The first speaketh unto verse 4. the second from verse 4. to verse 21. the third unto the end; and, for confirmation, addeth a sign.

In the first, the denouncer is described, verse 1. 2. His manner of denouncing, verse 2. 3. The denunciation is set down. The denouncer is another angel than spoke to John, chap. xvii. God hath many waiting on him, and maketh use of them at his pleasure. 2. He is a mighty angel; all angels are mighty, yet there are degrees, some more excelling in strength than others: there are angels and archangels, but of how many orders we will not determine. The schoolmen in this, as in all other unrevealed mysteries, do confidently define, that there are three hierarchies, and nine orders, every hierarchy comprehending three orders: the first hath seraphims, cherubims, thrones; the second, dominations, mights, or *virtutes*, powers; in the third, they place principalities, archangels, angels: this they presume to have from Dionysius (*Pseudareopagita*) who saith, de Eccl. Hierar. lib. 7. cap. 7. that he had this, by tradition, from his master Hierotheus.

3. As he is great in power, so he excelleth in glory, *the earth was lightned*, &c. as all these ministring spirits do, and it is like, had some visible manifesting of his glory in this work. The making use of such instruments, sheweth, 1. That God thinketh it a great work; for, mighty angels are employed in such, as the archangels in raising the dead. 2. That it will effectually be done; that instrument will effect it. 3. That it is God's work, and not men's, to perfect this judgment; therefore ought he to be trusted with it, and depended on in it. 4. It is said of the angels, *he came down from heaven*; it telleth, heaven is the mansion of these glorious spirits, Zech. iii. 5. 7. they *stand by* as attendants; and it is a privilege to be admitted amongst them: though their motion be swift, yet do they, at God's order, go from one end of the earth to another, changing their place, yet keeping their glory, and counting it no loss to do their Master's service: the *coming down*, sheweth not only a readiness in the angel to do what is committed to him, but the approaching of the ruin he denounceth, and a greater clearness in the thing denounced, when he cometh near to do it.

Ver. 2. It is said, he *cried with a mighty voice:* which sheweth both the thing to be certain and remarkable, and him to be serious in going about it.

The denunciation containeth these three parts of Rome's destruction, borrowed from the prophets. The 1. is Isa. xxi. 9. Jer. li. 8. the first denouncing Babylon's ruin more at a distance long before it come; the second more nearly foretelling it: we had these same words, chap. xiv. 8. of an angel; but this differeth, in that he is called a *mighty angel*, and that *he cometh down, and crieth mightily*, neither of which are in the former: the reason is, because that angel, chap. xiv. denounced the fall of that kingdom, first, when the light of the gospel began to break out; this setteth it out nearer her end, and so speaketh more clearly and powerfully, to shew it is now by the fifth vial fulfilled, or certainly to be closed.

If it be asked here, how angels speak, who have no organs as we have? *Answ.* There are three ways of speaking attributed to angels, and mentioned in this book: 1. When angels speak to men audibly, as to John, chap. i. 9. 2. When they speak in visions, as to John in the Spirit, or to Joseph in a dream; even as things are represented to the sight in vision, so may they be to the hearing. 3. When they speak one to another, as chap. xiv. The first way, angels speak audibly to men, by forming an audible voice in the air, as they appear to fight, by assuming a visible body. The second way they speak in visions, is by putting in, or working impressions of these things on the spirits of men. To the third, they speak one to another, by ordinating by their wills such conceptions towards such an angel, one or more to be understood by them; this is most rested on by the schoolmen; and thus they say, 1. An angel speaketh to one or more at once, as he ordinates his conceptions towards them. 2. That thus they speak with a like ease and facility, at a distance, as when they are near other. 3. That thus they signify their conceptions to God. And, 4. Thus they say, will the just men made perfect, at least

in their ſouls, have communications one with another, or with angels in glory. This, they ſay, is not *conceptum imprimendo*, which was Scotus' opinion, but *ordinando*, and ſo then that *locutio*, or ſpeaking, is not *actus ordinans conceptum*, but *conceptus ordinatus a voluntate, ut alter intelligat*. Our divines do alſo aſſent moſt to this. But this we inſiſt not on, neither will we paſs any determination. In a word, Babylon, that is Rome, her certain and approaching ruin is ſet down.

The ſecond part of the denunciation ſetteth out this ruin in its greatneſs, as dreadful and irrecoverable, borrowed from Iſa. xiii. 14. and xxxiv. 13, 14, 15. Jer. li. 37. where old Babylon's ruin is ſpoken of, ſhe ſhall be ſo far deſtroyed (for, it is ſo certain that it is ſuppoſed and ſet down as come already) that inſtead of unclean men, and great pomp of great men in her before, now ſhe ſhall be utterly deſolute, haunted and inhabited by none, but ghoſts or ill ſpirits, and furies, and foul and unclean creatures; ſuch as owls, wild-cats &c. as ye ſee old abbacies or monaſteries, or caſtles when walls ſtand and none dwelleth in them, they are direful-like to men, ſo ſhall Rome be, ſaith this angel: which importeth a great deſolation, and it is uſed for that end in the ſcriptures cited.

If it be aſked, if there be ſuch a thing as the haunting of evil ſpirits in theſe deſolute places? we anſwer, 1. That there are evil ſpirits, ranging up and down thro' the earth, is certain, even though hell be their priſon properly, yet they have a ſort of dominion and abode both in the earth and air; partly, as a piece of their curſe, this is laid on them to wander; partly, as their exerciſe to tempt men, or bring ſpiritual or temporal hurt to them, this is clear, Job. i. 2. That they haunt ſuch deſolute places of the earth moſt, may be alſo clear. Hence, Matth. xii. he is ſaid to *walk thro' waſte and dry places*, and he uſed to drive theſe that were poſſeſſed to the tombs: this is, and may be partly a part of their curſe, to be reſtricted there (as they get liberty to go abroad, as theſe got to enter the ſwine, and not to be caſt to hell) therefore it is here *phulakę* in the original, which ſignifieth a priſon; partly, to ſhew the accurſedneſs of the place to be thus inhabited, as Saul was when an evil ſpirit poſſeſſed him after his rejection: partly, they delight in theſe places, as fitted to make them the more terrible from them, and as triumphing in the deſolation, they have brought on men theſe judgments being the effects of ſin brought on by them. Some think they glory in theſe deſolations and graves, as evidences of their victory over men, which yet tendeth to their greater condemnation. 3. Whatever be of the former, this is ſure, that ſuch places deſolute, and uninhabited, uſe to work generally a horror and terror in the minds of men (which poſſibly may flow from the former) ſo that they are ever accounted irkſome, direful, and horrible places to abide in; and this common eſtimation is enough for the ſcope here, which is to ſhew what dreadful deſolation Rome ſhould fall into, and ly in. Cities, even great cities, had need to be humble and holy, it is hard to know what may come on, and what may dwell in the greateſt: cities that once have been the greateſt in the world, may now be the proof of this.

The juſtice of this judgment, though great, is declared, verſe 3. two ways, 1. By the greatneſs of her ſins, in three, 1. Fornication; 2. A luxurious and delicious way of living; 3. Inticing of others to theſe ſins ſhameleſly. 2. Her ſin is ſet out by the extent of it, in her making others partake with her: And there are, 1. All nations; 2. Kings; 3. All merchants that are made rich by her magnificence: Theſe three are the parties with whom ſhe ſinneth. 1. For the ſins, we may underſtand them. 1. Spiritually of idolatry, and ſuperſtitious, pompous worſhip, as is before ſaid: thus her merchandizing is not the leaſt part of her ſin, it muſt therefore be ſuch a merchandizing as it is ſinful. 2. Literally, of filthineſs, pride, affluence and ſuperfluity of all things in apparel, dwellings, diets, &c. Rome aboundeth in theſe. 2. For the parties ſinning, nations and kings, are clearly and literally to be underſtood as before. It is more difficult what is to be underſtood by merchants. Certainly they muſt not, at leaſt, only be common merchants: For, 1. *They are the great men of the earth*, that buy and ſell theſe wares. And, 2. The wares *are ſouls of men*, ver. 14. And therefore, 3. Theſe merchants muſt be underſtood chiefly, as merchants of ſuch wares as are vendible or ſaleable at Rome, and wherein eſpecially its market excels and goeth beyond other places: and that is not ſo much in outward commodities, As, 1. They ſold pardons, indulgences, biſhoprics, yea, Chriſt, heaven, diſpenſations, &c. (as it is ſaid, *omnia*

ſunt Roma venalia) theſe make their great men rich. 2. They buy coſtly things for their own pomp, and the pomp of their worſhip; and therefore they are called merchants, who both buy and ſell, and they are ſingularly merchants beyond others. The righteouſneſs then of this ſad judgment appeareth, 1. From the greatneſs of her ſuperſtition, idolatry, and ſuperfluity. 2. From her propagating of it to others. 3. From her making a trade of it, ſo that no calling almoſt did thrive better than to be a monger of her ſuperſtitions, either in carrying ſomething from her, or bringing ſomething to her.

The ſecond voice, from verſe 4. to verſe 21. ſetteth out the ſame thing, but as by a new witneſs of that deſtruction which men eaſily believed not. This is either the Lord himſelf immediately who calleth the people *his*, *My people*, or his miniſters mediately by his authority calling them: his words ſet out this deſtruction, 1. By way of exhortation to God's people, from verſe 4. to 9. 2. By way of commination, or foretelling of the lamentation, ſhould follow this great deſolation amongſt her *friends*, *kings*, *merchants*, and *ſhip-maſters*, to ver. 20. 3. By incitation to God's people to rejoice over her, verſe 20. &c. All which ſheweth the greatneſs of the deſolation: that, 1. All that would ſhun the judgment would flee from it, as Lot did out of Sodom. 2. As it giveth ground of fear to ſome, ſo it giveth ground of lamentation to others. 3. Of rejoicing to a third ſort, that is, theſe who have formerly ſeparated from her. It muſt then be great that maketh and worketh fear, grief and joy ſo univerſally.

The exhortation hath two parts with the reaſons of them, 1. There is an exhortation to ſeparate from her, verſe 4. and 5. which ſheweth, that now her ruin is at hand (get you, ſaith he, *quickly from her*, as Moſes ſaith, Num. xvi. 26. to the people, *to ſeparate from Korah, Dathan, &c.* It is borrowed from Jer. li. 6.) and that their delivery approacheth with her ruin and fall. The ſecond exhortation is verſes 6. 7, 8. and it is an upſtirring of God's people not to be remiſs in executing of God's judgments on her according to their callings and ſtations, as God ſhall give them opportunity.

Concerning the firſt exhortation we are to enquire, (beſides its ſcope, which is clear to ſhew her approaching ruin) 1. What ſort of ſeparation this is, which is called for. 2. In matter of fact, if any godly have been, may be, or are to be in Rome before its deſtruction? 3. What is the neceſſity or warrant of ſeparating from Rome? And what more now than before? And why Babylon only is to be ſeparated from, if this be peculiar to her?

Before we anſwer, we muſt premit a twofold conſideration of Babylon, and being in Babylon, 1. Babylon, or Rome, may be conſidered merely as a great city or dominion. 2. As an eccleſiaſtic ſinful degenerating party, or apoſtatized church of Antichriſt: ſo in the firſt acceptation, to be in Rome, differeth from the ſecond, which is to be of Rome, as God's people were in Babylon, yet not of Babylon; lived in the place, but did not partake of their ſin. So one may be in Rome two ways, 1. Locally; thus he is not of it as an Antichriſtian church, nor is this in itſelf ſinful, if by ſome circumſtances it become not ſo. 2. One may be in Rome as a member of that church; thus he is not formally one of God's people, and if he belong to his election, he is to be called in due time.

For anſwer then to the firſt queſtion, there are three things diſtinguiſhed, even by independent divines [Vide Norton ad. Apoll. quaeſt. ult.] 1. There is ſchiſma, that is, a ſeparating from the unity, and from the communion of a true church, whether more or leſs pure, if it be a true church; this is ſimply and alway ſinful, becauſe it is from a true church: this ſchiſm conſiſteth not alway in diverſity of doctrine, which is hereſy; but in divided practices from the communion of a true church, as Auguſtin contra Fauſtum, lib. 2. cap. 3. *Schiſmaticos facit non diverſo fides, ſed diſrupta communionis ſocietas*, ſo it renteth unity, and is either *negativum ſchiſma*, where its ſimply a withdrawing, without ſetting up a new diſtinct church; or, poſitive, when it not only withdraweth, but ſetteth up another worſhip or church (as the Novatians and Donatiſts did) to keep communion only with themſelves. And this is called to have *altare contra altare*. 2. There is ſeparation, and that is, 1. Either in whole, when people withdraw from communion in whole from others, as no church; or, 2. In part, when they acknowledge them churches, yet cannot communicate in ſome things with them (as in the ſacra-

ment with Ubiquitaries, ſince that Ubiquity ſprung up) this is ſinful or lawful according to the grounds of it. If it be no church, ſuch as Babel was, a total ſeparation is neceſſary; or, in part, it is lawful, if it exceed not its ground: but when ſeparation is from a true church (though with ſome defects) totally, or beyond that wherein ſhe is corrupted, that is, ſinful, and, as Cotton ſaith on Cant. 6. a condemning as no church that which Chriſt accounteth one, and is too much nicety not to keep communion with them, with whom he keepeth communion. Thus it becometh ſchiſma.

The third is ſeceſſion, that is without refuſing the communion of another, yet locally to remove upon ſome urgent or lawful occaſion ſpiritual or temporal, to another or better conſtitute church, that is lawful and is no ſeparation; but may be even from a lawful church and pure. The firſt, viz. a ſchiſm, is neither here called for nor is it poſſible to make a ſchiſm with Rome, (ſhe not being a true church which is rent, or from whom the rent is) and the ſecond, viz. ſeparation, and that total, is called for, and was ſo alway ſince ſhe became Antichriſtian, that none continued in her communion, but that they renounce it. The third alſo is now called for here, that they would even ſeparate locally from her, as Lot from Sodom, or theſe that were near Korah, did from their tents: becauſe, 1. The ſcope is clear to ſet out the greatneſs and ſuddenneſs of her ruin: therefore they had need to keep a local diſtance, as in the examples foreſaid. 2. The former ſeparation was alway neceſſary in heart and practice from that party (and it is like, except it be amongſt any yet to be called, was actually before this) but here ſomething more and peculiar to this reaſon, viz. her deſtruction is called for, which was not alway before required. Separation may be without ſeceſſion, and ſeceſſion in changing place without ſeparation in communion; but here both are called for.

For anſwer to the ſecond, if there ſhall then be any of God's people *de facto* in Rome; or *quo jure*, may they be there till then? *Anſw.* In theſe concluſions (having diſtinguiſhed God's people. 1. In elected, regenerated and called, and elected but uncalled) 1. Many uncalled have been, and may be, in Rome, yea even of it, and theſe are called to ſeparate; for experience telleth us, God hath called many who have been members of her, and may do ſo ſtill. 2. Many of God's called people have been in Rome locally, but not of it, and have continued long ſo in her boſom: there are true worſhippers in the temple, chap. xi. even when the outer court is trode on by heatheniſh Papiſts, then the prophets propheſy even in the great city, and God hath a temple and church even where Antichriſt ſitteth, though his congregation be not that church, even as the Lord had his word, prophets and people at old Babylon, captive, when the face of worſhip was overturned in Judah; ſo in this Babylon, he keepeth ſtill his word, baptiſm (as in the former he did circumciſion) and a miniſtry that was never loſt, but all the forty two months of Antichriſt's reign the prophets propheſy, though in ſackcloth. Hence in all the univerſal expreſſions of Antichriſt's dominion, ſtill they are excepted, chap. xiii. and xvii. whoſe names are written in the book of life: and, chap. vii. an hundred forty and four thouſand are ſealed, who, chap. xiv. are found on Mount Zion, even before light in Luther's time brake forth. And it may poſſibly be, that ſome ſinfully (as ſome of the people in Babylon did) have not made a ſeceſſion from Rome, and theſe parts, though they have formerly ſeparated from her communion: or, otherwiſe by their callings (as Obadiah was engaged with Ahab) being entangled to live ſtill. This voice putteth them to it, not to lodge a night in it, for they knew not when God's judgment may ſeize upon it; yet ſhe is Babel, and theſe in her are God's people, even then: but now when the goſpel breaketh out, and her judgment approacheth, they are called not only to ſeparate from her, but to remove out of her, and expect her judgment.

For the third, the neceſſity or warrant of ſeparating, it is grounded on theſe, 1. She is Babel, and ye are my people, and there is no communion between light and darkneſs, Chriſt and Antichriſt; this giveth the great ground, ſhe is but your oppreſſor, Babylon, not your mother the church. 2. Ye cannot ſhun her ſins, if ye ſtay; not only ſhould ye own me in ſeparating yourſelves when ye are called (which belongeth to the firſt ground, that is, to confeſs with the mouth, by profeſſion, as well as to believe with the heart) but if ye ſtay, ye are ſtill in danger of ſnares; yea, ſometimes in leſs or more, are partaking of them, as Joſeph did in ſwearing by Pharaoh's life at the court of Egypt.

And by this it may alſo appear, that many living in ſuch places are engaged and enſnared in many things, that at a greater diſtance they would be liberated of.

If any aſk, may not one abide in Rome now, and not be a partaker of her ſins more than before? *Anſw.* The hazard is greater now: 1. They have a retiring place, and a ſtandard for truth ſet up, that they ſhould follow. 2. They have God's call and invitation to come out; and though he was a ſanctuary to them in the wilderneſs-ſtate, while the ſet time of their captivity laſted, yet when he openeth the door that is not to be expected ſo confidently from him. 3. Babel groweth ſtill more corrupt, and never more than ſince Trent added to all her former abominations, 4. Becauſe Rome's judgment haſteneth: and though they keep themſelves free from many of her ſins, yet they may ſhare of her temporal wrath, as Lot's family was in hazard, had not the Lord removed it from Sodom. A third reaſon of ſeceſſion is the coming great plague, ſo that God, who had long ſpared, was, by judging her, to make it appear he had forgotten nothing, and now her ſins being come to an height, her judgment ſhould delay no longer, and this preſſeth a local ſeceſſion.

Hence it followeth, 1. That it is no ſchiſm to quit fellowſhip with Rome, ſhe being no wife to the Lamb, is therefore no mother to his children; ſhe giveth them poiſon for ſincere milk, by corrupting the truth of the goſpel, and not ſuffering them to feed upon the truth: ſhe hath been condemning, perſecuting and deſtroying the true worſhippers for many generations together, and would have no fellowſhip with any without the beaſt's character; therefore is there neceſſity of ſeparating, as was ſaid to the witneſſes. chapter xi. *Come up hither*, and here, *come out of her*. 2. It followeth alſo, that folks not only may quit Rome, but of duty they ſhould do it, in obedience to Chriſt's call, and they would try their warrant that go there for curioſity, ſeeing here is a command to quit it; who are they that know what night or day this horrible judgment will be executed? It were dreadful curioſity to be found there then. 3. It followeth, that where God warranteth ſeparation, it is from a company that is no church, and muſt be ſuppoſed a Babel; and therefore there is no ſeparation allowed by him from a true church, ſeeing this is a proof of his diſclaiming her to be a church, to command them to ſeparate from her. Therefore here is Babylon contradiſtinguiſhed from his people, who are called to come out of her: which ſuppoſeth that he calleth none of his to ſeparate from ſuch as are his. It's one thing to withdraw from civil converſing with particular wicked men, another thing to ſeparate from God's church for its defects.

There is therefore this obſervable in ſeparating and withdrawing, that we are to keep leſs fellowſhip in civil things with a brother that is a church member, and is groſs, than with one that is without and not a member, as the apoſtle writeth, 2 Cor. v. 10. But we may, and ſhould, on the other ſide, keep church-fellowſhip with a true church, tho' in many things fully and corrupt, whereas we may not at all with an idolatrous company in their worſhip. Hence, in that ſame epiſtle to the Corinthians, going to, and eating in, idols temples, or at their feaſts, was ſo much condemned; yet communicating with the church of Corinth, or living as a member of it, (tho' corrupt both in doctrine and practice) was never found fault with as to worſhip: for it is clear, that that of not eating with an offending brother, looketh only to civil fellowſhip, becauſe it is ſuch a fellowſhip that is condemned with them, as is allowed to heathens, which certainly is ſuch: if our churches therefore be Chriſt's church, as ſometimes the favourers of ſeparation grant, there can be no ſeparation from them without turning to a ſchiſm.

The ſecond exhortation may be read by way of propheſy; or, becauſe the former is by way of precept, ſo is this to be underſtood alſo, *reward her*, verſe 6. Inviting them to a juſt zeal in recompencing her. It ſeemeth to be borrowed from Pſal. cxxxvii. 8. Jer. li. 35. And conſidering that the Lord here calleth for it, and that according to every ones ſtation and place, from kings in their place, and ſubjects in theirs, their can be no queſtion of the warrantableneſs of it. It is, that all, as they ſhall be called, who have ſeen Rome's whoredom, ſhall, or ſhould be ready in holy zeal, by doing or praying, to concur for executing God's judgments on her. This word *reward* implieth a juſt meeting and recompence. She did firſt the wrong, and now in juſtice they do but repay. Thoſe to whom it is ſpoken, are the perſons exhorted formerly to *come out of her*, viz. God's people, who formerly ſuffered by her, as the expreſſion of retaliation cleareth.

The juſtice and dreadfulneſs of this ſtroke, is comprehended in three reaſons, annexed in three expreſſions, 1. *Render unto her double, as ſhe hath ſerved you.* Which words not only hold out their recompencing of her to be juſt, *lege talionis*, but alſo great. So *double* is, 1. Very much, Iſa. xl. 1, 2. 2. *Double*, that is, not above her deſerving, for that will not be poured out in eternity, but it is much or more than ever ſhe, for all her malice, was able to effectuate on you. She would fain have utterly deſtroyed you, as to have left no memory of you, but could not get it done: but now wholly make ye her deſolate; for juſtice will count in her judgment, not according to her practice in what ſhe was able to effectuate, but according to her ſin, and the mark ſhe aimed at; which being againſt God, deſerveth more than they were able to do. Therefore it is not unjuſt with God, to make theſe his inſtruments (even before men) to render double to her in temporal miſeries, being all within what was due to her. The expreſſion of *filling the cup* is to the ſame purpoſe.

A ſecond thing aggreging her judgment is, that as ſhe getteth double, as the fruit of her malice, ſo let her have, ſaith the Lord, judgment according to her pride and haughtineſs; which being very great, her judgment cannot but be ſo, ſeeing here it is both the cauſe and meaſure thereof. And that her pride is great, there is a word cited out of Iſa. xlvii. and applied to her for evincing it. This is verſe 7.

The third expreſſion is verſe 8. Hanging theſe plagues on her former ſins, *Ergo. &c.* Aggreging them, 1. That they came thick, and many together. 2. *Sudden*, in one day. 3. Unexpected and irrecoverable, *utterly burnt*, another deſtruction than ever ſhe ſaw before. And becauſe it is incredible like, as things have for a long time ſtood, a word is added to confirm it, *for ſtrong is the Lord God who judgeth her:* it is not men, nor yet angels, tho' both be inſtruments; but it is the Lord's controverſy, and the judgment is his. Therefore believe it will come, and be encouraged yet to do this work who ſhall be called to it; for the Lord is engaged in it, and cannot be overpowered. This being the Lord's quarrel, and to be executed by ſaints once wronged by her, it cleareth, 1. That it is the ſame war with that, chapter xvii. 14. 2. That Rome is in a preſent guilt, when ſhe is deſtroyed. 3. That it is not executed by Antichriſt, but by ſuch as had ſuffered formerly by her; and afterward, verſe 20. are commanded to rejoice over her.

LECTURE II.

Verſe 9. *And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication, and lived deliciouſly with her, ſhall bewail her, and lament for her, when they ſhall ſee the ſmoke of her burning,*

10. *Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, ſaying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.*

11. *And the merchants of the earth ſhall weep and mourn over her, for no man buyeth their merchandiſe any more:*

12. *The merchandiſe of gold and ſilver, and precious ſtones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and ſilk, and ſcarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner veſſels of ivory, and all manner veſſels of moſt precious wood, and of braſs, and iron, and marble.*

13. *And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincenſe, and wine, and oyl, and fine flour, and wheat, and beaſts, and ſheep, and horſes, and chariots, and ſlaves, and ſouls of men.*

14. *And the fruits that thy ſoul luſted after, are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly, are departed from thee, and thou ſhalt find them no more at all.*

15. *The merchants of theſe things which were made rich by her, ſhall ſtand afar off, for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,*

16. *And ſaying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and ſcarlet, and decked with gold, and precious ſtones and pearls:*

17. *For in one hour ſo great riches is come to nought. And every ſhip-maſter, and all the company in ſhips, and ſailors, and as many as trade by ſea, ſtood afar off.*

18. *And cried when they ſaw the ſmoke of her burning, ſaying, What city is like unto this great city?*

19. *And they caſt duſt on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, ſaying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ſhips in the ſea, by reaſon of her coſtlineſs: for in one hour is ſhe made deſolate.*
20. *Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apoſtles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her.*
21. *And a mighty angel took up a ſtone like a great milſtone, and caſt it into the ſea, ſaying, Thus with violence ſhall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and ſhall be found no more at all.*
22. *And the voice of harpers, and muſicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, ſhall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftſman, of whatſoever craft he be, ſhall be found any more in thee; and the ſound of a milſtone ſhall be heard no more at all in thee;*
23. *And the light of a candle ſhall ſhine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom, and of the bride ſhall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy ſorceries were all nations deceived:*
24. *And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of ſaints, and of all that were ſlain upon the earth.*

FOlloweth now the ſecond part of this angel's diſcourſe, whereby the ſad deſolation of Rome is foretold, viz. the ſad lamentation of all her friends; it ſhall be ſo great and dreadful, as to affect and aſtoniſh them all: this is the ſcope, which is clear, and we ſhall inſiſt the leſs on the words.

The parties brought in lamenting, are of three ſorts, moſt eſpecially concerned, who are ſufficient as to the ſcope. 1. Kings, verſes 9, 10. Then Merchants, ver. 11. 3. Shipmen and Traders by ſea, verſe 17. All theſe ſhall join in lamenting, but for their ſeveral ends.

The kings, that is, ſome of the kings, chapter xvii. who ſhall not hate her with the reſt, but ſhall continue favourers of the beaſt, till the battle of Armaggedon, they ſhall lament this deſolation, not acknowledging God's juſtice, but affected with their own particular, and otherwiſe blinded. By which it is clear, 1. That not all the ten horns, chapter xvii. but ſome of them ſhall hate the whore. 2. That after Rome's deſtruction, many ſhall remain unſatisfied with it, even when the propheſy is fulfilled, which ſaith, that the fulfilling of propheſies maketh them not palpably to be ſo, where there is prejudice formerly drunken in. 3. It ſaith, that Rome's deſolation will be ſad to many kings that are enemies to Chriſt, and therefore not be executed by them.

Theſe kings are ſuch as have been partakers of her ſin, and have been in love with her external pomp and delicate way, now they have one common lamentation with the reſt, Alas, alas! that ſheweth affection in them, and deſolation on her, that they lament for. 1. In its greatneſs, ſhe is burned. 2. In its terribleneſs, they ſtand afar off for fear: they cannot, or dare not, help her, tho' they lament her. 3. In its greatneſs and unexpectedneſs, *that mighty city is deſtroyed in one hour.* And ſeeing theſe kings both partake of her fornications, and give their power to the beaſt, it muſt follow, that theſe go together: and therefore this ſin, for which Rome is ruined, is Antichriſt's ſin, and that defection hath been derived to all the nations from it, and by it, before its deſtruction, and that for a long time, which hath intoxicated or bewitched them ſo to affect her.

If it be aſked, why kings ſo much lament, and are affected? *Anſw.* Many of them, or ſome of them, are ſtill drunken with that wine of her fornications, and cannot lay by that pomp of external worſhip, whereby their magnificence hath opportunity to kyth, and they love a natural formal way of worſhip, and cannot abide the ſimplicity and ſpirituality of the goſpel. 2. They have been for a long time entertained with counterfeit reſpects from that court, receiving titles and privileges from her that have ſometimes been thought much of, ſuch as to be Protector Eccleſiae to the Roman emperor, Rex Catholicus to Spain, Rex Chriſtianiſſimus to France, Defenſores Eccleſiae to the Helvetians, Defenſor Fidei to the kings of England, ſanctified ſwords and banners, &c. Theſe vanities are now taken away from them. 3. All men, eſpecially great men, love an eaſy and lazy form of worſhip, ſuch as Popery is, to get diſpenſations to their oaths, unlawful inceſtuous marriages, (as often many

Popiſh kings do, Spain with his niece, and Poland with his brother's wife for the time) pardons and indulgences, for money, for their greateſt ſins. Theſe things the kings love well, and will be in heaven as ſoon as any, if money will do it, and cannot abide to want theſe things that give them liberty, when there is hope by ſome money to recover all. 4. Enmity at Chriſt's way and yoke; they ſee her going down, maketh way for the flouriſhing and ſpreading of the true religion that they ſtill were ſuppreſſing, and that galleth them. Theſe reaſons are from their intereſt. 5. Poſſibly alſo the fear of ſharing in that judgment, they being jointly ſome way engaged with her, it may affect them, and that fear maketh them ſtand afar off.

The next who lament are the merchants, who have their *alas*, verſe 16. alſo upon theſe common grounds, (*i. e.* the ruin of an excellent outward glorious city) in a general way of pity, eſpecially conſidering that ſhe, that was juſt now gallant in all pomp, is ſuddenly brought to the deſolation; yet the ground is alſo more peculiar, they by their loſs do loſe their trade and gain in merchandiſing; and thus their particular ſticketh to them. Therefore merchants are in two ways in this lamentation to be underſtood. 1. Literally, the merchants of thoſe ſorts of Wares which Rome in its greatneſs and luxury, made uſe of; and that for two ends, *Firſt*, In their pomp and civil outward grandeur. Theſe four are mentioned, 1. All things ſerving for decking the body gorgeouſly, as ver. 12, *Gold, ſilver, precious ſtones, pearls, fine linen, ſcarlet, purple, &c.* 2. All things that adorn a houſe, as *ſweet wood, ivory, veſſels of precious wood, braſs, iron*, ibid. verſe 12. 3. All manner of things for pampering the body, and the table, and for ſavour, as *ſpices, cinnamon, odours, wine, ſheep, oxen, wheat, &c.* verſe 13. 4. All neceſſaries for outward pomp and equipage in peace and war, that is, *ſervants, horſes*, and *chariots:* in a word, whatever delicious thing was deſirable. Theſe were all much made uſe of at Rome, and are ſtill by their eccleſiaſtical princes. *Secondly*, They are much made uſe of in their external ſervice, and manner of worſhip, *gold* and *ſilver* in their images and ornamenting of churches, *purple* to their cardinals; *fine linen* about their relicts and maſs, table or altars; *oyl* in many things, &c. Thus merchants that were ſure how to get theſe things ſold at a good rate at Rome, are now diſappointed of their gain; theſe things ſell not ſo well, and they lament for it, as it is ſaid concerning Tyrus, Ezek. xxvii. but this is not all. This ſort of merchandiſe is ſtill of worth, gold, ſilver, &c. And tho' Rome be deſtroyed, they might have recourſe elſewhere to their market; it muſt therefore be ſome other ſort of merchandiſe, and merchants who live eſpecially by theſe wâters of Rome, and whoſe merchandiſe and trade faileth, when it falleth, and is ſo peculiar to Rome, it is clear; for this merchandiſe is of *ſouls of men*, diſtinct from bodies, (for the words, *ſouls and bodies*, in the original, differ in this caſe, to ſhew, that one thing is not underſtood by both) that is, ſelling ſouls out of purgatory, and ſending them by it at their pleaſure, and trading with their diſpenſations, indulgences, &c. And by her merchants, then muſt be underſtood their cardinals, and great churchmen, who are verſe 23. called *the great men of the earth*, (and ſuch a greatneſs is a part of Rome's ſin, and a cauſe of her ruin) whoſe trade is now cried down at Rome's deſtruction, none buyeth their wares now, when their vanity is diſcovered, as in a great part hath been ſince Luther's days. Theſe wares are ſuch as are peculiar to Rome, theſe make their great men rich: and therefore this decay maketh them cry out, Alas, alas! This is merchandiſing of falſe teachers ſpoken of, 2 Pet. ii. 3. who profeſs themſelves ſhepherds, but feed themſelves, and not the flock, Ezek. xxxiv. This muſt be the merchandiſing, and the merchants here underſtood; for great men of the earth, are not for common wares, and this trade is pitched on here as ſinful, in reſpect of them, as committing fornication with her was in the kings.

Having ſet down the merchants, (who are the great clergymen) their lamentation for their temporal loſs and hazard alſo, viz. both *lucrum ceſſans*, and *damnum emergens*, (which two are the great grounds of lamentation among the men of the world.) He proceedeth, verſe 15. to the lamentation of the ſhip-men, and under-rowers of Peter's bark, as they call it, or inferior clergymen, and ſub-miniſters of the church of Rome, who have their ſtanding by this trade, verſe 17. and their lamentation is much more, as having a more ſenſible touch of their own miſery in hers, *they caſt duſt on their heads*, poſſibly being more blinded than others) and regret the deſolation of that city that had no equal in her pomp, and hath now no equal in her ruin; yet ſo they lament, as it appear-

eth, what pincheth them moſt, *She made all that traded in ſhips rich*, verſe 19. Not ſimply all, who traded in outward things, but all her dependers in abbacies and convents, prieſts, jeſuits, and all inferior orders and officers, that were ſervants to this ſtately city in her merchandiſe, and providing for her venting of her wares, and carrying them through the world, and bringing back returns, for the adorning of her again; all in that ſea are made rich: ſo the merchants ſuit with the wares, the ſhipmen and ſea muſt be ſuitable to both, employing a trade and traffic of Rome, ſinful to her, and enriching to her ſervants and merchants occupied in it. Theſe ſhipmen's ſtanding, dependeth on Rome, and her ruin is theirs: for, all of that ſort live by her trade, and that is the change of her merchants: from which it is clear, that that ſea is not literally to be taken here, but ſo as ſerveth to this Antichriſtian trade and end of merchandiſing in the forms, laws, and eccleſiaſtic ſtate of that whore, and her clergy, who are moſt uſeful in that employment, and made up by it. The orders are the ſhips and men that trade; the ſea is the ſpirituality under which notion they trade. Hence alſo we may ſee what trade enricheth Rome moſt, viz. of ſouls, and what holdeth on its merchants, viz. ſelf-intereſt; it giveth them ſuch a being as they have in worldly eſteem and grandeur: and what wonder it be ſad to them to part with ſuch a trade?

The third part of the angel's denunciation followeth, verſe 20. ſetting out the greatneſs and fulneſs of this ruin, by the great ground of joy it ſhould give, and juſtly give to all God's people formerly oppreſſed by her. The words are by an apoſtrophe, ſpoken to others than theſe he was ſpeaking to in the words before. By heavens, apoſtles and prophets, may figuratively be underſtood, the great glory God ſhall have out of Rome's deſtruction, ſo that it ſhall affect heaven, and be ground to them of joy; or, rather by heaven, is meaned the church, ſo they come in as obeying by this, chap. xix. and they ſing, and by apoſtles and prophets, is underſtood their ſucceſſors, who are to be in the church unto the end. The reaſon why they ſhould joy, is, becauſe in this judgment, God had reſpect to them, to vindicate them, and to liberate them, and is to take vengeance on her for them. If it be aſked, how ſhe, viz. Rome Antichriſtian, was guilty of the blood of the prophets and apoſtles, ver. 20. and all ſaints? ver. 24. Or, 2. how they are to rejoice at her deſtruction? *Anſw.* 1. She is guilty of the apoſtles blood, as of the prophets blood, (tho' ſhe never actually ſhed the blood of any of them) in theſe three, 1. Becauſe there is but one body, and who wrongeth any of the members on that common account, as ſuch he wrongeth the head and all the reſt; for they have one cauſe. 2. Becauſe they who wrong one, they virtually wrong all; and their malice would reach to all, if they had them, as Matth. xxiii. 31. *ye are the children of them that killed the prophets;* for ye ſhall ſlay me, and would have done ſo to them, if ye had had them. 3. They are acceſſory in ſerving themſelves, heirs to the judgments of all perſecutors, who have all one lot, and who comes laſt, is on the ſame ſcore with the former; ſo is the generation that Chriſt lived in, guilty of all the blood that was ſhed from Abel's time, Matth. xxiii. unto that. For anſwer to the ſecond, they rejoice not carnally or ſelfiſhly; but, 1. For that they ſee the glory of God's juſtice manifeſted. 2. That they, and eſpecially the truth they ſuffered for, and the threatnings they had pronounced in his name, do appear now to be vindicated and ratified, and God owneth them, which for a long time was not believed in the world; thus he hath *judged your judgment*, that is, there was ſtill a controverſy between them and Babylon, God cometh and now decideth for them, and declareth it was truth they ſuffered for, and not error. 3. That by this mean, way is made to the ſpreading of Chriſt's kingdom, the ſnare is removed from many a poor ſoul. This is joyful to them, and upon this account they formerly prayed for it, and this addeth to their joy, when God now heareth them, and maketh it appear he heareth them.

The laſt part of the chapter followeth, from verſe 21. by the ſecond angel, who by word and ſign confirmeth this final and utter deſtruction of Rome. The ſign goeth firſt, the word next, and the cauſe of it is ſet down in the cloſe. The ſign is *a mighty angel, taking up a great ſtone, like a milſtone, and caſting it in the ſea.* So that as the heavy ſtone, which is thrown down by a mighty angel to the bottom of the ſea, cannot but ſuddenly fall, and not riſe, ſo ſure ſhall this fall of Babylon or Rome's deſtruction be, and that with violence, and ſhe ſhall no more be found. This is the angel's expoſition, verſe 21. as taken from Jer. li. 63, 64. and ſpoken of old Babylon. He proceeds to ampli-

fy this deſolation, verſe 22, 23. out of Jer. xxv. 10, 11. where the ſad deſolation of Judah is propheſied in theſe, almoſt the ſame, terms. 1. There ſhall be no more chearfulneſs and mirth there. 2. No tradeſmen uſeful for man's life there. 3. No milſtone, or proviſion meet for entertaining man's life there. 4. No light of a candle, or what is comfortable, but abſolute darkneſs there. 5. No marrying, or chearful ſolemnity of that kind, without which there can be no continuing city. Theſe particulars are inſtanced, according to the manner of the prophets, to ſet out deſolation, and its continuing in the higheſt degree.

The cauſes follow, and they are three great ones, the firſt is, verſe 23. *For thy merchants were the great men of the earth:* whereby it is clear, 1. Theſe are not common traders, but ſuch as become by this trade to be, and are accounted, great men on the earth, though not in heaven. 2. That it muſt be ſomething ſinful and peculiarly ſinful to Rome, which is not to be found elſewhere, it being given here as the firſt cauſe of their judgment, which could not be of ordinary merchandiſing, but that in an extraordinary way ſhe employed ſuch men (and made it a trade honourable even for the beſt) in ſuch things as were ſinful, wherein even princes thought it honourable to be employed, and theſe employed were thought ſo; for though it be borrowed from the traffic of Tyrus, Ezek. xxvii. yet it is to be applied ſpiritually, as many other things in this propheſy, not to temporal wares, but ſpiritual: this being John's way, as before was obſerved, to borrow expreſſions from the prophets their ſetting forth of temporal evils, and to apply them to ſpiritual.

The ſecond cauſe, is her ſorceries, whereby many were deceived, which is to be underſtood ſpiritually alſo, as the former of enticing or bewitching, Gal. iii. 1. to idolatry and her ſuperſtitious worſhip, though literally ſorcery, wherein Rome abounded, is not to be ſecluded, as neither in the former the literal trading where ſuch was.

The third ſin, is, perſecution and blood-ſhed, and that of all ſorts, miniſters and people; yea, ſhe being the laſt perſecutor, and head of all the perſecutions throughout other kingdoms, whether by inquiſitions, maſſacres, or wars, ſhe is found juſtly guilty of all, upon the reaſons given before, and it is now repayed on her, though others will not be freed of the judgment.

Theſe are the ſins, now if Rome be this Babylon, as adverſaries confeſs, theſe ſins muſt either be the ſins of heathen Rome, or of Popiſh Rome, or of Rome under their feigned Antichriſt, that muſt procure this judgment, (for, its ruin is not to be ſeparated from its cauſe) but they cannot be ſins of heathen Rome, that procureth the ruin of that city, which is irreparable, ſuch as is here: For, 1. The ſins here procuring this judgment, are ſuch as Rome is to be actually taken in the guilt of, and many preſently are acting in it; but that idolatry and perſecution of old Rome is broken off long ſince. 2. This ruin is on an whore; and therefore ſuch ſins as belong to one making defection, which cannot be applied to heathen Rome; for, this is whoring Rome that is here. 3. Theſe ſins are a following ſtep of idolatry and perſecution that was to be on the earth, viz. Antichriſt after the heatheniſh perſecution ceaſeth, as was cleared, chap. vi. for ſaints are to be killed after that fifth ſeal, which is to be performed by the beaſt, chap. xiii. and xvii. and here it is cloſed.

4. Theſe ſins for which Rome is deſtroyed, are the ſins wherewith Babylon is formerly charged, chap. xvii. and whereof the world was guilty then, but theſe were not the ſins of heathen Rome, but of Antichriſt, neither is it very like that Rome ſo long time after will be puniſhed for faults done thouſands of years before, or at leaſt, many hundreds. It followeth then, 1. That that city Rome is by this propheſy eſpecially ho'den out to be a ſeat of Antichriſtian tyranny, when ſhe is found guilty of all this blood; otherwiſe ſhe would not be ſo ſingularly plagued with him, and for him. 2. That Rome preſently muſt be thus under the guiltineſs, and that its preſent practice is the continuing of this guilt; for we cannot conſider Rome guilty thus, but as either under heathen perſecutors, and this is not the guilt, for ſhe is plagued for a preſent guilt, and taken in the act of whoring, for God's puniſhment is not on the walls of a town where ſuch ſins once were committed; but on perſons, principally, preſently ſinning, or continuing in former guiltineſs, and long forborn, and on the walls for their cauſe; or it muſt be conſidered as guilty under an Antichriſt to come, and to ſuffer the ruin by him; (if ſo he be to come as they ſay) but this cannot be ſaid either: for, 1. They ſay, Rome is not to be his ſeat, but Jeruſalem,

therefore this judgment is not due peculiarly to Rome, if that defection be not ſingularly acted and plotted by it. 2. They ſay, Rome is to be deſtroyed by him, or by the ten kings before him; but that deſtruction would be ſuffering innocently, and not juſtly for her ſins, as here. 3. This judgment of Rome is given as an evidence of God's juſtice, and to continue a time, as a ground of rejoicing to the ſaints, and as a ground of lamentation to the kings, who ſupported the beaſt, and committed fornication with this whore: that muſt therefore be a longer time before the end of the world than they make it, and cannot be by Antichriſt, as they ſay, but for him that it is deſtroyed; for that would be no rejoicing to the ſaints, but mourning to them, and joy to him and his. Seeing, then, it is not Rome, one of theſe ways conſidered, it muſt be Rome Popiſh: for an other ſtate of it is not alledged by them; yea, it is this Rome, and this deſtruction, upon ſuch cauſes yet to come: for it is to be done by kings, that, in John's time, had no dominion, but were to receive it, and afterwards to give it, for a time, to the beaſt, and were to commit whoredom with this whore, and then, after that, to hate her, and deſtroy her. Again, it appeareth here alſo, that many will ſtick in their doting, to lament Rome, even after its ruin, which certainly could not be, if they underſtood this propheſy. It is no marvel then it be dark to many, as yet, who ſtick ſo to that Antichriſt then, as if he were not Antichriſt; ſo, it is like, many will defend this Babylon at its ruin, as if it were not the Babylon ſpoken of here. The Jews ſtill reject clear propheſies of Chriſt, and of their deſtruction, for rejecting him. Propheſy then after their fulfilling are clear to ſuch whoſe eyes God openeth only, and are not diſcerned by all, as Papiſts ſpeak. 3. Hence alſo, we may gather, it is but fooliſh pity, that is ſhewn in Rome's greatneſs in herſelf, or pendicles, ſuch as abbacies, monaſteries, &c. God's juſtice ſhould be acknowledged on them, and none ſhould thus lament over them. 4. It muſt follow then, that the way of worſhip now at Rome, muſt be fornication and ſorcery; their executions, perſecutions, their ſelling of pardons, &c. the merchandizing condemned here.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *And after theſe things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, ſaying, Alleluia, ſalvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God:*

2. *For true and righteous are his judgments, for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his ſervants at her hand.*

3. *And again they ſaid, Alleluia. And her ſmoke roſe up for ever and ever.*

4. *And the four and twenty elders, and the four beaſts, fell down and worſhipped God that ſat on the throne, ſaying, Amen, Alleluia.*

5. *And a voice came out of the throne, ſaying, Praiſe our God, all ye his ſervants, and ye that fear him, both ſmall and great.*

6. *And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, ſaying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.*

7. *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herſelf ready.*

THE ſcope of this chapter is more fully to explain the events of the ſixth vial, chap. xvi. which was more abruptly left there, without ſhewing the event of that battle of Armageddon, which is ſupplied here. That it doth belong to the ſixth vial, beſide what was ſaid, chap. xvi. doth appear from theſe things, 1. That this is ſubjoined to the expoſition of the fifth vial, chap. xviii. and includeth other events not on the ſeat of the beaſt, but on the beaſt himſelf, who ſurviveth his ſeat, and is placed before the expoſition of the ſeventh vial, the object whereof is not the beaſt, as in this chapter,

and his adherents only, but Satan's kingdom indefinitely, who is taken, chap. xx. and caſten into the lake, where the beaſt and falſe prophet are before him, as being caſt in there by this ſixth vial. This then belonging to an event after the fifth, and before the ſeventh, it muſt be applied to the ſixth, by which, and under which, the beaſt muſt end before the ſeventh come, as his throne did by the fifth.

2. It is clear, that the event of this battle, deſcribed here, is the event of the ſame battle, whereof the preparation is ſet down, chap. xvi. under the ſixth vial: it muſt therefore belong to it: for all theſe vials bring judgment on the beaſt: and if this event belong not to the ſixth vial, but the preparation only, which was chap. xvi. then it cannot bring a plague on him; for the plague conſiſteth not in preparation to the battle, but in the croſs event of it to him, which this chapter ſetteth down, and mentioneth nothing of his preparing for it, becauſe that was done, chap. xvi. but proceedeth to the event, which was ſuſpended there in its diſcovery. That ſixth vial contained two notable effects, one ſhewing the increaſe of the church, and a notable acceſſion to her; the ſecond ſhewing the rage of Antichriſt at that, anſwerable to which this nineteenth chapter hath two parts: 1. Of exulting at theſe glad tidings, unto verſe 10. 2. Of the beaſt's overthrow, and his helpers, from verſe 11. to the end. That which is caſten in, verſe 10. is not prophetical, but the record of a particular of John's carriage, and the angel's, whereby way is made from one part of the explication to the other.

The ſong hath three parts: the firſt is more general, reſpecting the former deliverance, verſe 1, 2, 3, and 4. The ſecond is more particular, reſpecting as the ground of it, the preſent ſtate of the church, and a more ſpecial way of Chriſt's reigning in her, from verſe 5, to verſe 8. *Thirdly*, This ground of joy is more fully explained and confirmed, verſe 8, 9.

The firſt part expreſſeth the church's rejoicing over Rome's deſtruction, and a ſpecial invitation they give to the Jews to praiſe God with them, anſwerable to that invitation, Iſa. ii. 5. The ſecond ſheweth what welcome they ſhall give them when they ſhall come in, ſo both do look ſome way to the Jews calling, as was ſhown, chap. xvi. and is ſo to be applied. The Gentiles now taking occaſion, when this ſtumbling-block of Popery is taken out of the way, to ſtir up, and provoke the Jews to join with them: this agreeth well to the time of the Jews calling, which muſt be before the end. 2. It agreeth well to theſe propheſies, Iſa. ii. 5. and Micah iv. 3, 4, 5. and Iſa. xxiv. where ſuch exhortations are foretold. 3. It ſuiteth well with theſe phraſes hereof *Alleluia* in Hebrew, becauſe it is ſpoken to them, which, in former ſongs, is not uſed. 4. That theſe made ready, are *the Lamb's wife*, as having a former intereſt in him, and that peculiarly he reigneth, now, when they come in, as Iſa. xxiv. 23. All which could not be well ſaid without them.

The firſt ſong hath two parts: 1. *Of many in heaven*, as it were more promiſcuouſly. 2. Of the *elders* and *beaſts*, more orderly, ver. 4. By the firſt, is underſtood the joy that ſhall be in heaven amongſt all the ſaints in the church militant in their private ſtations. By the ſecond, is underſtood the ſolemn acknowledging of God, and giving of him praiſe in the congregation. By theſe in heaven, we underſtand theſe who, verſe 5. are called, *All that fear God, ſmall and great;* which taketh in eſpecially theſe who are ſo accounted here on earth in the militant church, which is often called *heaven:* it will be no error to take it properly alſo, there being joy at the converſion of one, much more at ſuch an acceſſion as this; their joy is in a viſion in heaven, ſet out to John here. The ſecond circumſtance, is the time of this joy, *After theſe things*, implying not only the order of John's ſeeing, but the order of ſucceeding, viz. after Rome's deſtruction, and the lamentation of her friends, this ſong ariſeth. If any aſk, Why this ſong is after their lamentation? Theſe two reaſons may be given: 1. Spiritual grounds of joy, affect ſaints more ſlowly than temporal grounds of loſs do men of the world; the one is ſooner ſenſible of this, than the other of that. 2. Becauſe this joy hath not only reſpect to Babylon's ruin in itſelf, but to the events of the church's enlargement, that was to follow the removing of that ſtumbling-block out of the way: therefore it is reſerved to begin the event of the ſixth vial.

The ſong of the ſaints, or church, in general, is, 1. Generally propounded, ver. 1, 2. The grounds of the joy laid down, verſe 2. and confirmed, verſe 3. The firſt word is *Alleluia*, and it is an Hebrew word, of *Hallel* and *Jah*, and is on the matter, the ſame with *praiſe God*, verſe 5. for ſo

they anſwer Hallelujah. It is often the beginning and cloſe of many pſalms, it is not uſed out of any ſuperſtitious account of ſyllables or letters in this word, as if they were more holy than others; but that their multiplying of Hebrew words and praiſes in them, or exhortations to praiſe, may now ſuit with the preſent ſcope, which is to point out the increaſe of Chriſt's praiſe now after Rome's deſtruction by the Hebrews; and there can be no other reaſon why it is ſo often repeated here, being in no other place mentioned, where ſongs are uſed, and yet ſome peculiar reaſon thereof may warrantably be enquired after.

More particularly, the praiſe is expreſſed in four words, rendering unto God ſalvation, glory, &c. which were before, chapter v. ſpoken of. In a word, it is, the praiſe of all thoſe be to him who alone deſerveth it.

The grounds of all this praiſe, are, verſe 2. in general, *his judgments are true*, that is, his threatenings are fulfilled; or, what is threatened cometh to paſs, and taketh hold of folks as well as his mercies: ſo, Ezek. i. 6. his word of threatening ſtriketh to a people, when the prophets who did threaten it are gone. And as they are true, ſo they are righteous, and not inflicted but on juſt grounds that will ſtop the mouths of all his cenſures. Both theſe are proven in this great inſtance of *judging the whore*, who was juſtly condemned in that ſhe *corrupted the earth*, and deluded the world with her abominations: and truth kythed in it; in that, by it, he ſheweth himſelf the avenger of much innocent blood ſhed by her, which vengeance he had often threatened againſt her, and now he had performed it.

The repetition for confirmation followeth, ver. 3. and *again they ſaid, Alleluia*, 1. To ſhew it was no paſſing fit, but that they continued in the practice of that duty, and under the conviction of their obligation to it, and were withal hearty in it. 2. To ſhew they were not ſoon ſatisfied in performing this duty: for they fall to it over and over again; and therefore they ſtir up all, and vent it in an exhortation to all to join with them: an heart rightly thankful, is not ſoon ſatisfied with its own praiſe. The ground is further illuſtrated, that Rome's judgment is irrecoverable and great, yea, perpetual; therefore they praiſe as being but to continue in it; by the continuance of that ground; for *her ſmoke* is continual, *riſing up for ever and ever*.

Their ſolemn thankſgiving is, verſe 4. *The elders and beaſts*, (ſignifying people and miniſters, as we ſhew, chap. iv.) they concur ſolemnly by falling down jointly, (which is to worſhip publicly) and putting to their ſeal in two words to the former praiſe, Amen, that is, ſo be it; or he is well worthy to whom it ſhould be given; let it be ſo, in a confident wiſh and prayer, and Alleluia they can expreſs no more, but count God worthy, and invite others (eſpecially the Jews, for whoſe ſake this is in Hebrew) to give God praiſe.

The ſecond part of the ſong, which is in reference to the Jews calling eſpecially, followeth from ver. 5. to ver. 8. There is, 1. The party exhorting. 2. The party exhorted. 3. The exhortation itſelf. 4. The grounds of it. And, 5. Obedience thereunto, which is a part of the ſong in general.

The party exhorting is, *a voice from the throne*, that is, from heaven, or from the ſanctuary, repreſenting miniſters ſerious preſſing of people to rejoice and be glad in this joyful event, and to praiſe God for it; or it is the voice of Jeſus Chriſt, calling God his God as he is Mediator: or of an angel, having his warrant, as by verſes 8, 9, 10. appeareth in his refuſing worſhip from John, if the party ſpeaking here be the ſame that John falleth down before there.

The parties exhorted to this duty, are *God's ſervants*, called afterward, *thoſe that fear him both ſmall and great*, that is, all his houſe who acknowledge him as Lord and Maſter: for, though all creatures ſome way be his ſervants, Pſal. cxix. 91. yet here they are taken more properly, either for ſuch as are by covenant his ſervants, by tye and profeſſion ſeparated to be ſuch unto God, as all Iſrael, even the children were, Lev. xxiii. 47, &c. Or, more eſpecially, for believers, who, by their practice manifeſt their reſpecting of this obligation in giving him fear, and that of all ſorts, high and low, ſtrong and weak, &c.

The exhortation is to praiſe, and that our God, which wanteth not an emphaſis in praiſing more than in other duties, as Deut. xxi. the great and dreadful name of the Lord your God: that maketh praiſe and all duties to come kindly from us, and be accepted graciouſly by him, when it founded upon a covenant relation: thus it is not only praiſe, but ſo qualified in its object, our God, that is called for.

The obedience followeth, which expreſſeth the grounds, ver. 6, 7. There are many that go about the work, therefore it is called *like the noiſe of many waters*, and *like great thunderings*. Not to hold out confuſion or terribleneſs in their ſong, but greatneſs in it, and earneſtneſs in them who ſing; it is loudneſs in their ſong: which in its matter is diſtinctly ſet down from two grounds (beſide their concurring in the former Alleluia, and inviting others to concur) the firſt ground, is, *the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*. This is not God's ordinary ſovereignty, whereby he guideth all the world, (for that hath no interruption) but this is the manifeſting of that ſovereignty at ſpecial times, and in ſpecial events, in the guiding of his church. This, as before men, ſeemeth ſometimes to be eclipſed, as where it is ſaid, chap. xi. that God hath taken to him his power and reigneth, which he ſeemed for a time to neglect. This then is underſtood here: for, this being a peculiar expreſſion of praiſe, it looketh to a peculiar manner of his appearing and reigning: which is two ways ſpoken of, 1. When it is evidenced in ſingular overthrows of his enemies, ſo Antichriſt's overthrow is an evidence that God reigneth, chap. xi. whoſe dominion ſeemed before to be obſcured while he ſtood. See Pſal. lix. 13. 2. When there is an acceſſion to the church, as chapter xi. when nations became the Lord's and his Chriſt's; and more eſpecially, his reclaiming of Iſrael, and appointing David their king over them, is looked on as a ſpecial part and evidence of his dominion, as Iſa. xxiv. 23. Ezek. xxxiv. Micah iv. 7. This is when they ſhall cry *Hoſannah unto him who cometh in the name of the Lord:* for that being a part of Chriſt's promiſed kingdom, there is ſome ſeeming want in his outward ſovereign reign, ſo long as this is wanting: now, ſay they, Alleluia, the Lord reigneth over Jews as well as Gentiles: for as the in-coming of the Gentiles is a more eminent ſtep of his reign and marriage than was before, when the Jews were only the church; ſo that the Jews acceſſion to the church, is as another remarkable ſtep (when they ſhall be called in) beyond what was when the Gentiles were only his church.

The exhortation is renewed, ver. 7. with a new ground, *let us be glad and rejoice:* it is a duty, and a great part of praiſe, even to rejoice in God; it honoureth him. The other word proveth this that relateth to God, *let us give honour to him*. This acceſſion is acknowledged to be from him, and therefore the honour of it is due to him. The firſt part ſetteth out the inward affection in praiſing; the ſecond their outward expreſſing of it to God's honour. The reaſon is twofold, which is ſubjoined, yet to one ſcope, 1. *For the marriage of the Lamb is come*. Chriſt's marriage with his church is three ways ſpoken of in ſcripture, 1. As it cometh by the offer of the goſpel, wherein many are eſpouſed, and by faith engaged to him, 2 Cor. xi. 2. Thus it hath been, even ſince Chriſt's days, his marriage was then, and many were, and are, invited, Matth. xxii. &c. 2. As it is conſummated and perfected at the end, when the queen is brought to the king, and abideth with him for ever, Pſal. xlv. 3. There is an intervening ſtep, when the fulneſs of the Gentiles, and the Jews, ſhall be brought in together, that is, marrying eminently; becauſe it is the grafting in again of the old branches, and the bringing back of a divorced wife, for a time forſaken. And becauſe then eminently there will be an accepting of the bargain of grace on the marriage terms, as if what paſſed had been but wooing, in reſpect of this following enlargement: and, as in ſcripture, there is a threefold reſurrection, 1. By the goſpel, 1. Which was and is alway, Job v. *The dead ſhall hear the voice, &c.* verſe 14. 2. At the end, which is general, as the firſt is particular. 3. When Jews and Gentiles ſhall come in together, which, Rom. xi. is as life from the dead, which is between the two former. So may we conſider the church's marriage with Chriſt, which is the ſame with the reſurrection, in a threefold conſideration alſo. It is not the firſt, nor the ſecond marriage that is mentioned here; for it is in a ſingular way ſuch a marriage as was not before, and the laſt end is not intended here: for that laſt marriage doth not comprehend an acceſſion to the militant church, as this doth here, going along with the Pope's overthrow before the end. It is therefore that of the fulneſs of the Gentiles in-coming, and the Jews reingrafting eſpecially, who are here called his wife: not as all believers are, but even in ſome reſpect ſuch before their calling. For it is his wife he is to be married with, which is peculiar to the Jews, who in ſome reſpect ſtand in a tye and relation to God by that covenant with Abraham, &c. which is not with any nation that can come in then to the

church, as appeareth from Rom. xi. 26, 27, &c. for, they are beloved for the Father's ſake, when broken off, and *the Father's ſake* relateth to the covenant made with them. So *his wife* here, holdeth forth the in-coming of the Jewiſh nation, to accept of their long deſpiſed Bridegroom, and their returning to their firſt huſband, and David their king, which is ſaid of them to be fulfilled in the latter days, Hoſ. ii.

The reaſons why we expound this of the Jews, are, 1. Becauſe they ſpeak of this acceſſion to the church as of ſome excellent new thing, and calleth them ſingularly the *Lamb's wife*; and therefore they muſt be diſtinct from the Gentile's church, who do thus ſtyle them and make them welcome: for, theſe titles are given eſpecially to theſe who are now lately joined and made ready for their huſband and marriage. 2. Becauſe there can be no ſuch grounds of praiſe, if the Jews were not here included. For, 1. It is his reigning in the moſt eminent way in his church. 2. It is the church's eminent ſtep of glory unto, and readineſs for her marriage; and can that be without the Jews? 3. Neither can there be ſuch joy, as if now nothing were wanting, if the Jews incoming, which is fore propheſied of, as life from the dead, Rom. xi. were yet defective. Beſide, that theſe titles and expreſſions have a peculiar ſuitableneſs and ſibneſs with the Jews, as is ſaid before her *being made ready*, is her being made ſuitable and fit for ſuch a work and Bridegroom, viz. with the wedding garment, Matth. xxii. which is faith and holineſs; and ſhe is content to take him, and longeth for a church-ſtate to own him. She is ſaid to *make herſelf ready*, not as if in her own ſtrength ſhe fitted herſelf; for, that is contrary to what followeth, *to her it was given*, whatever ſhe had, ſhe got it freely, it was not her own. But it implieth, 1. That ſhe muſt be made ready for him: common garments are not for that wedding, Mat. xxii. 2. That ſhe is active in it, purifying herſelf as he is pure, from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit, 1 John iii. 2 Cor. vii. 1. 3. That which maketh her ready, is ſomething performed by her, viz. her believing, which yet is done in his ſtrength; and all the marriage dependeth on that. Now, ſhe deſpiſeth no longer, but layeth by her enmity, and ſubmitteth. It ſheweth the manner how ſhe came to be made ready, or the putting away antecedently of what marred her; but it ſheweth not the ſtrength, by which ſhe is made ready: the next verſe adjoined, guardeth againſt that.

LECTURE II.

Verſe 8. *And to her was granted, that ſhe ſhould be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteouſneſs of the ſaints.*

9. *And he ſaith unto me, write, bleſſed are they which are called unto the marriage ſupper of the Lamb. And he ſaith unto me, theſe are the true ſayings of God.*

10. *And I fell at his feet to worſhip him: and he ſaid unto me, ſee thou do it not: I am thy fellow-ſervant, and of thy brethren that have the teſtimony of Jeſus, worſhip God: For the teſtimony of Jeſus is the ſpirit of propheſy.*

THIS eighth verſe doth more fully clear, and the ninth more fully confirm what went immediately before concerning the Lamb's marriage, and the making ready of his wife. There are two things cleared in the 8th verſe, 1. What *it is to be ready*. It is *to be clothed in fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteouſneſs of ſaints*. 2. How ſhe is made ready, thus, *to her it was granted, i. e.* freely given, that ſhe ſhould be clothed. The two things, which are confirmed, are, 1. That it is certain, there is ſuch a thing coming as the marriage of the Lamb ſpoken of. 2. That it ſhall be the great happineſs of any that ſhall be called unto it: both which are confirmed, 1. By a ſpecial command to write them, as things that ſhould certainly come to paſs. 2. In that they were not the ſayings of men or angels, but *the true ſayings of God*, who is truth itſelf, verſe 9. Both theſe, viz. the explication and confirmation, may be conſidered more generally, as they yield general doctrines; or, more ſpecially and propheticaly, as they relate to the preſent ſcope.

The 8th verſe hath three things in it, 1. Who is this made ready. 2. What this readineſs it. 3. How ſhe cometh by it.

The party made ready, is, Her, that is, the wife formerly mentioned, verſe 7. viz. the Jews: for, the Gentiles church is before this adorned, chapter xii. 1, &c. The word is *gune*, that ſignifieth, 1. One eſpouſed only, as Mary was to Joſeph, before they came together, Matth. i. This in the Latin, is called *ſponſa*. Or, 2. It is taken for one brought to her huſband, and joined to him, this the Latins call *uxor*. It is here taken eſpecially in the firſt ſenſe, ſo that the Jews, that ſtood before their actual calling in a ſpecial covenant relation with Chriſt, (which is not yet fully obliterated and diſſolved, as concerning the covenant made with the Fathers, Rom. xi. 26.) are now made ready. 2. This readineſs is now ſet out in two expreſſions, 1. Figuratively, She is clothed in *fine linen, clean and white*. 2. More plainly, it is *the righteouſneſs or juſtification of the ſaints*. Both may be two ways underſtood. 1. Of Chriſt's imputed righteouſneſs, whom we are ſaid to put on, Rom. xii. *ult.* and Gal. iii. when by faith we are united to him, and made partakers of his righteouſneſs, for the hiding of our nakedneſs, as in his counſel to Laodicea, chap. iii. 2. It may be underſtood of inherent righteouſneſs, which alſo in ſome reſpect we are ſaid to put on, Col. iii. 12. In the firſt ſenſe, it is called clean and white ſimply, for ſo Chriſt's righteouſneſs is without ſpot. In the ſecond ſenſe, it is ſo comparatively; or, it is cleanneſs and whiteneſs not abſolute, but in reſpect of what they were, and in reſpect of the holineſs of other times: this ſhall now be more. 2. The righteouſneſs or juſtification of the ſaints, is alſo two ways underſtood, 1. For a righteouſneſs before men, evidencing their juſtification before God; ſo it is ſaid, James ii. that Abraham was juſtified by his works. 2. For that which indeed juſtifieth, and is the cauſe of our juſtification before God; and ſo, Rom. iv. Abraham was not juſtified by works, not only excluding all the works of the ceremonial law, (for it was then not given) but even of the moral law. But he was juſtified by faith in Jeſus Chriſt, which was imputed to him for righteouſneſs the former is the ſame with inherent righteouſneſs, the latter is called imputed.

Now, though we take in both here, as they are alway conjoined, and go together, (and holineſs ſerveth in a ſpecial way to make ready, and meet for enjoying Chriſt in glory, when theſe garments ſhall be fully white) yet we underſtand here Chriſt's imputed righteouſneſs; or the righteouſneſs of faith eſpecially, as that which maketh the Lamb's wife ready; and that for theſe reaſons, 1. This cloathing is that which is the righteouſneſs of all ſaints, and that before God; but that of faith was Abraham's before the law, Rom. iv. David's under the law, Pſal. xxxii. with Rom. iv. and Paul's under the goſpel, Phil. iii. 9. therefore ſo here. 2. Chriſt's righteouſneſs is only ſpotleſs and clean, ours is unclean, the beſt being filthy. 3. This readineſs is that upon which the marriage with Chriſt ſtandeth, and ſerveth to cloſe with him in that covenant; but that is in the offer, *he that believeth ſhall be ſaved:* and it is the want of that that caſteth and marreth the making of the marriage; for holineſs inherent precedeth not our union with Chriſt, which is our marriage, but followeth our conſent, (when the bargain is cloſed) as duties of a perſon married. 4. It agreeth beſt with the ſcope, in reference to the in-coming of the Jews, they are made ready, and brought in by the contrary of that for which they were caſt off; but that, Rom. xi. was unbelief, ſtumbling at the ſtumbling-ſtone, in going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, and not ſubmitting to his, Rom. ix. and x. ver. 3. therefore now, that which maketh them ready muſt be faith and ſubmiſſion to Chriſt's righteouſneſs. 5. This agreeth beſt with, and is clear from the expreſſions, ſetting forth the manner how ſhe is made ready, and that in two expreſſions, *She is clothed with it:* that ſpeaketh to the reſemblance of putting on ſomething from without, in which this readineſs and decoring conſiſteth, and not of what is within, as Rev. iii. which pointeth at imputing of righteouſneſs. 2. That it was granted to her, to ſhew it was not of herſelf it was given, and freely given and gifted to her: which faith, it is not inherent holineſs; for, that ſomeway inferreth debt, and is oppoſed to grace, Rom. iv. 9. and xi. Eph. ii. but it is of grace, which is the ſame with faith, that it might be free, Rom. iv. 16. Eph. ii. and that to all the ſeed: by which it appeareth, how we are to reconcile, verſe 7. with this.

Thus if we look to the ſcope as it is prophetical, this verſe ſaith, 1. That theſe Jews, on whom blindneſs and hardneſs hath layen long, ſhall, in the end, in due time, be brought in to believe on Jeſus Chriſt, and to ſubmit to that righteouſneſs which is common to all ſaints, Gentiles, as well as

Jews, and to take that one way of ſalvation with the Gentiles, which they have ſo long rejected; God ſhall freely reingraft them again in his church, by that ſame faith which they deſpiſed. 2. That at their incoming into the church of God at that time, ſhall be more eminently ſhining in holineſs than formerly, when the Gentiles ſhall provoke the Jews; and there ſhall be a holy emulation amongſt them, more fully to adorn the profeſſion of the goſpel, then ſhall the number of believers be increaſed, and their qualifications of holineſs at a higher pitch. This flouriſhing eſtate is promiſed, whatever be of external peace.

The confirmation followeth, verſe 9. where conſider, 1. Who confirmeth. 2. What he confirmeth. 3. How, *Firſt*, The perſon confirming is not God or Jeſus Chriſt, (for it had not been a fault, verſe 10. to have worſhipped him) but is an angel: it is like that angel, who, chapter xvii. came to ſhew John the judgment of the whore, and whom, it is like, God made uſe of, to ſhew John the *things to come*, chap. i. 1. That which he confirmeth in an extraordinary way, by a ſpecial commiſſion to write, that the thing may be the more obſerved, is ſet down in theſe words, *Bleſſed are they who are called unto the marriage ſupper of the Lamb.* The Lamb is our Lord Jeſus, often called ſo. His marriage here is that, verſe 7. eſpecially of the Jews, in calling to faith in him. It ſignifieth, 1. That betwixt Chriſt and believers there is a mutual tye, conſent, and obligation of each to other. 2. That it is real. 3. A near tye. 4. Kindly and loving. 5. Indiſſolvable. 6. For believers advantage, to ſhare of what he hath. It ſheweth, in a word, a kindly and loving relation between Chriſt and them, beyond what is betwixt him and others. It is called a *marriage-ſupper*, not mainly from that cuſtom, as if then ſuppers had been moſt rife feaſting times at marriages, whatever truth be in it: for, Matth. xxii. 3. it is called a *dinner* that the gueſts are invited unto: but this ſeemeth to be the cauſe, that, Matth. xxii. looketh to the Jews firſt calling at the preaching of the goſpel which they rejected: and it is called a *dinner*, they being more timely invited to it with the firſt. This again looketh to their calling, which ſhall be made effectual when the day draweth near to an end at their reſtoring; therefore it is called the *marriage-ſupper* as more immediately preceding the ſolemnizing fully of the Bridegroom's marriage, when the queen ſhall be brought to his palace, and the firſt-born ſhall be gathered together.

By *called* here, are underſtood 1. Thoſe who are effectually ſo; for they are bleſſed and glorified, Rom. viii. 30. Yea, 2. Called even outwardly: now they of the Jews that ſhall be called to the ſupper, are more happy than thoſe who were called at the firſt to the dinner; for God ſhall make them generally more obedient, and the iron ſinew ſhall be taken out of their neck, and the vail from off their eyes, and they ſhall generally yield to this call, and flee like doves to the windows to this goſpel; therefore are they bleſſed and happy. Thus theſe who are called by this happineſs, are not only oppoſed to theſe who are not called at all, or only to ſuch who are called and not choſen, Matth. xx. But this ſecond call of the Jews is oppoſed, thus, to the firſt, Matth. xxii. which is, in a word, that the Jews after their reingrafting ſhall be generally more bleſſed, by being made to yield to the call of the goſpel, than thoſe who did live under the firſt offer thereof. So, the things prophetically confirmed are two, 1. That there is a ſecond calling of the Jews, or feaſt of Chriſt's marriage to come, beſide what was at firſt at the dinner, a new offer to be made to the Jews before the end of the world, and a new and moſt beautiful luſtre to be put upon the church. 2. That they ſhall be bleſſed and happy, beyond the former Jews that ſhall be called to this, as is ſaid.

This truth is confirmed two ways, 1. By a ſpecial command to write; *write*, ſaith he, as chapter xiv. 13. importing a ſingular excellency in the thing. 2. A great certainty in it, that it may be recorded, *ad futuram rei memoriam*, as Paul ſignifieth in expreſſing that of the Jews calling, Rom. xi. 3. A difficulty in believing, or receiving the truth ſo preſſed. And a ſecond way he confirmeth this, is, *theſe are the true ſayings of God*; it is from the author of them and his nature, and the nature of all his ſayings; they are, ſaith he, not men nor angels words, for there might be a lie in both theſe, but they are God's, all whoſe words are truth, he himſelf being truth, he himſelf being God, who cannot lie; and yet as in theſe ſayings concerning the happineſs of theſe called, there is, as it were, a ſingular eminency of his faithfulneſs; ſo in ſpecial, theſe are his true ſayings, and will take effect.

The tenth verſe is notable, by expreſſing the infirmity of an eminent ſaint, and the angel's rejecting of that worſhip intended to him by John, with ſeveral reaſons, as if purpoſely he would rectify men in that point of will-worſhip, in giving that religious adoration to creatures, though moſt excellent, which alone is due to God.

John's infirmity is ſet down in theſe words, *And I fell at his feet to worſhip him.* Worſhip implieth three things: 1. An act in the judgment, taking up an excellency in the object worſhipped. 2. An act of the will, yielding it conformly to that apprehended excellency. 3. An external act of the body; this may be common to all ſorts of worſhip. Further, we may conſider a twofold adoration, or worſhip, mentioned in ſcripture, that is allowable; one is religious, and is a ſpecial duty due to God, and commanded in the firſt table of the law; the other is civil, which is due to creatures, and commanded in the ſecond table. Again, this ſecond ſort is twofold: the firſt is, that which proceedeth from a reverencing of men for their ſtations or relations, whatever their qualifications be, as magiſtrates, miniſters, parents, great men, &c. The ſecond is, A reverential worſhipping of men for their qualifications of wiſdom and holineſs, ſo we reſpect good men, though they be not great, as Acts ii. 47. Such living ſaints get, and, in a great meaſure, angels may have, when they appear; ſuch was that which Abraham and Lot gave to the angels, Gen. xviii. and xix. ſuppoſing them to be men. All theſe are lawful.

There is alſo an idolatrous and ſinful worſhip; and that is, when what is due to the Creator, is given to any creature, and that either more groſsly to idols, images, &c. called worſhipping of devils, or more ſubtil to ſaints, as that of Cornelius to Peter, Acts x. and that to Paul and Barnabas, Acts xiv. and is alſo of divers ſorts. This here is not of the firſt two ſorts: for, it is not condemnable to worſhip God, nor to give holy men and angels due reverence; but it is this third ſort, An unlawful worſhip, as appeareth by the angel's rejecting it with ſo much zeal and earneſtneſs, theſe two ways expreſſed: 1. By a vehement prohibition, *See thou do it not:* there is no more in the original, but *ſee no*, an abrupt cutted expreſſion, ſuch as is uſed when men haſten to prevent ſomething they abhor, and would fain prevent. 2. It is expreſſed by the preſſing arguments he uſeth, which are two: 1. This is not my due to be ſo worſhipped, *I am*, ſaith the angel, *thy fellow-ſervant*, not thy Lord, and *the fellow-ſervant of thy brethren that have the teſtimony of Jeſus*, and are employed in his miniſtry, we have but one miniſtry: 1. The angels to the prophets, then the prophets to the church; therefore are miniſters called angels, and angels miniſters. The ſecond argument is taken from God's prerogative, to whom only ſuch worſhip is due; *worſhip God*, ſaith he; I am not God, and that is alone due to him: therefore give it not to me, but to him, allowing, by the one argument, no ſuch worſhip to creatures, and by the other appropriating it all to God.

He confirmeth, in the cloſe, his arguments, eſpecially the firſt, thus, *For the teſtimony of Jeſus is the ſpirit of the propheſy:* which may be thus underſtood, the ſpirit of propheſy and revealing of theſe things is not mine, but it is Jeſus Chriſt's; hence it may be called *the teſtimony of Jeſus*, as belonging peculiarly to him: therefore worſhip is not due to me, who am but a ſervant with thee; or, to the ſame purpoſe, reading the words as they lie, I am thy fellow-ſervant, for the teſtimony of Jeſus, or the miniſtry of the goſpel, (called ſo for its bearing witneſs to Chriſt, in which reſpect, miniſters are often called witneſſes. See chap. xxii. 8.) is the ſpirit of propheſy; that is, is alſo his gift, and way of revealing ſecrets, and edifying of others, as this more immediate meſſage which I bear is, they are of the ſame nature and kind of ſervice; and, therefore, from theſe who are employed in one of them, religious worſhip is not due to the other, they being fellow-ſervants.

For more clear opening the doctrine contained in the words, it may be aſked, *Firſt*, If John ſinned? *Secondly*, What ſort of ſin? *Thirdly*, How he, being ſuch an eminent ſervant of Chriſt, and, in the midſt of ſuch revelations, fell into it?

Firſt, That he ſinned, we ſuppoſe, is clear, 1. In that he never fell to worſhip an angel before, tho' he had ſeen and ſpoken with ſundry; he is not reproved for that, but for this. 2. By the nature of the reproof, *See thou do it not;* eſpecially conſidering it again renewed, chap. xxii. as of an heinous ſin. 3. By the reaſons whereby John is rejected, as having aimed to give that to a creature, which was due to God the Creator, and not to it: which reaſons do reject that worſhip, not for

compliment, but on such grounds as conclude that none such is due to any angel.

For the second, we may easily discern the kind of sin, but more hardly in what respect he fell into it; for kind, it is, no question, idolatry, in giving that to a creature, which is due to God. Now, there is a twofold idolatry: 1. Against the first command; that is, when folks err in the object of their worship, giving it to another than God: this is of three sorts: 1. To what hath no being, as to such idols, which are nothing. 2. To what hath a being, good or bad creatures, angels, devils, sun, moon, heaven, &c. 3. More subtilly, when one maketh gold his confidence, as Job speaketh, chap. xxxi. or his belly, or some lust his god: in which respect, covetousness is called idolatry, Col. iii. 5. *Secondly*, Idolatry against the second command is not a miscarrying in the object, but in the manner of worshipping him, who alone is the true object of religious worship, as when men worship God by other means or midses than he hath prescribed. Such was Aaron's making the calf to Jehovah, Jeroboam's putting up the calves at Dan and Bethel: both these sorts are frequent amongst the Papists. Now, for this of John's, it is especially and directly of the first kind.

If it be asked, why John fell now in this sin, and not before? it can hardly be said, that he fell in this fault only upon mistake of the person, as if he had supposed him to be Christ that spoke to him: for, 1. It is like, John knew it was that angel spoken of, chap. xvii. 1. who did still speak to him; for, so we conceive the same angel to continue his undertaking, to shew John the whore's judgment, which yet, to the end of the chapter, is not finished in her supporter. 2. If that had been the mistake, he needed not then have fallen into it again, chap. xxii. 8. after he was taught in this point. 3. Had that been his mistake, the angel needed say no more, but tell him he was not Christ; but the angel's answers are to rectify him in the grounds of his practice, as proceeding from a mistake in what was due to God and to angels; and his answer being to remedy his falling, we may the more warrantably read, out of the contrary directions which the angel giveth him, what was his failing: this therefore is not the ground. We conceive it then to flow from these three together, surprizing the holy man, 1. The glorious appearance of the angel. 2. The good news he told him. 3. John's weakness, and the nature of our corruption in departing from God, which is, in some measure, the strongest. Now, considering these three to meet together, it is no wonder that John was surprised, as it were, even to the forgetting of himself, and falling down now to worship one and again, which he had not formerly done; thus the good news of the church on earth here, and of the church in heaven, chap. xxii. 8. again affecteth him so. Alcasar acknowledgeth the same reason: from which we may conclude, 1. The sinfulness of worshipping angels, saints, or any other thing by religious worship. This argument maketh it out, that which is condemned in John, is not to be practised by any; but this is condemned in John, *Ergo*, &c. Papists, to eschew this argument, and defend their idolatry, run in two extreme answers, whereof the one overturneth the other. 1. They say, he sinned in mistaking the person only, and so giving *Latria* to angels, whereas *Dulia* is only due to them: but this is refuted, 1. In that before it is shown, this was not the ground of John's practice. 2. The angel's arguments are not only against this sort of worship, but all worship, and admitteth of no middle-worship, as we will hear, but will have all directed to God.

But seeing it cannot be denied, but John understood that this was an angel, and not Christ, and that therefore he intended not *Latreian* to the messenger (as Viegas, Cornelius a Lapide, and Alcasar upon this place, do not only acknowledge, but confirm:) it is therefore, *Secondly*, Their way to alledge, that John sinned not, but that he did his duty: and because that digesteth hardly, considering the angel's repeated reproof, they are therefore put to it to invent reasons, why the angel doth reject this duty, and say, 1. It is but for compliment, to shew his humility. 2. To testify their respect to Christ, who is now man; therefore they shun honour now of men; (whereas they say, *now*, it is on a mistake, as if he who received this honour at any time under the law, had been a created angel.) Or, say some, for respect to John's person, or office, or merits, wherein he was above angels, especially by his virginity; and therefore it is no wonder angels refused it from him.

Unto all which, we reply, 1. That it is no wonder that men go wild, when they give way to their own inventions, and rest not satisfied in the reasons given by the angel.

2. It must be a strong addictedness to idolatry,

that when we have it out of an angel's mouth twice from heaven, yet will we not acquieſce in it, but rather ſay, the angel was wrong, than amend that fault.

3. We have ſhown, that this is ſinful in John, when it is thus thruſt away by the angel once and again, and that upon ſuch arguments as inferred that God was wronged by it: for what is that argument, *Worſhip God?* If it be of any force, as to the angel's exhortation, worſhip not any but God; it muſt imply, that his worſhipping of the angel was not a worſhipping of God, but a derogation to it; and that worſhipping of God could not have been conſiſtent with worſhipping of him, otherwiſe he might have worſhipped God, and the angel alſo, which breaketh the force of the angel's conſequence, which oppoſeth them as inconſiſtent together.

It is wonderful therefore, that Bellarmine ſhould fall in that impudency, (De ſanct. beatitud. lib. 1. cap. 14.) as to preſs an argument for worſhipping of angels from this place, thus, either, ſaith he, John took it to be Chriſt, whom he worſhipped, and ſo he ſinned by giving the angel divine honour; or, he knew him to be an angel, and yet worſhipped him, which, ſaith he, is a copy to us; for if John knowingly worſhipped an angel, ſo ſhould we, and whether doth John or the Calviniſts, ſo he ſpeaketh, know beſt what is due to angels? And this he confirmeth, if it had not been duty, then, ſaith he, John would not have done it after the firſt admonition; for he was neither forgetful nor indocile.

Anſw. If worſhipping of angels ariſe from this place, certainly it may be gathered any where; and ſeeing the weight of it lieth here, that if it had been ſinful, John would not have done it; and this ſuppoſeth John to have had no corruption, and ſaith nothing to the arguments formerly alledged. It may more eaſy be retorted, thus, either in this practice John ſinned, or the angel; but it cannot be ſaid that the angel ſinned in reproving of him for doing this: therefore John ſinned in doing it.

It cannot be ſaid that neither ſinned: for, 1. There is an oppoſition, the one diſalloweth what the other practiſeth; and if any thing be gathered from John's relapſing in that deep, chap. xxii. 8. the ſame may be urged ſtill, either he ſinned in renewing of his practice, or the angel in renewing his reproof: for he doth again follow his reproof, and that more hotly than formerly. 2. They cannot both be right here: for John did not worſhip this age formerly; and if the former was no ſin, this muſt be: neither is it to be thought that the angel would have confirmed John by this reproof in his former error. 3. The angel not only refuſeth John's worſhip, but refuſeth it with reaſons, which will admit no ſuch evaſion: for either the angel really abhorred this fact as he expreſſed, or he did diſſemble; but this laſt cannot be ſaid. *Ergo, &c.* Alcaſar confeſſeth, that theſe reaſons which they give, will not hold, and that it is beſide the text to alledge any other than the angel mentioneth; he doth therefore excogitate, forſooth, a judicious expoſition, and ſaith, the angel here is Peter, and that, chap. xxii. is Paul, and that they refuſe worſhip from John their colleague, as their great church-men do from one another; who uſe to ſay to each other in their low courteſies, *Keep that* (meaning their humbling of themſelves) *to the ſacrament of the altar.* He maketh that objection to himſelf, why Peter, being the prince of the apoſtles, refuſeth that honour which John was offering. He anſwereth, that it is truth, that in the firſt age of the church, the Popes uſed not to be ſo reverently worſhipped, their pomp was not come to an height, therefore Peter refuſed it, as being loth at that time it ſhould be known how great they were. In all which fooleries we may ſee what it is to thwart with clear ſcripture.

2. We may conclude the falſhood of that diſtinction of Dulia from Latria, as a mid-worſhip between divine and civil. If the angel would admit no worſhip to him, then there is no ſuch thing; but he rejecteth all without diſtinction. This is clear,

1. By the great oppoſition he maketh, *worſhip God*, and ſo leaveth no religious worſhip to any but to God. 2. By this, John gave not Latreia to him but Douleia; for he knew him to be an angel; but the angel caſteth that which John gave him: therefore he admitteth no mid-worſhip.

3. This diſtinction will enervate both the angel's reaſons, why he caſteth that worſhip. The firſt, *I am thy companion;* and, chap. xxii. 9. *Companion of all that keep the ſayings of this book*, &c. therefore do it not. His argument is, no fellow-ſervant that is not maſter, is to be worſhipped by another; but I and all angels are fellow-ſervants: *Ergo.* The reaſon pleadeth

that *de jure* nothing is due to him. Now, if there were any ſuch diſtinction, it might be replied, as Papiſts do, *non ſequitur:* Why? Becauſe there is a mid ſort of worſhip allowable to fellow-ſervants, and therefore the angel did wrong in rejecting of it. His ſecond reaſon, *worſhip God;* which ſaith, this worſhip, and all worſhip, is due to God; therefore it is not due, nor to be given to men. The adding of this diſtinction would enervate the argument, and ſay, it is not this worſhip, or all worſhip that is to be given to God only; or, when he ſaith, ye cannot worſhip God, and me, (for he oppoſeth theſe as inconſiſtent) they would anſwer, yes, with divers ſorts of worſhip we can, whereas the angels' ſcope is to overturn all ſuch worſhip to himſelf, and to aſcribe it all to God; and therefore ſaith not, give not me this, or that ſort of worſhip, but none; yea, ſo he appointeth even that which John gave him, to be given unto God. And if *Duleia* were allowed, then worſhipping of angels would be worſhipping of God the Maſter; but the angels oppoſeth here worſhipping of God to the worſhipping of him: therefore worſhipping of angels is acknowledged by angels to be no worſhipping of God: otherwiſe John might have replied, that he was worſhipping God, the ſender in him that was ſent.

4. If there were any worſhip due to angels of a religious kind, then the angel ſhould not ſimply have prohibited, but ſhould have directed John right, leſt from one extreme he had fallen to another; but that he doth not: and if we conſider that God comprehended all worſhip either in the firſt or ſecond table of the law, and this can be none of them, we need not be anxious about it, but ſay, certainly angel's know better what is their due than Papiſts and Bellarmine do: therefore we conclude, that giving of angels that worſhip, is ſinful and idolatrous.

It will confirm this, if we conſider what uſe the fathers make of this place, who draw a ſtrong argument for Chriſt's divinity from this, that he is worſhipped, whereas no angel is capable of worſhip which they confirm from this place. Vid. Ath. ſerm. 3. contra Arian pag. (mihi) 191. Certainly this anſwer would overturn that argument ſo much preſſed by them, if there were any religious worſhip which did not prove him to be God that is worſhipped. The uſe alſo which Auguſtine maketh of it againſt the heathens, on Pſal. xcvi. (nobis 97.) is to the ſame purpoſe, expounding theſe words, *Confounded be they that ſerve graven images, &c.* He entereth in debate with the heathens, who, ſaith he, denied that they worſhipped an image, (knowing it to be without life) but ſaid, *Adoro quod video, ſed ſervio ei quem non video,* not unlike this former diſtinction. If it were aſked, who that were? They anſwer, *Numen quoddam.* If it were replied again, that which they took to be *Numen* was a devil. They anſwered, (Colum. 1088) 'Non co-'limus mala daemonia: angelos, quos dicitis, ipſos 'et nos colimus, virtutes Dei magni.' Auguſtine urgeth, 'Utinam ipſos colere velletis, facile ab ip-'ſis diſceretis non illos colere, audito Angelum 'doctorem.' And then citeth this place, 'Surge, 'quid facis? illum adora, &c.' And concludeth, 'Quid ergo, fratres mei, nemo dicat, timeo ne 'iraſcatur mihi Angelus ſi non illum colo, tunc 'tibi iraſcitur quando ipſum colere volueris, bo-'nus eſt enim et Deum amat, &c.'

LECTURE III.

Verſe 11. *And I ſaw heaven opened, and behold, a white horſe; and he that ſat upon him was called faithful and true, and in righteouſneſs he doth judge and make war.*

12. *His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew but he himſelf:*

13. *And he was clothed with a veſture dipt in blood: and his name is called, The Word of God.*

14. *And the armies which were in heaven, followed him upon white horſes, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*

15. *And out of his mouth goeth a ſharp ſword, that with it he ſhould ſmite the nations: and he ſhall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine-preſs of the fierceneſs and wrath of Almighty God.*

16. *And he hath on his veſture, and on his thigh a name written,* KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

17. *And I ſaw an angel ſtanding in the ſun, and he cried with a loud voice, ſaying, to all the fowls that fly in the midſt of heaven, come and gather yourſelves together unto the ſupper of the great God.*

18. *That ye may eat the fleſh of kings, and the fleſh of captains, and the fleſh of mighty men, and the fleſh of horſes and of them that ſit on them, and the fleſh of all men both free and bond, both ſmall and great.*

19. *And I ſaw the beaſt, and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to make war, againſt him that ſat on the horſe, and againſt his army.*

20. *And the beaſt was taken, and with him the falſe prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beaſt, and them that worſhipped his image. Theſe both were caſt alive into a lake of fire burning with brimſtone.*

21. *And the remnant were ſlain with the ſword of him that ſat upon the horſe, which ſword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their fleſh.*

THE laſt part of the chapter followeth from verſe 11. to the end; wherein the laſt part of the ſixth vial of the battle of Armageddon, mentioned chap. xvi. is more fully ſet down. 1. In the preparations for it. 2. In the event of it. The firſt is to verſe 14. the other to the end.

The preparation of the beaſt was more fully ſet down, chap. xvi. therefore it is but touched here, and the Lamb's order and army, who are the other party, are more inſiſted on.

I ſaw heaven opened: this is preparatory to the viſion, that he might the more clearly diſcern it: but that is not all, hereby it would appear is now ſet out a more flouriſhing eſtate of the goſpel after the Lamb's marriage; for by a *white horſe* this was ſignified, chap. vi. and by the *opening of heaven* and the *ark*, chapter xi. it was ſignified alſo, this would then hold forth a flouriſhing church, able to ſend out armies, at leaſt of ſpiritual fighters, for Chriſt, againſt his enemies.

The preparations, upon the Lamb's ſide, are more particularly ſet down, 1. By the deſcription of the captain. 2. Of an angel, as an herald denouncing the war, or rather foretelling the victory, verſe 17. he inſiſteth moſt on the captain; for he is of moſt concernment in the war, and cannot eaſily be deſcribed. The properties given him are of two ſorts, 1. Such, whereby he is ſomeway tied in his proceedings to his word. 2. Such wherein he is abſolute, and he hath a name anſwering both as a deſcription. There are four names given to him that divide this deſcription; or, take it as it lieth, and, 1. We have ſet down his own properties to verſe 14. Then, 2. His army, ver. 14. And, 3. His weapons, or armour, ver. 15. He now rideth on his *white horſe* as captain, being ſpotleſs in his way and manner of proceeding; for which cauſe, his firſt ſtile, verſe 11. is *faithful* and *true* in keeping promiſe and covenant to his people: And then, *Secondly*, It is added, that in *righteouſneſs he doth judge and make war:* which implieth, that there is a right end in his undertaking, a right cauſe, and a right manner of proceeding in it. Two properties more are ſet down, verſe 12. *His eyes were like a flame of fire*, importing ſearching omniſciency and terrible majeſty, as chap. i. *He hath on his head many crowns*, not materially ſo, but to ſhew his abſolute ſovereignty, that he is an high and great and glorious king, ſo that one crown, or few crowns, will not ſerve to deſcribe his glory. This is a great King above all kings, as his name is, verſe 16. This alſo importeth many triumphs and victories over his enemies.

Anſwerable to this greatneſs, he hath an inexpreſſible name that none can take him up in the infiniteneſs and greatneſs of his eſſence and glory but himſelf, to creatures it is a myſtery and a ſecret, as Judges xiii. 18. for no name can adequately ſet out his perfections.

He proceedeth in the deſcription of him, verſe 13. as in a moſt conquering-like poſture, *he was clothed in a veſture dipt with blood:* it is like with the blood of the former events of former vials, or of this on him: he followeth the chaſe ſo hot, when he once beginneth and appeareth ſo terrible and bloody, and yet conquering like *one mighty to ſave*, Iſa. lxiii. 1, 2. His name is here ſet down more plainly in a ſtyle more uſual for John to give him, and that is, *the word of God*, John i. So Chriſt is called the Word, *Firſt*, In reſpect of

his perſon, ſeeing he doth expreſs the character of the Father's perſon, as clearly as the word doth repreſent a man's ſecret conception within, Heb. i. 3. Secondly, In reſpect of his offices, becauſe by him God doth, as by a word, plainly make known the ſecret of the goſpel, before hid in him.

In the 14th verſe, his armies are ſet out, 1. Theſe in heaven; not only angels and ſaints glorified; but ſuch of the church, as verſe 8. are arrayed with ſuch veſture. The new married Jews and beautified Gentiles are both ſtirred up to this employment, they are named, chap. xvii. *called and faithful* who were with the Lamb, they are the ſame here. The church now is more pure in worſhip, and ſhining in holineſs; and the moſt pure are moſt zealous in following of him: for, this honour have all his ſaints, as Pſal. cxlix. 2. They are called armies, for their multitude, ſtrength and diſcipline. 3. They ride, and that on white horſes; he hath all his ſoldiers mounted as well, as it were, as himſelf, they ſhare with him as certainly of the victory, as he doth overcome: it is good being on the Lamb's ſide, and at his back, but there is no word of a weapon amongſt them all: for, they need none, becauſe he goeth foremoſt and fighteth, and they but follow as a company in triumph. It is to let us ſee alſo, it is not the ſoldiers, but the captain, and his weapons, that get the victory; for righteouſneſs, or fine linen, is their defenſive armour; and for offenſive, they have none mentioned here, although from chap. xvii. and the ſcope, we may gather that they are alſo to be made active in this war, yet the victory dependeth not thereupon: holineſs and faith is the beſt armour folks can put on.

His own weapons are ſet down, verſe 15. in three. 1. *A ſword going out of his mouth*, which is the word whereby he ſubdueth nations to himſelf. 2. *A rod of iron*, Pſal. ii. ſignifieth both authority, Pſal. cx. 2. and power to cruſh gainſayers, and to put his laws in execution againſt wicked oppoſers that yield not to the word, them he ſtriketh with the rod of iron: for, rule he muſt, 3. *There is a wine-preſs of God's wrath*, as chap. xiv. and Iſa. lxiii. and that he treadeth, that is, he eaſily, and now at this time abundantly, executeth judgment himſelf where the former prevaileth not, And ſeeing he treadeth alone, Iſa. lxiii. few arms will ſerve theſe that are with him.

Suitable to his ſovereignty and power he *hath a name*, verſe 16. *on his veſture*, that it may be viſible, as it were in his colours legible, and *on his thigh*, that is, graven now, moſt obſervably upon all his ways and motions, as chapter i. It ſhall now be known he is *Lord of Lords and King of Kings*, that is, moſt ſovereign, and will now be ſeen and acknowledged to be ſo, for he taketh it on him.

Laſtly, verſe 17, 18. This battle is ſet out by one *ſtanding in the ſun*, that he may be conſpicuous, *crying to all fowls, to come* and *to eat*, all ſort of *great and ſmall:* which doth ſent out, 1. The certainty of this defeat. 2. The greatneſs of it: the ſlain ſhall be ſo many, that fowls ſhall eat them; it is borrowed from Ezek. xxxix. 17. Alſo it may ſet out a clear and confident incitation of God's miniſters to ſtir up others to go about the execution of this judgment with confidence of victory, as if they were invited to prey upon dead men; and poſſibly alſo by this, many that are not mounted like the Lamb, nor clothed in white, and are not following him, nor walking on his account, ſhall yet upon hope of gain to feed, (like ravenous fowls upon others ruin) engage into this fight, and be made uſe of (though following their corrupt ends) for a time to execute God's juſtice againſt this beaſt, who preferred his own intereſt to Chriſt's.

This is the Lamb's preparation; now followeth a word of the contrary party. There is the beaſt and *the kings of the earth and their armies*, viz. ſome kings yet ſticking to the beaſt, that did lament the whore's deſtruction, and with them others without the church, of late engaged to ſide with the Pope, who is now made to flee from Rome. The beaſt here is only mentioned (though chap. xvi. 13. and in the following verſe the falſe prophets be added) to ſhew they are but one, though diverſly repreſented. All theſe are gathered againſt Chriſt, ſo it is conſtructed, and his people, how this gathering proceeded, and whence it came, is not ſpoken to here, becauſe it is inſiſted on chap. xvi. 13. &c. as alſo the place whereto they are brought; only now both armies and their captains are marked to be in the fields.

The event followeth, verſe 20. and 21. in three ſteps, firſt, in reſpect of the oppoſite chieftain, 1. He is taken priſoner, 2. He is condemned and caſt alive in the lake from whence he came. The party overcome hath two names, yet is one;

the beaſt here is that firſt, chapter xiii. the falſe prophets is that ſecond eccleſiaſtic beaſt, or ſecond conſideration of the former: for, theſe ſame things are attributed to this falſe prophet, which were the properties of that beaſt, chap. xiii. 11. therefore they are one, as was ſhown there; and their joint death ſheweth in all things an identity. They are only named as diſtinct, 1. To ſhew that that grandeur of Rome which hath long ſtood, and after that city is burned, doth yet pretend ſome preheminence by the ſurviving of its head, the falſe prophet, (who ſtill, though baniſhed, keepeth up the name of *Romiſh Pope,*) ſhall now both fall together, Rome's empire in that ſeries and the Pope they ſhall go together into deſtruction, and there ſhall be no ſuch empire of Rome under any form after that, as hath formerly been, but the body and head, in a word, ſhall periſh together. 2. To ſhew that both that civil grandeur, ſignified by the firſt beaſt, and that religious deceit and hypocriſy, whereby it was maintained, ſhall now be at a further end than when the whore was deſtroyed; no Popes, nor avowed ſpreading of Popery, are to be after this in any ſuch meaſure. Thus they are captivated who kept ſtill liberty in all former defeats, and are enſnared, as it were, unawares when they looked for no ſuch thing, but on the opinion of the Pope's perpetuity were confident: the word, in the original, implieth ſome ſurpriſal: they *are caſt alive into the lake;* this is their judgment, to ſet out the abhorrency which the Lord hath at them and ſheweth at their end, as in the caſe of Korah, Dathan, &c. to ſhew there is a judgment after this to them; for he purſueth them ſtill till it end them. 3. To ſhew, that there is now no redreſs to them after this defeat: for, it is irrecoverable to the beaſt by the ſixth vial, as it was to the whore by the fifth, before, chapter xviii. he came from the pit, chap. xiii. and xvii. and he returneth to it here.

2. This victory is ſet out in reſpect of theſe that eſcaped this ſort of judgment, verſe 21. All that adhere to the beaſt, it is like, periſh not now; ſome, by Chriſt's word, are either won, and ſo their enmity is ſlain, and they made to ſubmit; or, by it, they are condemned: the former, as to many is not unlike Chriſt's conqueſt, as mentioned, Pſal. xlv.

The event is ſet out by the ſatisfaction that theſe who love prey ſhall have the ſlaughter; and ſpoil is anſwerable to what was denounced, verſe 17, and 18. Theſe that follow duty, even on corrupt ends, may ſometimes get a fill, and ſome ſucceſs; but theſe that did ride on white horſes had a more noble deſign; this one ſword of Chriſt doth all the buſineſs, and they have enough to be witneſſes.

So the ſeries of Antichriſt's deſtruction looketh thus in the three laſt vials; the fifth overturneth Rome, yet he himſelf hath ſome being, and maketh ſome new ſtickling or ſhifting for help in his laſt eſſay: after that he is taken by the ſixth, and there is then neither ſeat nor beaſt to ſit in it; yet, poſſibly, there may be ſome remnant of adherents to that Babyloniſh ſuperſtitious way, regretting the overthrow of the beaſt by the ſixth, as they did of his ſeat by the fifth, chap. xviii. which, in this ſenſe, may be judicially ſlain by the ſword of Chriſt's mouth, although the execution of it be ſuſpended: theſe are fully overturned by the ſeventh vial, when great Babylon cometh in remembrance before God, poſſibly, in the days of Gog and Magog, ſuch old principles concerning Rome are revived, but they are ſoon baniſhed,

There is a great objection againſt this, becauſe the deſtruction of Antichriſt ſeemeth to be reſerved for Chriſt's ſecond coming, 2 Theſſ. ii. 8. and here he is caſt in hell, which ſome think cannot be before the end. Before we anſwer, we take it for certain, that this judgment of the beaſt is not at the laſt day: for, 1. It is under the ſixth vial, and it is the ſeventh that bringeth the end. 2. It is a judgment, wherein armies of ſaints are employed, and his word is made uſe of in this ruin, which cannot be ſaid in the laſt judgment. 3. In his judgment of his caſting in the lake, there is a difference put between him and his followers, who are otherwiſe judged, verſe *ult.* and their caſting in ſuſpended; there is no ſuch difference in the laſt judgment. 4. There are ſome events yet behind this, the devil is not yet fully overturned till the ſeventh vial caſt him in the lake, which is by the judgment of the great day, and yet the beaſt is in the lake before him: therefore this judgment is before the laſt, by which the devil is caſten, where the beaſt and falſe prophet are before him, as is clear from chap. xx. verſe 10.

Now, for anſwer, 1. It is not abſurd to ſay, the final end of Antichriſt's kingdom ſhall not be before the end, his kingdom being complexly conſidered;

yet it hindereth not, but both himſelf and his ſeat may be overturned before. 2. That place, 2 Theſſ. ii. may look to the deſtruction of Antichriſt, not at Chriſt's laſt coming, but at his coming to that judgment of the whore, as it is called the great day of God, chap. vi. when he came to be avenged on heathen emperors: and the deſtruction there, 2 Theſſ. ii. is, 1. Piece and piece, and not at once. 2. It is by the breath of his mouth, that looketh to the ſhining of the goſpel, whereby he is ruined, as here by the ſword proceeding from Chriſt's mouth. And, ſo, 3. The brightneſs of his coming will be his coming in the goſpel, and taking to him that great power which Antichriſt hath long uſurped; and that agreeth well both with the ſcope there and here. And, 4. If any ſhould urge further, that in that place, 2 Theſſ. ii. two diſtinct ſteps are ſet down: 1. To conſume him by the Spirit of his mouth; but the ſecond, his deſtruction, is reſerved to Chriſt's ſecond coming. *Anſw.* It will prove no more but this, 1. That Antichriſt's fall ſhall begin long before it end. 2. That it ſhall be fully completed at the great day. 3. That beſide whatever come upon him now, there ſhall alſo be a reckoning with him then. We deny none of theſe, ſeeing the word ſaith not it is only ſo; for, our opinion is not excluded, which ſaith more, viz. he ſhall be judged at his particular judgment, and at the general judgment alſo: and although it be ordinary in the ſcripture to deſign the laſt day for the time of the perſecutors deſtruction, and the ſaints outgate, becauſe both are at that day perfected; yet can it not be argued; therefore there are no foregoing ſtrokes or deliveries; ſo neither can it be in the preſent caſe; beſides, it being in the cloſe of the ſixth vial, and after the Jews converſion, which will be not long before the end, it may there be ſo expreſſed.

For that, *he is caſt alive into the lake*, it is certainly not properly to be underſtood, as if he ſhould never die, but is in alluſion to that of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, to ſhew the greatneſs, dreadfulneſs and irrecoverableneſs of that doom that ſhall come on him: and conſidering this ſpecial and eminently ſtated enemy of God and Jeſus Chriſt in his kingdom, and God's viſible taking courſe in this world with other more open enemies, it is like, that the jealous God, who is avenged, as is clear, on his ſeat before men, will even in this world, though he ſpare him long, ſingularly ſhew his judgment on him, beſide what he will do in the laſt day, which alſo, in part, contributeth to his glory, and his people's comfort, as any other temporal judgment doth, which yet is not ſo much foretold, for theſe ends, as this is.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *And I ſaw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomleſs pit, and a great chain in his hand.*

THIS chapter hath alway been accounted amongſt the darkeſt of this propheſy, the Lord, as it were, minding, by this cloſe, to ſtay the inſolency of men's humour, and to teach the neceſſity of ſobriety in the uſe-making of his word. Hence it is, that many both of old and of late (and that neither of the groſſeſt nor moſt ignorant of divines) whom God hath made uſe of ſingularly in the opening of his truths, have yet not withſtanding, ſtumbled at this: in which Auguſt. de civitate Dei lib. 20. cap. 5. and 6. profeſſeth himſelf once to have been ſomewhat miſcarried; ſo that it will become us, with trembling to undertake it, and alſo we would with ſobriety aim at the ſearching of the truth, but not expect the ſatisfying of curioſity in it.

It is God's goodneſs that he hath given us the neceſſary truths of the myſtery of godlineſs in more plain expreſſions; yet, ſince this is a part of the word which God hath given his church for edification, and ſeeing alſo it wanteth not encouragement to ſtir up his people to pry with ſobriety into it, we cannot therefore ſhun the eſſaying of it, looking to him, without prejudice, who hath in his providence led us to the opening of this book, and hitherto hath in ſome meaſure helped us in it.

The great ground of miſtake is, as in other dark ſcriptures alſo, becauſe the expreſſions are odd and unuſual, therefore we are apt to conceive ſome ſtrange thing to be contained in them, ſuch as is no where elſe laid down in plainer words; and our curious and itching humours are ready to foſter that, taking occaſion thereby to exerciſe themſelves; and when we come with prejudice to dive into them, we are often anſwered according to the idea which we have followed in our own hearts. It is neceſſary therefore, that with humility we proſecute this ſearch, it being to ſuch that the Lord revealed his ſecrets.

Concerning the diviſion of this chapter, there need be no queſtion; we may take it as containing, firſt, ſome notable events to fall out in the church of Chriſt before the end of the world, which are two, 1. An eminent binding of Satan, having cotemporary with it an eminent reign of the ſaints; 2. An eminent looſing of Satan, and hazard of the church.

The ſecond part ſubjoineth to that, the conſummation of all things, by the laſt judgment, in which Satan ſhall be utterly faſtened up in his priſon for ever, and the ſaints, being freed from all difficulties, are brought to the enjoying of their everlaſting kingdom; or, take it thus, as it ſetteth out the upſhot of all former propheſies in the laſt judgment, there are, 1. Some things going before the laſt judgment, and that immediately. 2. The deſcription of this judgment. 3. What followeth, is in the execution of the ſentences thereof; both are one thing.

Concerning the ſcope alſo, we take it to be thus, 1. Generally, to ſet out the laſt cataſtrophe and cloſe of all the church's troubles, and her enemies ruin and malice, they end happily for her, but miſerably for them. 2. More particularly, it is to ſhew her outgate from her grand enemy the devil, who is the firſt enemy, and continueth with the laſt. It is eſpecially his binding and his looſing, and his final overthrow that is aimed at here, (what concerneth the whore, beaſt, and falſe prophet being in the former inſiſted on) and the church's condition, in reference to this enemy, is occaſionally ſet out. 3. And yet more particularly, it is for the explication of the ſeventh vial, which was, chapter xvi. *poured out in the air*, the devil's univerſal kingdom, but ſummarily touched there; here it is more fully ſet out: for the dragon's deſtruction is inſiſted on here, which was the object of that vial. Beſide, in the former chapters it being told what became of the whore, chap. xviii. and of the beaſt, chap. xix. there being nothing of this enemy's overthrow till now recorded, but of his action in the ſixth vial, it followeth therefore, both in order and ſeries of this explication ſubjoined to the former, and alſo by neceſſity of the matter, that this is added for ſupplying what was defective concerning the overthrow of this enemy, and explication of the ſeventh vial, which is no where explained as the reſt are, if it be not here; and the coincidency of the matter, the dragon's final overthrow, and expreſſions about the laſt judgment, common to this with the ſeventh vial, ſuch as the *heavens paſſing away*, &c. do evidence it eſpecially to belong to the clearing of the ſeventh vial. Yet, 4. We add, that we are not to reſtrain it ſo, as if both theſe events were fully cotemporary with the ſeventh vial; for then the continuance of this vial would be diſproportionable to all the reſt, as being longer than they all. Beſide, that vial, including eſpecially Satan's laſt overthrow, it is not neceſſary to extend it ſo far, but ſo much of it muſt be applied to the ſeventh vial, as was not comprehended under the former ſix, but all now is put together when it cometh to its height, and reckoned in a ſum, even as the church's low condition, chap. xi. was reckoned, and put in a ſum together of ſo many days under the ſixth trumpet, when it came to its height, although it had begun under the trumpets preceding. That therefore followeth not, but though that be eſpecially the ſcope, which it is levelled at, yet it is not only, but ſo as on that occaſion for more fully clearing this victory over the devil, a more full view of his former practices cotemporary with former propheſies, is ſet down, and this beginning is drawn down from a prior period of time, that all being ſet together, this laſt may be the more full and clear and obſervable. And yet, 5. We take it not to ſet out the hiſtory of the devil from his firſt reſtraint by the goſpel, and ſo to be cotemporary with that of Michael's caſting him down from heaven, or from civil power, in Conſtantine's time, chap. xii. but to begin the ſtory of the dragon here where it left there: thus the devil that is thrown down from civil power and open perſecution, we heard he had great fury when he was put from open working by avowed idolatry and perſecution to a more ſecret

underhand way; we heard alſo what way he took then, 1. By ſpueing out a flood after the woman which was dried up. 2. By going to make a war with the ſaints, which he attempted and proſecuted by a new lieutenant the beaſt, and had ſuch ſucceſs by him, that he was again upon another account worſhipped, chap. xiii. and that by the whole world. except ſome few, and made war with the ſaints, and overcame them. Hitherto we have never heard how he was reſtrained, or what became of him after his reign by the beaſt 1260 days. To clear that, this is ſubjoined, even to tell what became of the dragon, as he had formerly told what became of the beaſt; and ſo this chapter is not cotemporary with chapter xii. but is to be ſubjoined to it, as the next reſtraint which followed upon him, who then was looſe, and in rage. This appeareth, 1. By obſerving the expreſſions; for, there he is caſt down by the angel of the covenant Chriſt, out of heaven to earth; here the angel deſcendeth out of heaven to him, as it were, purſuing him, which ſuppoſeth him to be down before. 2. There he is looſe and making war with the woman, who is made to flee; here he is bound up, ſo that the ſaints do reign in the mean time. 3. This here is his laſt great binding, preceding his looſing in Gog and Magog, before the end of the world: either therefore we muſt ſay, Satan hath no binding after that, but is ſtill looſe to the end, which is falſe; or we muſt ſay, that his binding in reference to that looſing, is not ſet down in this propheſy, but that only telleth that he was looſe, but not how he was reſtrained, which ſtandeth not with the ſcope; Or, we muſt thirdly ſay, that it is done by this chapter, which will further appear afterward: and indeed it were hard to ſay, that one event ſhould be twice expreſſed in ſo different expreſſions, and yet that ſuch a concerning event, as Satan's binding after his liberty and dominion in Antichriſt, ſhould be paſſed over in ſilence. Beſide, if it were a repetition of the ſame victory, chap. xii. or of the goſpel's victory over Satan's kingdom, or that of Gog and Magog, a reception of the propheſies concerning the Pope or Turks, then theſe laſt explications, or viſions, would be much more obſcure than the former of the ſame events, which is contrary to the way of this book, as is acknowledged by all, and contrary to the manner of repetitions of the ſame thing uſed by Daniel and other prophets, the laſt whereof are always clearer than the former. And that Satan getteth the ſame names here that he getteth, chapter xii. it is not to ſhew, that it belongeth to the ſame time; but rather to ſhew, that it is the continuation of the hiſtory of that ſame enemy, which, as to the event of that rage of his, was defective there, but is ſupplied here.

For clearing this, conſider that there is a fourfold looſing and raging of the devil mentioned in the word, and there is a fourfold victory of the church over him in oppoſition to theſe, alſo ſpoken of, and the laſt is ſtill the greateſt. His firſt dominion we may call perſonal, when he keeped all the world in groſs darkneſs, worſhipping him directly in temples, and he giving reſponſes and anſwers in them, poſſeſſing men perſonally and corporally, as he did in Chriſt's time, leading the world at his will. He is bound in this reſpect by Chriſt's birth, preaching, miracles, death, aſcenſion, and ſending forth the Apoſtles and the goſpel (*like a white horſe conquering*, chap. vi.) whereby the prince of this world was judged, Satan caſten from heaven like lightening; many corporally poſſeſſed, were diſpoſſeſſed, and freed from his dominion, and the devil chaſed from his audible anſwering in oracles, as formerly he had done. His known anſwer given at Delphos to Auguſtus his legates, who were ſent to him to enquire concerning his ſucceſſor, about the time of Chriſt's birth, is by many cited to this purpoſe.

Me puer Hebraeus, ſuperum Rex, linquere tecta
Haec jubet; et ditis caecas remeare ſub umbras:
Ergo ſilens aris tu nunc abſcedito noſtris.

An Hebrew child, King of the heavens high
To leave theſe temples hath commanded me,
And to be gone, to darkneſs, and to wo:
Thou therefore ſilent from our altars go.

After this no audible anſwer was given at theſe oracles. Thus Satan is bound from the beginning of the goſpel to the end of the world; for, Chriſt ſhall have a church even among the nations and Gentiles: and thus Chriſt hath overcome him, and ſo ſpoiled him, that he ſhall never prevail againſt the Catholic church, Matth. xvi. This is not the binding here, becauſe this is a binding that is eminently applicable and agreeable to one particular time, ſo as it cannot agree to any

other before or after. And it would ſeem, that as it is clear, that Satan is looſed after it, before Chriſt's ſecond coming: ſo it is clear that Satan hath been, as to this binding, looſe before it, after Chriſt's firſt coming, except we ſay, that all the time between Chriſt's firſt coming and his ſecond, ſhall be taken up in theſe two, viz. 1. A thouſand years reſtraint upon Satan, and then a little time's liberty, upon the back whereof cometh the judgment: but the length of time intervening, and the various and frequent ups and downs of the church ſhew, that there are more periods in her caſe, and the great liberty of the church (and ſo the binding of Satan, which is ſtill cotemporary with it,) ſpoken of to be in the latter days of the goſpel, at leaſt after the firſt thouſand years, will not admit that: theſe thouſand years therefore muſt not begin either at Chriſt's birth or death, or yet at the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, or ſending of the goſpel to the Gentiles; (beſide that it preſuppoſeth martyrs as antecedaneous to it) and therefore it muſt begin after theſe periods.

There is a ſecond dominion Satan hath yet, even when the goſpel is preached, and that is by his guiding the public magiſtracy of the world, whereby he condemned Chriſtians, perſecuted and deſtroyed them, and obſtructed the public and avowed profeſſion of Chriſt in an united church way, at leaſt in a great part, and keeped up ſtill temples and idol-worſhip, and that as countenanced by authority. Satan is put from this, chap. xii. where we have the hiſtory of his caſting from the throne, before which time he is ſeen as looſe in heaven, that is in perſon of the emperors, as a bloody dragon ready to devour the child, as formerly, chap. vi. he rideth as it were, on the *red*, *pale* and *black horſes*, till by the ſixth ſeal anſwerable to, and cotemporary with, chap. xii. he is in all theſe reſpects defeated, the public and avowed worſhipping of idols overturned, and the public profeſſion of Chriſtianity countenanced by authority, in which reſpect, chap. xii. verſe 10. it is called the *kingdom of our God, and power of his Chriſt*, which certainly inferreth a good condition to the ſaints with it.

His third ſtorm and looſing, after he cometh to the earth, is by more ſubtil means proſecuted in the firſt ſix trumpets by the beaſt, chapter xiii. and in the end of chapter xii. which is cotemporary with the firſt ſix trumpets. His reſtraint, as to that looſing, is by the ſeventh trumpet, wherein his dominion by the beaſt, ſuch as formerly he had by the heathen emperor is overturned, and anſwerably to that liberty of his, ſpoken of chap. xii. and xiii. here it is ſet down, in this third explicatory propheſy, Satan's third reſtraint in oppoſition to that dominion of his by Antichriſt: and this propheſy will be found cotemporary with the ſeventh trumpet, and the vials from their beginning which ſucceed immediately to the witneſſes aſcending up to heaven, and to the end of the woman's flight and abode in the wilderneſs, and *to the forty two months* of the beaſt's reign.

The fourth and laſt liberty and dominion of the devil mentioned, is this of his ſtirring up Gog and Magog, and his reſtraint, in reference to this, is the laſt judgment. Now, ſeeing his binding here cannot be the firſt, as is ſaid, nor the ſecond, chapter xii. this preſuppoſing the beaſt in being, (as appeareth by theſe who reign in this time) nor yet the laſt, it muſt neceſſarily follow therefore, that it is the binding, ſpoken of in the third place, which is cotemporary with the beaſt's overthrow, in whom he was formerly worſhipped, and fain would have ſuſtained that worſhip, but was bound up from it, and could not help himſelf, as chapter xviii.

Taking this then to be the binding of Satan, following upon that rage of his, chap. xii. verſe 13, and 17. the ſcope will be to ſhew what came of the devil after he had brought that deſign to a great height, chapter xiii. So that if it be aſked, what became of him after he raged *forty two months* againſt the woman, having made her flee to the wilderneſs, and againſt the witneſſes, having made them propheſy all that time in ſackcloth? It is anſwered here, I ſaw, ſaith John, him again taken and bound up from his liberty, as the beaſt was from his; and I ſaw that church, which by and under the beaſt he had perſecuted and made deſpicable in the world, brought again to an honourable condition (where he could not impede them) having again an honourable public and avowed profeſſion of the goſpel in greater number of profeſſors, purity of doctrine, holineſs of life, ſpirituality of worſhip, and vigour of diſcipline, with much leſs outward diſturbance than formerly: which reſtraint of his, and kingdom to them, continued a long time, till God, in his ſecret juſtice, permitted him to make a new onſet before the laſt judgment

by Gog, which followeth that aſſault of the devil's by the beaſt; thereafter the Lord purſueth and overturneth him and his deſigns everlaſtingly; after which he ſhall never have a link of his chain looſed to the diſturbance of Chriſt's church. This is the ſum, which will be more clear in the particular explication of the words, and in that which followeth.

That we may the more clearly proceed, the great controverſies in the words may be drawn to three heads, I mean in ſo far as concerneth the firſt event of Satan's binding, till verſe 7.

The firſt is, concerning the events propheſied of, that is: 1. What is meant by this binding of Satan. 2. What by this dominion or reign of the ſaints, of what nature and extent it is; which is alſo called *living*, and the *firſt reſurrection*.

The ſecond head is, concerning the perſons to whom this kingdom is promiſed: 1. Whether to dead or living ſaints. 2. Whether to martyrs only, or to others. 3. If only to ſaints without any hypocrites. 4. If to theſe who ſuffer in themſelves perſonally, or in others.

The third head is, concerning the time mentioned of a thouſand years. And, 1. If the time of the ſaints reign be cotemporary with, or ſucceſſive unto the thouſand years of Satan's reſtraint; and ſo, whether they be one, or two diſtinct times. 2. If theſe thouſand years be definite, or indefinite. 3. Whether it taketh in all the time after Chriſt's death, or otherwiſe. 4. And mainly, whether theſe thouſand years be applicable, and in the ſcope of the propheſy, and intent of the Spirit to be applied unto any time wholly paſt, or wholly to come; or, to the time which is preſently current.

The firſt and laſt head, and laſt particular of it, do mainly decide the queſtions incident here, and make way for the right underſtanding of this chapter. The firſt head openeth what is foretold here; the ſecond to whom; the third when it is fulfilled.

Concerning all which, we ſhall put by, 1. Some things which we conceive more clearly to be truths, and leſs controvertible. 2. Some things more obviouſly falſe, and which cannot any ways be conceived as intended, by theſe words in this viſion. And, ſo, 3. The things controverted will be fewer, and we ſhall have more ready acceſs to ſpeak of them.

The firſt thing we lay for truth, is, that whatever be meant by Satan's reſtraint here, it is not to be underſtood abſolutely and ſimply in all reſpects, but comparatively, and in ſome reſpect, ſo as notwithſtanding thereof he is ſtill deluding, deceiving, tempting, and carrying many to hell, and not wanting inſtruments to diſturb the ſaints peace; (tho' he get not to that ſucceſs he would be at in the means he uſeth, nor yet to that readineſs of inſtruments and means he hath formerly uſed) for there are many *dead*, and continuing ſo as yet, verſe 5. he hath Gog and Magog, many yet without, and poſſibly alſo within the church, in whom he reigneth, tho' he prevail not with them, ſo as to bring them up againſt the camp of the Moſt High; and his full binding is reſerved till the laſt day, when he is caſt in the lake, and when he getteth his final judgment, Jude verſe 6. And therefore, Matth. viii. he pleadeth that his time was not come, fully and ſimply to be ſhut up. Beſide, that that warning (that *the devil goeth about ſeeking whom he may deſtroy*, 1 Pet. v. 8.) concerning Chriſtians till the end of the world, they ſhall have a tempter of him till then, againſt whom they ſhall ſtill have cauſe to watch. Therefore he is not ſimply bound up in hell; but, in his raging among men, reſtrained, and that eminently in a great degree: for, as Satan is ſaid to be bound, when he is caſt out from having abſolute dominion over a man, Matth. xii. tho' he continue to tempt and trouble; ſo, in reſpect of the church, he is bound, though he may be troubling to them, as he may do a particular perſon; yet getteth he never ſuch abſolute and full dominion over them again, in that reſpect he is reſtrained and bound; even ſo here.

2. We think here is underſtood his moſt eminent reſtraining after Chriſt's birth till his ſecond coming; and therefore Chriſt's victories over him being always the longer the greater, it is like to be the laſt great reſtraint of Satan, viz. after Antichriſt's (at leaſt, begun) ruin, which may be in ſundry reſpects ſhown to be greater than any of the former, as having ſomethings of all the former reſtraints concurring together in it, and that in an eminent degree: however, that it is moſt eminent, is clear by theſe evidences, 1. That he is bound and ſealed, in ſome meaſure, not only caſt from the throne to the earth but kept from that liberty which formerly he had on the earth; the expreſſion ſignifieth certainly a very great reſtraint. 2. The ſaints peaceable reign, ſheweth him to be eminently bound; for, that they are now in more reſpect than at any

other time, it is from this that he is more bound up: and therefore this effect, or concomitant thereof, viz. their reigning, must of necessity be from a more than an ordinary binding. 3. That he may, and must be restrained, and said to be so in a greater measure, and in a more eminent manner than agreeth to him, or can be said of him, either before or after that. It is therefore a singular eminent binding, which differenceth this time and event from any time or state of the church before or after it.

3. Concerning the saint's reign for a thousand years, we take it for granted, 1. That it is cotemporary with the former; so that both Satan's binding, and their liberty and reigning, is for the same thousand years, which is clear, 1. By the repeating of them with the same article in the Greek *ta chilia ete* that thousand years, that, that, wherein Satan was bound; so after he hath told that Satan's case is to be bound that time, he now telleth what the church's estate, during that time, is, without which, the narration had been defective as to the church's comfort, had it not been added, that as during that time Satan was bound, so therein the saints had a joyful liberty. 2. This reigning of the saints is set down as an effect of his binding; and they are mentioned together, to shew how the one had influence on the other, the restraint of the one importing always liberty to the other: and it will be unsuitable to apply the saints reign rather to the time of Satan's loosing than of his restraint, it being certain, that as his kingdom and reign hath influence on her disturbance, so hath his binding on her peace. Beside, it will be hard so to lengthen the world, as to make two thousand years to pass after this binding, before ever Gog and Magog come, or to make them fall within the time of the church's reign; and it wanteth not inconveniences to make them fall together, that are mentioned as successive. We must therefore lay aside that opinion, which maketh these thousand years of Satan's binding, and the saints reign, successive.

A second thing clear of this reign is, that whatever it be, it is on earth, and that not immediately before the last judgment; for Gog interveneth before the resurrection come, and they, even these that did reign, are beset with Gog and Magog, who comes not to besiege heaven. 2. It is a reign or good condition that Satan's binding hath influence to increase, and his loosing to diminish, and disturb. Therefore it is not heaven, viz. of the souls of saints or martyrs, who are dead; for the devil's binding hath no influence on that. 3. It is such a good condition as is capable of hazards and interruptions by enemies: therefore it is on earth. It holdeth forth then a good condition of the militant church, and that in a particular limited time, which is not agreeable to it at other times; it cannot therefore be understood of suffering martyrs, they being glorified in heaven after their sufferings in that time; for this is no peculiar thing to any one time, but always, and in all times, a truth.

Thirdly, As it holdeth forth a good condition, so it would seem eminently to hold out the best that they can expect on earth for degree, length of time, and kind of dispensations. This is clear, 1. By the expressions of *sitting upon thrones, and reigning*, especially being compared with what went before of the woman's fleeing, and the prophets propheſying in sackcloth; this saith, it is an honourable condition, and settled, opposite to that, 2. By this, that they are styled martyrs, or such as were spotless in keeping their garments clean, which signifieth much holiness; and their living with Christ also denoteth the same. 3. That they have a camp, and look as if all formerly dead were alive again, it signifieth number, they are numerous, all of them are put together, and, as it were, both these are killed under emperors, and the beast Antichrist, they arise now in this new state of the church, see chap. vii. ver. 9, 10, &c. 4. That Satan is bound so strictly, and that they reign and live peaceably, it sheweth purity and peace in a great degree. 5. For a thousand years it sheweth, it is the longest time that hath been; before the church was seen over-run with persecutions; after, with heresies and heretics, and their favourers, after that immediately with Antichrist. Now, this flourishing reign shall be longer, the last then being the longest, most uninterrupted and complete dominion, this must be it, all things considered.

Fourthly, It is some good condition peculiar to some one time, not such a reign as believers alway have, even when Satan is loose, and Gog and Magog comes; but something eminent, that is not common to other intervals of the church's condition, but is more than hath formerly been, or will be after it; for as it is on the one side the devil's eminent restraint, so, on the other, it

is the saints eminent reign, so as it was not in such case before these years began, nor yet is to be after they are expired.

A fifth thing we say concerning this reign of the saints is, that whatever it be, it is not absolute, either for holiness, purity, peace, or length of time: which appeareth, 1. Because so they reign as Satan is restrained, and his restraint being but partial, so also must their reign be, seeing their absolute reign is reserved for heaven, after the last judgment, as his damnation is, it being only in heaven where that which is only perfect is, and what is imperfect is not done away to believers, 1 Cor. xiii. till they come there, either in holiness, or outward, or inward peace. 2. It appeareth from this, that while believers here reign in the world, in it is the devil, their own corruptions, many hypocrites, (that being proper to the visible militant church, till the last day separate all these who offend) and there being yet many dead in the world, who have not gotten victory over the beast, and there being also enemies without, as Gog and Magog, that want not enmity, but opportunity: it is therefore clear, not to be an absolute freedom that they enjoy, tho' it be in some extraordinary measure and manner, yet onsets upon, and wrestlings with them are not wanting, and that with some success, though God graciously disappoint as to the event, and suffereth it not to get to an height; yet all his children have their own crosses, and are to look for them to the end of the world. And altho' this be rejected by Alstedius in his Diatriba, *axioma vulgatum*, but not *probatum*, and saith, these warnings belong to the primitive times; yet who shall consider, (that the scripture joineth following of Christ, denying of ourselves, and taking up of the cross together, as Matth. xvi. 24. and elsewhere, and maketh it a mark of sons, and of love to be chastised, Heb. xii. and a piece of our conformity to Christ the head, Rom. viii. 28. and a consequent unto Godliness alway, 2 Tim. iii. 12. and many other places) will find it not so easy to reject it, except we would have perpetual duties, such as denying of ourselves, &c. and deny that there was such need or use of crosses to believers, who will certainly have corruptions in them to be mortified to the end of the world, and so need the rod for promoving of that.

A sixth thing I suppose is clear, that whatever it be it is not literally to be understood, and properly as the words sound, but figuratively and spiritually. The particular making out of this, will follow in the opening of the words. Yet this we may in general say, 1. That they are figuratively to be understood, not as the letter properly soundeth: for that the devil *bound with a chain*, cannot be proper, but to shew that he stept in, like a violent mastiff in a chain, by God's sovereignty; so *thrones*, the *souls of these slain*, their *living*, and their *resurrection*, is figurative, as the rest who continue dead signifieth not properly these who continued in the grave, but these in nature; for it is said of all men, contradistinctly from these living, *the rest of the dead*, &c. yet the last judgment is not come, therefore many lived a natural life then, who did not live thus; but as all men are divided in regenerate and unregenerate, so here they are divided in living and dead to that same purpose. So souls sitting on thrones, and reigning with Christ, cannot but be figurative, as that also of the resurrection, there being in the scripture but one acknowledged that is proper, which this is not. 2. I say they are to be understood spiritually, which confirmeth the former, that is, this dominion, reign, living and resurrection of the saints, must be spiritually understood, especially and chiefly: for clearing whereof, understand, that as there is a natural and proper life, dominion, and resurrection, so there is one figurative and spiritual, which agreeth to all Christians: 1. There is a spiritual slavery and bondage to sin, death, satan, &c. Rom. vi. we were servants to it, led captive by the devil at his will, sold under sin, and its reign, Rom. vii. So there is a spiritual dominion to be free from that, made kings unto God, Rev. i. 6. and chap. v. 10. reigning on the earth. 2. There is a spiritual death, Eph. ii. and 1 Tim. v. 8. and so there is a spiritual life, Gal. ii. 21. 3. There is a resurrection spiritual from the death and dominion of sin, that is it, John v. 25. *The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and live:* and this is the in-bringing of many to the gospel, or the breaking out of it, which is called a resurrection, Rom. xi. as there is a resurrection universal in the great day mentioned, v. 12.

I say then, these words here are spiritually to be understood especially, tho' not only, as is clear: for, 1. This dominion and reign is on the earth, therefore it is not proper but figurative, seeing clear scripture promiseth no such earthly temporal

kingdom to ſaints, but warneth them to be alway looking for the croſs and affliction, which could not be, if there were a thouſand years freedom and temporal reign. 2. This is a dominion common to all ſaints as ſaints; for, the world now is divided in dead or regenerate, and living, that is, believers, and all theſe living, are martyrs, and ſuch as have not received the beaſt's mark, (which is the character, chap. xiii. xiv. and xvii. of all the elect) whereby is underſtood all true believers; but no temporal kingdom is promiſed to all ſaints as ſaints, but what is ſpiritual is promiſed. *Ergo*, &c. Yea, there can be no other; for, if all the ſaints were temporal kings, whom ſhould they command? who ſhould be their ſubjects? yet without any confuſion, ſpiritual dominion will agree to them all: neither can it be ſaid, they are to govern the reprobates, who continue dead: for, 1. That would imply a diſtinct diſcernible ſeparation, even here-away, as if no hypocrite could lurk. 2. The text ſuppoſeth the church viſible, and theſe without to be ſeparated, as having their own rulers, which appeareth in Gog's undertaking afterward, who is not ſubject to them. 3. There behoved to be many kingdoms, if every ſaint had one now, when they are multiplied, and the wicked fewer. This is a reign eſpecially of ſouls, and it is not for nought ſo expreſſed here, as there is a ſoul-merchandiſe hinted at by this expreſſion, chap. xviii. 4. So theſe live and reign, as the moſt part of the world are dead, and in bondage, and enjoy not that reſurrection; but that is ſpirituality to be underſtood, they were dead in ſin, and not raiſed thus to reign, therefore ſo muſt the reign of ſaints, and their life on the contrary be ſpiritual: for, in this only they are ſingular. 5. It is a dominion at this time, as common to all ſaints, ſo peculiar to them, and common to none other; but, no queſtion, many reprobates have yet dominion in the world, and ſo live without the church: for, Gog and Magog have their own magiſtrates then, and are ſaid to come againſt the ſaints, and not to rebel againſt them; which would have been true, if ſaints only had born dominion and rule over theſe: and when the devil goeth out to the four winds, it ſuppoſeth great and large territories to be even then without the church, which certainly wanted not temporal rule. 6. It is ſuch a dominion as Chriſt hath: for, they reign with him; as therefore his kingdom is on earth, ſo is theirs; but his kingdom is not of this world, but is ſpiritual: therefore ſo is theirs: for, this, to reign with Chriſt, ſpeaketh not any new way of Chriſt's reigning, but ſpeaketh a new acceſſion to his kingdom, of others coming in to partake of it with him; and is certainly to ſhew what ſort of kingdom this is, which the ſaints ſhall have, and to contradiſtinguiſh it from that dominion that is worldly. 7. It is ſuch a reign on earth, as all the ſaints have in reſpect of kind, though not for degree; for, there is but one covenant and kingdom, and the ſame promiſe is made to all under the New Teſtament; but that is ſpiritual, they all, chap. v. 18. ſo *reign on the earth*. *Ergo*, &c. 8. It is ſuch a reign, as it is a prieſthood, ſo are they kings, as they are prieſts, ſee verſe 6. Theſe partakers of this reſurrection, are prieſts to God; but their prieſthood is ſpiritual, and not again of offering outward ſacrifices, ſo muſt alſo therefore be their dominion and kingdom. 9. Certainly ſpiritual mercies are the beſt, and the church's condition that floweth and aboundeth moſt in theſe, muſt be the beſt condition: ſeeing then this is the church's beſt condition ſpoken of, it muſt therefore be eſpecially underſtood ſpiritually; for, what is commended here, is not as ſimply commendable to men, but as commendable in a church, and peculiar to her as ſuch.

Object. If it be ſaid here, then nothing peculiar is promiſed to ſaints, or believers in this time, (ſeeing that dominion agreeth to ſaints at all times) which ſeemeth to be abſurd, therefore ſomething more muſt be here.

Anſw. That is granted, that ſomething more is here, as is ſaid: for, 1. Now ſaints not only reign ſingularly over their own luſts, but jointly in viſible churches, and in a church eſtate, having all the ordinances of word, ſacraments and diſcipline amongſt them, and theſe in more purity, power and fruits, than for any time before, and in longer continuance. The ſtamp of God's authority on his ordinances ſhall be more ſenſible now, than before. 2. Though it be not a temporal thing that their reigning conſiſteth in, yet ſhall they have more temporal freedom than formerly; the devil ſhall not mar the courſe of the goſpel, neither by open violence, nor by Antichriſt's deceit, but ſtill there ſhall be churches, either in kingdoms where they ſhall have law and allowance for their profeſſion, or amongſt enemies, and their enemies ſhall be reſtrained from being able

to put them in ſuch doleful conditions as they have formerly been into; thus the goſpel ſhall be countenanced with public authority, which was, chapter xii. And beſide, they ſhall have freedom againſt Antichriſt's dominion, with a more full performance of promiſes of the Spirit, which they had not then.

A ſeventh thing concerning this dominion is clear that it implieth as more ſpiritual, ſo more temporal peace and freedom than at any other time, (putting the continuance of it, and all together) and though it doth not mainly and eſpecially, yet, in ſome meaſure, it doth take in outward peace in their condition alſo: which appeareth, 1. From Satan's eminent reſtraint, which hath influence alſo on the church's temporal peace as well as ſpiritual, ſo it followeth in ſome part as the other. 2. It appeareth from the event after his looſing, their temporal peace is then marred; therefore they had it by the devil's reſtraint, in ſome meaſure, otherwiſe they reign when Gog is high, as before ſpiritually in a good meaſure. 3. The pointing out of this reign, as having a more continued eminent honourable profeſſion of the goſpel, not common to other times; and it being oppoſite, probably, to the ſaints ſuffering times alſo, when their prophets were in ſackcloth, and the church forced to flee: it is like it holdeth out a temporal freedom ſuiting with theſe ends, and freeing them from the bondage they lay under before; for, if in ſuffering times, ſaints ſtill reign ſpiritually, then that new engagement of Gog and Magog, would not interrupt it, and ſo it would be a reign not for a thouſand years only, but for the length of the world; for ſo they ſtill did reign; therefore it is not purely and only ſpiritual. We ſhall more particularly ſpeak of it according to theſe grounds, in the lecture following.

Only now from what is ſaid, we may gather, as to the events, that theſe cannot be expected from the text, which, both of old and late, men have been fathering wrongfully on this place; as, 1. That Chriſt ſhould come to the earth perſonally, and that all the martyrs and ſaints ſhould reign a thouſand years before the reſurrection, and have all ſorts of pleaſure, even unlawful, as drinking, polygamy, &c. This was invented by Cerinthus, and ſtill counted an hereſy by the fathers, even by theſe called Chiliaſts or Millenaries by Auguſtine, de civit. Dei lib. 20. cap. 5, 6. Concerning the Millenaries errors about the thouſand years, ſee Euſeb. Eccl. Hiſt. 3. lib. cap. 22. where he ſheweth Cerinthus his hereſy who added ſacrifices and ceremonies alſo. A ſecond error different from the former is, that ſome profeſs to expect ſuch a reign with Chriſt on earth, yet ſo as not to enjoy carnal ſinful pleaſures, but lawful delights, wherewith, they ſay, the earth ſhall then abound: of ſuch an opinion was Iraeneus, Juſtin Martyr, Lanctantius, and many of the fathers. This flowed from Papias, ſuppoſed to be an hearer of John the diſciple, (which made his opinion the more to be received) but he was not. See Euſeb. lib. 3. cap. ult. He alſo fell into other faults by following tradition contrary to the word, which is a native conſequent of that principle. 3. There was another opinion allowing the ſaints reſurrection and kingdom before the laſt day on the earth, but abounding only in ſpiritual delights; of ſuch Auguſtine profeſſeth himſelf once to have been, and ſo it is like alſo were many of theſe fathers called Chiliaſts. This was ſtill accounted an error rather than an hereſy; but yet there is no ſuch kingdom here.

Again, neither do theſe opinions ſpring from this text; as, 1. That before the reſurrection, which ſhall be general, the martyrs (the text ſaith *all ſaints*) ſhall ariſe a thouſand years and reign with Chriſt, but in heaven; this is Piſcatur's opinion of the place.

2. Some bring not Chriſt down perſonally; yet plead for a reſurrection of the martyrs, and a reigning of them with the ſaints on earth a thouſand years before the end of the world, as Alſtedius doth in his Diatriba de mille annis Apoc.

3. Some go on more groſsly and add to that, that Chriſt in his perſonal preſence (which is not ſpoken of in the text) is to reign with them on earth: thus Henry Archer, and ſome others of late. All theſe thwart with, and are contrary unto the grounds formerly laid down.

4. Others alſo that begin theſe years too ſoon, or expect too great a temporal kindneſs, or an abſolute univerſal freedom to come, may ſee the groundleſſneſs thereof from what is ſaid

LECTURE II.

Verſe 1. *And I ſaw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomleſs pit, and a great chain in his hand, &c.*

IT would follow that we ſhould lay down ſomewhat more particulary to ſhew wherein this good and excellent condition of the ſaints here ſpoken of conſiſteth, as it is holden forth according to the preceding grounds; by which we may ſee it is no uncouth nor ſtrange thing, that is here ſpoken of, (though as the manner of this book is) the expreſſions be ſtrange-like; and this prejudice being once admitted, that ſome peculiar myſtery, and unheard of in any other place of the ſcripture, is contained here, it hath occaſioned the many miſtakes about the meaning thereof. In ſum then, we conceive this place to hold out a flouriſhing and good condition for ſometime, of the church militant, in the days of the goſpel, in theſe ſix, peculiarly agreeing to that time and going together, oppoſite to ſix things, wherein the low condition of the ſaints conſiſteth.

1. In pure ordinances, and an abundance of the knowledge of the goſpel: for if that be a ſpecial thing, wherein and whereby Chriſt doth reign on earth himſelf, this being the rod of his power, Pſal. cx. verſe 2. It is ſuitable that this be the firſt thing of the ſaints reign, who reign with him when he reigneth, even as the church is made to flee, when the purity of ordinances is obſcured.

2. It conſiſteth in the power of ordinances upon profeſſors, by bringing them out of the bondage of ſin to the liberty of the ſons of God, which is to reign and to be free indeed. And it would appear that much of this good condition muſt certainly be in that dominion over ſin, oppoſite to that natural ſlavery and death by it, under which the moſt part of the world lieth, therefore is the word, *bleſſed and holy is he that is partaker of this reſurrection*, verſe 6. and for this they are called *prieſts unto God*, and oppoſed to the dead world.

3. It conſiſteth in the plurality and abundance of profeſſors their embracing this goſpel, many nations ſetting their face toward Zion, and joining themſelves to the Lord. This, chap. xi. is given as a ſpecial evidence of Chriſt's reign when the nations become his: and thus their reigning is oppoſed in reſpect of their multitude to the fewneſs of the ſealed ones who were before, chapter vii. (the two laſt parts being compared together) when they were ſhut up in the temple, chap. xi. verſe 1. and 2. Then neither Chriſt nor they ſeemed to reign; but when the temple is again opened at the end of that chapter, then beginneth their dominion; even as their former purity and light is oppoſed to the darkneſs and errors that went before, as Judah is ſaid to rule with God, Hoſea xi. ult. in reſpect of Ephraim's bondage in error.

4. It conſiſteth in a viſible, bold, public profeſſion of theſe ſaints by a church-ſtate, not only worſhipping privately, as when the woman fled to the wilderneſs, but openly as when the prophets put off their ſackcloth, and are taken up to heaven; when there are nations together, and the temple open, and religion avowed, and diſcipline exerciſed, then they reign; this is oppoſed to their former lurking.

5. It is in outward freedom, ſometimes they are perſecuted, and are not free to bear office in military or civil employments under heathens to buy and ſell under the beaſt, chap. xiii. Now, either God giveth them favour in the eyes of rulers, or reſtraineth their malice by ſome counter-ballancing thing, or turneth them to be worſhippers of him, as he did Conſtantine: thus they reign when they have law for them. In which reſpect, chap. xii. 9. It is ſaid, the kingdom of our Lord is come, when heathen perſecution is ſtopped, and religion is countenanced, and kings become nurſing fathers to the church; all the ſaints do not become magiſtrates, but God maketh magiſtrates ſaints, or friends to them who are ſo.

6. The ſixth thing wherein this good condition conſiſteth, is the length of time it continueth, which at leaſt is a long time beyond any former ceſſation and peace they have ever had, it is a *thouſand years*. In theſe we ſuppoſe the good condition here holden forth to conſiſt, the particulars whereof will appear more in opening of the words. We would only underſtand it with theſe caveats; leſt we extend it too far in our expectation beyond what the ſcripture in this place giveth warrant for:

and theſe three extreams are to be guarded againſt. It is not therefore, 1. An abſolute freedom in an height of ſuperiority in temporal or ſpiritual privileges, but in a good degree, being compared with the church's condition at other times. It is the moſt free and longeſt time of the church's peace with greateſt light, holineſs and number of profeſſors; but cannot be extended ſo as we may warrantably think that there ſhould be no croſſes nor hypocrites, nor offences amongſt the people of God during that time. 2. That good condition cometh not inſtantly to an height, and to the chief top of it, but by degrees from leſſer to greater, from a day of ſmall things to greater: for even as the church's low condition under Antichriſt, and her prophets propheſying in ſackcloth and Antichriſt's dominion came to an height at once (though all theſe conditions be accounted for ſuch a definite time, viz. from their beginning and firſt working, till they come to their height) ſo it is here, the ſaints good condition is to be reckoned from the beginning and riſe of their reign, though it come on by degrees to an height. 3. We would not think, during this time, but that there may be ſome partial interruptions of this good condition, and ſeeming, if not real, in part at leaſt, declinings from it; for that is not underſtood in any condition, that it ſhall continue alway alike, the church may have difficulties now, as Antichriſt had oppoſition during the time of his reign; but it is meaned, 1. That during that time, enemies ſhall never univerſally eclipſe the face of a viſible church, as at other times, ſo as to make her flee to hide herſelf: and that in the upſhot the ſaints ſhall ever be gainers even here, though for a time they may be ſtraitned and wreſtle, yet it ſhall not be now: as chap. xiii. where the beaſt maketh war and overcometh them, but as it is chap. xvii. the Lamb with the choſen and faithful that are with him, ſhall make war with the enemy and overcome in the end, though they want not enemies even then, it is not then wholly uninterrupted and conſtant. This being the truth of the good condition holden forth here, we may ſee how unwarrantable it is either with ſome of old, or others of late, to abuſe this place unto an abſolute dominion; and that we may be put from the expectation of ſuch a ſtrange thing from this text, (tho' the expreſſions be ſtrange) and that whatever be meaned by it, yet we may be ſure, no ſuch uncouth thing, eſpecially temporal, is contained in it, as men dream of. We would have you conſidering, beſide what is ſaid before, theſe three.

1. Conſider that this, whatever it be, is cotemporary with ſome of the principal propheſies going before; it being an explicatory viſion, it muſt belong either to the time of the ſeals, trumpets, or vials: for the ſeals begin after Chriſt, and continue till Antichriſt begin, (underhand at leaſt) to work; this is certain. 2. The trumpets follow, and continue till Antichriſt's begun fall; this is alſo certain. 3. That the vials ſucceed the trumpets, and carry on Antichriſt's ruin, and the ſtate of the church to the end of the world, is alſo cleared before, chap. xi. and chap. xvi. So that for the period of this viſion, the devil's final overthrow is the ſame with the period of the vials; for the ſixth overturneth the beaſt, and the ſeventh vial bringeth with it the next more univerſal overthrow to the devil, which can be fixed at no other term but the end of the world, when the devil is caſt in the lake where the falſe prophet was, which knitteth the caſting down of theſe enemies together in an immediate ſucceſſive way, as the laſt two full victories which Chriſt ſhall have; which confirmeth what is ſaid. Now, this being truth, it muſt follow then, that theſe thouſand years are cotemporary with one of theſe propheſies, ſeeing they go before the end of the world, and are at ſome certain time; therefore we muſt underſtand ſo this kingdom and dominion of the ſaints, and binding of Satan, as muſt be agreeable and competent to one of theſe propheſies, and the events foretold in them: but if we will look through all theſe propheſies, we will find the church having enemies, and the ſaints having their difficulties: under the ſeals there is open perſecution, under the trumpets there is Antichriſt's tyranny, and under the vials (look but the fifth vial, chapter xvii.) the kings war againſt the Lamb: and ſee the ſixth, chapter xvi. there are in much vigor againſt the church, the beaſt, falſe prophet and dragon, ſending out unclean ſpirits, that with many do prevail to bring them up to battle againſt the Lord. See alſo the ſeventh and laſt, the devil is not yet taken till the end, he hath a freſh looſe not long before it, by Gog and Magog. Now, if ſo be, where will this abſolute dominion of the ſaints for ſuch a time appear? This one conſideration well grounded, will overturn that conceit; for this dominion is either cotempo-

rary with theſe, and ſo not abſolute; or, it is ſucceſſive to theſe; which to ſay, 1. Doth contradict that truth, that the vials bring the end. 2. It contradicteth this truth, that by this viſion, that propheſy of the vials, eſpecially the ſeventh, is explained, otherwiſe the ſeventh vial is left without any particular event. 3. By this the world will be lengthened long, we being yet about the beginning of the fourth vial, three vials being to come, then a thouſand years after that, Gog and Magog before the end, it would ſeem exceeding to lengthen theſe days, which for the elect's ſake are ſhortened. We conclude then, it is ſuch a good condition, as muſt conſiſt with ſome of the difficulties of the church, mentioned in the former propheſies: for, though the ſaints good condition here only be ſet down, yet are we to read the ſtate of the enemies in ſome other place, it being ordinary in this propheſy to ſet down firſt one event, as it is by the vials told what is become of enemies, and then to ſet down another cotemporary with it, as here, how it was with the ſaints.

2. For removing this ſtrange thought, we would conſider the prophet's manner of propheſying good to the people of God; how do Iſaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Zechariah, ſpeak of the Jews eſtate after the captivity? And how do all ſpeak of the days of the goſpel in general, as, *The weak ſhall be as David, their horns ſhall be iron*, and *their hoofs braſs*, and *they ſhall threſh the nations, they ſhall lie down, and none ſhall make them afraid*, and many ſuch like? Yet, if any would draw from them a temporal happineſs, or an abſolute freedom, would not the event (the beſt commentary) confute him? Take the propheſy of Daniel, wherein often it is ſaid, *The ſaints ſhall take the kingdom*, which is no temporal thing, nor this intended here, as appeareth, in that it is a kingdom not for a thouſand years, but for ever. Now, it being certain, that ſuch manner of ſpeaking and expreſſions, are uſual to the prophets, when they ſet out ſpiritual mercies, or temporal deliverances that are but partial, and in their events have been inferior to what the expreſſions literally bear, (tho' they be in themſelves great and glorious) and this being clear all alongſt this propheſy, that John followeth the expreſſions and manner of the prophets in other things, is it not then ſafeſt to expound the events propheſied of by him in ſuch expreſſions, by the events propheſied of by them in the like? So that the applying of their propheſies to the events wherein they were fulfilled, may be a commentary to clear what ſort of events are underſtood here.

3. Conſider John's way in this ſame viſion: certainly ſome things, yea, many, are not to be applied according to the letter, but in a ſpiritual way to be underſtood, as theſe expreſſions, verſe 6. of the firſt reſurrection, muſt be neceſſarily meant of riſing from ſin; for, it is reſurrection oppoſed to the ſinful dead world, which continue dead, and did not riſe. 2. It is ſuch a reſurrection, as upon which, freedom from the ſecond death doth flow; but that is not a bodily reſurrection, but a ſpiritual; for, many at the laſt day riſe bodily to contempt, Dan. xii. which ſheweth, that that place ſpeaketh of the laſt reſurrection. And, 3. It is ſuch, as the want whereof maketh men liable to the ſecond death, and it is not the want of the firſt bodily reſurrection, according to the *Millenaries* themſelves; (for then, ſeeing, as they ſay, none ariſe firſt but martyrs, none ſhould be ſaved but martyrs) but the not being born again, that ſecludeth from heaven; and that expreſſion concerning the privilege which theſe that are raiſed here have, they *ſhall be prieſts to God*, muſt either be ſpiritually underſtood, or we muſt, with Cerinthus, bring back again the ſacrifices, and ceremonial and typical worſhip, contrary to the whole ſtrain and ſeries of the goſpel. And ſeeing the former part of that 6th verſe is neceſſarily, figuratively, and improperly to be underſtood, why not the latter part alſo, *That they ſhall reign with Chriſt?* We conclude, then, that here there is no abſolute temporal kingdom promiſed, but ſuch as we have before hinted at.

We come now to ſpeak of the ſecond head, wherein the queſtion lieth; and that is, concerning the parties who are partakers of this good condition, which hath alſo ſundry branches.

1. It is queſtioned, whether our Lord Jeſus ſhall come perſonally to reign with the ſaints on earth? We anſwer, negatively, there is no ground to expect our Lord's preſence perſonally and viſibly to converſe on earth with his people, tho' we will not ſay, but there is in this time an eminent meaſure of his preſence by his Spirit and power in his ordinances, and manifeſtations in his diſpenſations more than ordinary; that is not controverted. But that perſonal preſence we deny, on theſe grounds, 1. Becauſe the ſcripture is ſilent of it, and knitteth ever Chriſt's perſonal coming again, and the laſt

judgment together, as holding that out to be his errand. If it be ſaid here, they are ſaid to reign with Chriſt, therefore he muſt be on earth. *Anſ.* It followeth not, no more, nor when it is ſaid, Gen. v. Enoch walked with God three hundred years; or, that we ſuffer with Chriſt, Rom. viii. or converſe with him, therefore he is on earth ſuffering with us, or walking with us: yea, the very contrary followeth from this place, that he is not on earth: which may be cleared, 1. Thus, ſo Chriſt reigneth with his ſaints, and they with him, as they do other things with him, that is, ſuffer with him, and walk with him, &c. But that implieth not a perſonal preſence, but a ſpiritual, therefore ſo doth this. And indeed ſaints reigning, being in their ſenſe, and in a part truth, oppoſite to ſaints ſuffering; muſt not then ſuffering with Chriſt be oppoſite to reigning with him? And ſo to reign with Chriſt, will imply, 1. A ſpiritual preſence of Chriſt with them. 2. A common intereſt and account of dominion, as there is a common intereſt and account in their ſuffering. Thus to reign with him, differenceth their good condition from the good of worldly men's conditions, even as to ſuffer with him differenceth the nature of their ſufferings from worldly men's croſſes. 2. It is clear from this, that it is not ſaid ſimply they reign, but reign with him: the peculiarneſs of the dominion for theſe thouſand years, is not on his ſide, but on theirs; for, he reigneth before and after only for theſe thouſand years, the ſaints, who did not ſo reign formerly, are admitted to reign with him: therefore as his reign is ordinarily, ſo is it now: for, there is no change on his ſide; but ordinarily it is not perſonal, but by his Spirit and ordinances, therefore it is ſo now, and no otherwiſe.

2. Either this perſonal reign of Chriſt, is after the day of judgment, as the old Chiliaſts thought; or, it is immediately before it, or during it, as theſe that would have Chriſt continuing, as it were, his judgment that long time, as Tyllingaſt, and others of late. But the text overturneth all theſe, 1. It is not after the day of judgment: for, Gog and Magog are before the day of judgment; yet Gog and Magog are after theſe thouſand years, therefore it cannot be expected after it. 2. It is not immediately before: for, 1. Gog and Magog intervenes, and the dominion of the ſaints is interrupted before that. 2. At the day of judgment, Chriſt is not on earth, but cometh in the clouds from heaven. See 1 Theſſ. iv. ver. 16, 17. *The Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend*, therefore he is not on earth; *Then ſhall we that are alive be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air;* and ſo he is there, *and we ſhall be for ever with him:* Where both theſe are clear, 1. That at the day of judgment, Chriſt is not on the earth, therefore are the ſaints caught up to meet him. 2. It is clear, that he and they return not to the earth, but they abide in heaven for ever with him: for their continuing with him for ever, is expreſsly ſubjoined as the fruit of their being caught up, and ſo ſupponeth that it is not to be on the earth.

3. We argue (for preventing an objection) thus, at Chriſt's perſonal coming before the end of the world to reign, he either continueth in the world till the end, or he returneth again to heaven till the time of judgment; but neither of theſe can be found: not that he abideth on the earth after the thouſand years; for, 1. Then he would be longer on earth than a thouſand years. 2. He muſt continue to reign, (which ſtandeth not with the definite time of the ſaints thouſand years dominion) or, he muſt be ſtraitned and encompaſſed by Gog and Magog with the ſaints; and this were to make Chriſt ſuffer again perſonally, which cannot ſtand with the ſtate of his exaltation. Beſide that, this would ſuppoſe him to be on earth (contrary to what is ſaid before) at the day of judgment. Neither can it be ſaid, he aſcendeth and returneth: for, 1. That would make three comings of Chriſt, whereas the ſcripture ſpeaketh but of two. 2. It would divide his ſecond coming from the ends which the ſcripture giveth of it, that is, to ſubdue all his enemies, and fully to deliver all his people, Heb. ix. 27, 28. *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: ſo Chriſt was once offered to bear the ſins of many; and unto them that look for him, ſhall he appear the ſecond time without ſin unto ſalvation.* Where theſe are clear, 1. That there is but a ſecond coming again of Chriſt, and no more. 2. That that perfecteth the ſalvation of his people. 3. That there is no intervening coming between his firſt coming and this. Now all this would be left undone, if he ſhould before the end aſcend again, and leave the ſaints in a new difficulty, which cometh upon them at the cloſe of the thouſand years.

I might further add multitudes of abſurdities that this inferreth, as, 1. To what end cometh he? Is it for his people's comfort temporal, and will he leave them then in a new ſtrait, or continue with them, and not prevent it? 2. How converſeth he on earth? Either he muſt ſtill be in the company of all his ſaints, and ſo cannot be in one place contrary to the nature of his true body; or, he muſt be ſometimes with ſome, and ſometimes with others, and that conſiſteth not with this, that they all reign with him a thouſand years, if to reign with him be to have his bodily preſence, ſome muſt alway want it: for it cannot be ſo on earth with the ſaints, not yet made in their bodies ſpiritual, as it will be in heaven in the enjoyment of his preſence. 3. By his deſcending, he behoved either to bring all the ſaints from heaven to an earthly glory, to eat and drink again, contrary to the ſcripture, that ſaith, *They ſhall be like the angels;* or, he muſt leave them in heaven, and ſo their felicity, by wanting of his bodily preſence (in which the happineſs of heaven in a great part conſiſteth) is, however it be, impaired. 4. Let it be aſked, what cometh of ſaints for theſe thouſand years, when he reigneth on earth? Either they live all that time, which none can expect, or elſe they die, and then by death they are not to be with Chriſt, (which being with him, maketh the ſaints willing and deſirous to be looſed, Phil. i. 21. but are for a time to depart from him: and ſo in ſum, Chriſt's being here on earth, proveth neither for the comfort (ſimply at leaſt) of ſaints in heaven, nor in earth: we would therefore much improve the ways of preſence we have, (to be at a higher degree in theſe) and contentedly ſuſpend the enjoyment of Chriſt's perſonal preſence till we get it where he is.

It will not remove thoſe abſurdities, to ſay with one, viz. Tyllingaſt, 1. That this perſonal coming of Chriſt is the ſame with his ſecond coming to judgment, and that theſe thouſand years, and what followeth, is the day of judgment, as it were, continued and current. Nor, 2. To ſay that the ſaints continuing on earth, during ſuch a time, doth not mar their glorious condition more than it doth to angels to be abroad in their employments. To the firſt we ſay, that at Chriſt's coming, *He cometh in flaming fire with all his holy angels*, the powers of heaven are ſhaken, faces gather paleneſs, and men's hearts fail them for fear, &c. And it is certain that this inſurrection of Gog and Magog againſt Chriſt's church, is after theſe thouſand years: now is it credible, that during the time of judgment, while Chriſt in ſuch glorious majeſty is ſitting as judge, that there can be no heart in any creatures to eſſay, much leſs in any meaſure, as is here ſuppoſed, to effectuate ſuch an undertaking againſt Chriſt and his ſaints, as this of Magog is? Eſpecially if we conſider that the ſame author maketh the deſtruction of the beaſt to follow Chriſt's perſonal coming, as the firſt act of his judgment: and to ſuppoſe ſuch an interruption, or mutiny againſt the judge, as this is not conſiſtent with the nature of Chriſt's judicial procedure.

To the ſecond, altho' we ſay not that it is inconſiſtent with the angels glorious condition to ſerve their Maſter any where, by executing his commands; yet is it never ſaid, that Satan is looſed on them, and that they are encompaſſed, as it is ſaid here of the ſaints, who are after theſe thouſand years ſtraitned, they, as it were, having the defender's part, and the wicked as the ſtronger party, purſuing them (therefore is their ſtate then differenced from their good condition preceding:) and can that conſiſt with a glorified condition? We may preſs this opinion thus, if all the departed ſaints be bodily to be raiſed, and to reign with Chriſt theſe thouſand years, then all the dead reprobates are at the cloſe thereof bodily raiſed and joined with Gog and Magog in the purſuing of the ſaints, and encompaſſing of them: for the wicked live ſo after the thouſand years as they did not before, and their following condition after that time is oppoſed to the former during that time, as is clear. That the wicked alſo after that time prevail, and the ſaints ſuffer, the oppoſing of the church's eſtate after that time, to its good condition during that time, doth alſo confirm: for all on the earth are then divided in theſe two, the holy city who are encompaſſed, and theſe who do encompaſs. And ſeeing theſe wicked reprobates cannot be comprehended under the firſt party that ſuffer, they muſt therefore be comprehended under the laſt, who, for the time, prevaileth: and ſo the preſſing of this bodily reſurrection and reign of the ſaints upon earth, will infer alſo a bodily reſurrection and reign of the wicked reprobates, which will be a ſixth monarchy, hitherto not mentioned. And therefore if this laſt be abſurd, and ſo to have no ground from this place, we muſt account the former to be ſuch alſo.

LECTURE III.

Ver. 1. *And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand.*

THE second thing questioned concerning the parties reigning, is, whether they that reign thus, be such as have formerly lived and died, and after death are made to reign? Or, whether they be such as have not yet seen death? *Answ.* We say these that reign with Christ here are not saints departed, but such as never yet died, living saints, members of the militant church. We shall first confirm the negative, viz. that they are not dead saints, that is, such as once lived and died, and thereafter are brought to this life again; which is three ways expressed by several authors, 1. Not such as have been martyred and brought again to live on earth with their bodies, as the old Millenaries conceited: for, 1. That maketh all this literally to be understood of the resurrection, which we shew to be spiritual: and if this be a spiritual resurrection, then it is not corporal; but that it is spiritual, may be thus made out, it is a resurrection that agreeth to saints that never died bodily, therefore it is spiritual. The antecedent is thus proven, this resurrection agreeth to all who are then living with Christ; but the living saints must at that time be living with Christ, or else they must be comprehended under the common reckoning with the dead world, which cannot be; or, we must say there are no saints in the militant church then, which is false, this being certain that the end is not yet come. 2. This cleareth it, that it maketh folks free of the second death, and only that doth it, as is said. 3. It crosseth the scope, which is to shew the state of the militant church on earth, whereof dead saints are not to be members. 4. It is such saints as may be in their dominion encompassed and straitned by Gog and Magog; but it were hard to bring saints from heaven to that condition. 5. How should they live on earth a spiritual life not eating nor drinking, or, a natural life again in these? Both are absurd. 6. This would make a resurrection and judgment, beside the one universal judgment and resurrection, against the scripture: that, 1 Thess. iv. speaketh of all living then, and the dead that die before, to go together to meet Christ. 7. What cometh of them after the thousand years reign expireth? it is they who did reign who are encompassed; but that cannot be said of saints raised again; for, 1. Then they would be longer on the earth than a thousand years. 2. They would be interrupted in their reign (this lasteth but a thousand years) therefore it is not such who reign. 8. If it be of such, it must either be before or after the day of judgment; neither of which can be, as is cleared.

2. Again, others say that it is martyrs rising again a thousand years before the general resurrection, but enjoying a dominion in heaven, not on earth, as is Piscator's opinion. This cannot be: for, 1. It is against the scope as the former. 2. This dominion is of all saints then in being, as we shall hear, therefore it is not peculiar to martyrs. 3. This dominion, and these who reign here, are interrupted in their dominion, which can be said of none in heaven. 4. It is shown before to be on earth. 5. It would be also more than a thousand years reign before the general resurrection, or else they must be again suspended in it, which is absurd.

3. Neither can it be applied to martyrs and saints living under Antichrist, and other persecutors, who being dead are said to reign by their souls enjoying of Christ in glory (as Paraeus and ordinarily interpreters do apply it) which is a truth that these saints do reign even after their death; but it cannot be applied to these who reign here, 1. Because that reign is in heaven; this meaned here is on earth. 2. That reigning of saints departed, is continual in all times; this is peculiar to these thousand years. 3. That of saints in heaven cannot be interrupted; this may be. 4. It agreeth to saints in their most suffering condition, even that of Gog and Magog; for even then they overcome and reign, so this is a peculiar good condition, and contradistinguished from the church's former hard straits and is interrupted, as it is afterward, verse 7. by that Gog and Magog. It must necessarily follow then, that they are living saints on earth, and then in some more than an ordinary flourishing condition. Concerning whom, we are to enquire, 1. If it be all saints then living, or some

few only? 2. What these contradistinguished one from another are? Who these martyrs, and who these others are? 3. How they continue for a thousand years to reign, if in their own persons, or in their successors?

And we say, 1. They are living saints, who never yet did see death, nor martyrs formerly killed, but who then shall be followers of the martyrs faith and practice, and keep themselves from pollutions, such as are, chap. xiv. called virgins, who are here meaned: for, 1. It is on earth, as it is said. 2. It is of all saints then living thus contradistinguished from the rest of the dead world. 3. It is not the same individual persons who live and reign all these thousand years, but they in their successors, the church being one body dieth never, even as the witnesses continued all the space of one thousand two hundred and sixty days, and died and rose again in their successors, so it is here, one generation succeedeth to another. Now, if it were martyrs restored to life, then, 1. It would be peculiar to them, which is here common to all. 2. Then they would live still and be in new hazard by Satan's loosing, which is impossible; for it is the same saints that are encompassed by Gog and Magog, who formerly did reign, when Satan was bound, therefore it is living saints continuing in a succession for many years, they who in their life did reign, suffering after death in their successors by Gog and Magog, even as their predecessors who suffered in their life, yet after death reign in their posterity: the one expoundeth the other, and sheweth that both the reigning of martyrs, and suffering of these saints, must be verified in their successors: for all who live and reign are partakers of this resurrection; but many living saints, who never died, must either be partakers of it, or they must be among the dead, therefore it is a spiritual resurrection to the living saints.

Again, the martyrs reign here would be then either alone, or with others; and none of these can be said without absurdity: therefore it is the living who are understood. Add, they must live and reign who did not so reign before, therefore it is not they.

Beside this reigning agreeth to such as it can be interrupted in, and be at one time and not at another; which cannot be said of martyrs glory, which is alway alike, therefore cannot this be applied to martyrs in glory, nor yet on earth in their own persons, and therefore it must be in their successors.

Fourthly, Neither can it be said, as Forbes doth, that this reign of martyrs is in respect of their good account in the church after their martyrdom, in which respect, some apply their receiving white garments under the fifth seal, saying, that they that were reproached before in their deaths, are afterward honoured in their memories, which they begin at Constantine's time, when the public profession of religion became honourable. This, I say, cannot be said as intended here: for, 1. This is not peculiar to a thousand years or definite time; for in the church, that was alway honourable. 2. Those who reign here, are saints on earth, and all saints and martyrs under Antichrist's tyranny, which was not begun then, this application maketh it peculiar to some. 3. Beside, martyrs under Antichrist after that, were as much liable to reproach as these formerly were under heathens, and therefore that cannot be applied here. 4. Add, that these who reign here are the same who afterward are encompassed and straitned by Gog and Magog; but that cannot be the same and good name of saints departed, but living saints themselves in their persons, therefore it is not that which is intended here.

These being on the negative part then laid by, we come to the affirmative: and seeing it must be living saints, who at the time here designed shall be members of the militant church, it is first questioned, whether all the saints then living are to partake of this good condition, or some only? That is, if it be a special privilege of martyrs or sufferers only who shall suffer during this time? Or, if it be common to all? *Answ.* This good condition, whatever it be, is in some degree, and in its kind, common to all the saints, who then shall be living, not so much distributively to all, and every one of every kind, as collectively making up one body, of whatever sort and degree they be, if they be saints and believers: even as the low condition of the church's suffering, will not prove that every individual saint suffereth, but that in common the church hath a suffering estate; so its good condition will not prove, that all have it alike so, but that generally they have a flourishing condition in common. And that it is thus to be understood, appear-

eth, 1. In that these who live here, &c. are contradistinguished from the dead: now all living saints they must either thus reign, or they must be comprehended under these who continue dead, seeing all the world is distinguished in these two, but none of them can be amongst the dead, therefore all of them must partake of this good condition. 2. It is for this end, that not only martyrs, but such as have not received the mark of the beast, nor worshipped his image, are mentioned; and by these no other can be understood, but such as in following the Lamb have kept themselves free (as Virgins, chap. xiv.) from the common snares and sins that others are taken with, and given unto. Hence, chap. xiii. these are given as the properties only of those who are written in the Lamb's book of life, and so mentioned here as the properties of all the elect saints to whom this belongeth. 3. The privileges here mentioned are common to all, as to reign with Christ, to be blessed, and holy, freed from the second death, to be priests to God, &c. These are common to all saints, therefore, so is that good condition also that hath these in it. From which we may see how unwarrantable it is from this to apply any singular felicity to some few martyrs, or others, which is common to all.

The second thing to be enquired in the positive, is, whether these living saints that are raised to reign, be the same individual persons that did suffer, and so now reign for a thousand years? Or, if it be understood of the saints in their succession, as the catholic church in its continuance from the beginning unto the end. This will answer an objection, where it is said, that those who were set on the thrones, were those formerly beheaded for the testimony of Jesus. Now those beheaded, we say, are not in their own persons raised again and set on the throne, but in their successors in the same faith and profession, the generation preceding reigning in the generation succeeding, as the generation succeeding suffered in the generation preceding; even as in common speech we say, the Babylonians, Romans, &c. governed this world for so many years, though the same individual persons lived not so long. Or, as it is said in Dan. vii. 18. the saints shall take the kingdom which shall never have an end, importeth not, that in the days of the gospel (of which time that speaketh) no saints shall die, but that the saints spiritual reign shall never be interrupted, and that there shall be a continual succession of a church, and of saints; so here we take not the same individuals to continue, but their race, as one kind or stock (to speak so) the church being one body, as the Babylonians, Romans, &c. are one empire: saints therefore here are not personally or individually to be understood, but successively, and in their general acception, as one body; so that during this time they shall have a visible profession, and there shall alway continue a visible church-state in the world. So it is neither therefore martyrs raised again, nor saints living still all that time, but generally in their successors, this being the scope, to shew the estate of the church in general, and not of individual saints. This may be confirmed, 1. From what is said, if they be the same, then martyrs dead must live again, (this being a good condition to the church on earth) and this is contrary to what hath been proven. 2. Then these saints so raised again, must only be the saints on earth at that time, for all partake of this. 3. Then these saints must again, in their own persons be encompassed by Gog and Magog: for it is these saints that are encompassed who did reign, verse 9. and therefore so must they that reign be expounded to be the former sufferers, as they are accounted afterward the besieged: but that cannot be personally understood, therefore neither the former, for then were they not to continue only a thousand years on earth, and to live so long only, but much longer: both which have many absurdities with them, as that whoever died during that time, would be known not to be an elect; and whoever lived that long, would be certainly known to be so; then also these who were born after the beginning of these thousand years, would not live so long in this reign as these who went before: it must therefore certainly be understood, as it may, in its continuance, agree to all saints, as well as in the events, which may well be in succession, so that what one wanteth in these who follow, he hath it in these who went before. And thus, generally, it setteth out the visible church in her good condition during that time; for it is still the same church which reigneth. We understand it then thus, that as it is said of the prophets, chap. xi. that they died and rose again, which yet is not to be understood of the same individual persons, but of their followers and successors in that spirit and cause (as John Baptist was successor to Elias, and in that respect is called Elias;) so the slain saints now are said to rise,

when the face of a visible church, which was long eclipsed, as if it had been buried with these martyrs, doth now in the same truth and cause shew itself again in new professors, as if these old martyrs had risen again to continue that church-face of purity and worship, for which once they suffered. And this phrase of rising again is, in this sense, not unusual in the prophets, as, 1. When they would signify a restoration from a low condition, that is marvellous, and such as men would think no less impossible than to raise the dead, as Ezek. xxxvii. 11. 2. When the restoration is numerous, and to make up an hopeless sad condition by such a new comfort as Jeremiah in his xxxi. chapter, verse 18. speaketh to Rachel mourning for her children. 3. When it is in the same truth, profession and cause, as is said of the prophets, chap. xi. so it may be of professors here, the time also being one. 4. When men have the same bold spirit to testify and suffer, as if these old martyrs had risen to preach down Antichrist, who, for a long time, had had peace. Thus was John accounted and named Elias, Matt. xvii. and her martyrs, both under the heathen persecutors, and under Antichrist, are named. 1. To shew the church's freedom from both these tyrannies, that now these who were undone by both formerly, may boldly profess that truth for which they were persecuted. 2. To shew the numerousness of saints now as if all were risen. 3. To shew what time it belonged unto, viz. that after both. 4. To shew what parts and courage these saints should have, and how fitted they should be both against the open persecution and secret designs of Antichrist. 5. To shew that they who now come to profess the gospel, are of one and the same church with these who went before, it being still one woman, who travelled under heathens, that fled under Antichrist, chap. xii. and now returneth in her seed to sit upon thrones.

The third thing to be enquired here, is, what martyrs these are, whether these suffering under heathen persecution, or these who suffer in the time of the beast's tyranny, (which to these of this opinion is the same time of these thousand years,) or such as have suffered both under heathen persecutors and Antichrist, preceding the beginning of these thousand years? We take them to be such whose sufferings are bypast, before these thousand years begin, and not such as are to suffer under it whatever they be, as appeareth, 1. They are said to be once slain, and to rise again before this reign begin, which could not be if their sufferings had not preceded. 2. They are said to reign a thousand years, which sheweth they begin altogether to reign: and therefore their sufferings must go before its beginning. 3. The time of their reign is expressly distinguished from, and made successive unto, the time of their suffering. Therefore as they are not to be confounded, or their reign made to begin before their suffering. 4. This condition is marked as the outgate of a former strait, and what former strait, rather than this, the saints suffering under Antichrist? therefore that suffering must go before it. 5. The suffering which immediately followeth the thousand years, is Gog and Magog: now, Gog and Magog belongs not to Antichrist, but goes immediately before the last judgment, and comes after the thousand years, then these who suffer here must either be after the thousand years, which cannot be, or during that time, which confoundeth the church's good condition and her ill; or it must be before, and it being none of the former two, must therefore be the latter. 6. Three states of the church are clearly holden forth here, 1. A suffering state under Antichrist. 2. A good condition during the restraint of Satan, it being ill before. 3. An ill condition after his loosing again by Gog and Magog: therefore as that of Magog followeth the thousand years, so that of Antichrist must precede; for these thousand years are put in the midst, and distinguished from both. 7. This reign agreeth so to saints, and to such saints as it did not agree to them before these thousand years, nor can do after. But if these who reign be cotemporary with Antichrist's dominion, then saints would reign so both before and after, and so would not suffer and be in a strait. 8. If, as many think, the killing of martyrs go before this reign, so must also these killed by Antichrist; for both are equally installed into this reign at its entry. Beside, this opinion would confound the church's suffering condition with this reign, which is peculiar to some one time, and differenced from the former, as hath been shewed. Hence followeth, 1. That Antichrist's supreme universal reign, is to precede these thousand years. 2. That then Antichrist is not to be expected a few years before the end of the world; for no other Antichrist there is but this same beast that persecuteth, before it begin.

Laſtly, It is enquired here, if reaſonable or ſenſeleſs creatures ſhall be partakers of this good condition and change? and how far it ſhall extend? For, of old, many, as Lactantius, and others of late, Burroughs on Hoſea, lay theſe two principles, 1. That the earth ſhall abound in extraordinary fruitfulneſs, that the rocks ſhall drop honey, and the earth be free of ſtorms, &c. 2. That the ſaints ſhall chiefly and largely ſhare of all thoſe temporal things. But, we ſay, 1. As there is poſſibly more peace now, ſo God may make abundance of all theſe things the rifer in the earth, as not being waſted with troubles and perſecutions as formerly. 2. That God may bleſs pains, ſo as to have extraordinary increaſe, (comparatively with former times) is not impoſſible, eſpecially if applied to the Jews, their land may be brought back to its wonted fruitfulneſs, to be as once it hath been, though now it be interrupted. 3. That the ſaints may enjoy more of theſe, as being leſs perſecuted or plagued, than formerly, and as having more liberty for induſtry and public employments, theſe may be granted, but that there ſhould be an extraordinary fruitfulneſs put in the earth, as without pains or induſtry to bring forth, or with pains more than at any time it did ſince the fall. Or, that, 2. The ſaints ſhould be all rich, and none poor; yea, that chiefly they ſhould enjoy the riches of the world, theſe we account falſe and groundleſs, and without the leaſt warrant here. And as they are without ground from this place, ſo are they, as would ſeem, directly againſt it, and other certain grounds, as, 1. That what is promiſed here, is eſpecially ſpiritual. 2. That this promiſed here, is a peculiar mercy to the ſaints; but fruitfulneſs of the earth would not be peculiar to them, many wicked men being poſſeſſors of a great part of it. 3. The delivering of the creature from bondage is reſerved for that day, when the ſons of God ſhall be manifeſted, which is at the laſt judgment, Rom. viii. 21, 22, 23. If then there were a delivery before that, it needed not groan ſo, for that time. 4. Beſide, the promiſes of the goſpel being ſpiritual eſpecially, it would be but a diverſion to our carnal humours to have ſuch an occaſion as temporal abundance to hunt after; and it is the fibneſs of our affections to creatures, that maketh many profeſs more delight in ſuch a kingdom than in that of grace and glory, which are uncontrovertable. Neither can any think, that the ſaints are wronged by this; for certainly ſpiritual things are ever preferable to carnal and temporal things.

The ſecond thing is as groundleſs as the former, viz. that ſaints then ſhould abound in that affluence of all theſe temporal riches: for, 1. Chriſt's promiſes and covenant, under the goſpel, run not on theſe terms, nor are they of that kind. 2. The Lord hath ſaid, that the poor ſhall be always amongſt his people, and that there ſhall be always objects of charity to the end of the world. 3. The croſs is ſpoken of to wait on believers to the end; and certainly, poverty is no little part of their croſs and conformity with Chriſt, and a cauſe of many other croſſes to them, which abundance of the things of the world uſually keepeth off, as contempt, reproach, ſtraits, &c. 4. The things of this world are accounted ſtill a portion for theſe of this world, Pſal. xvii. that God, as it were, alloweth them a more large ſhare of theſe things than he doth the others, to whom, as to young heirs, he hath reſerved a better heritage. 5. It were hard to place this good condition of the church in that which for many ages hath been the condition of the men of this world. 6. If this were promiſed to them, much riches, power, &c. then might they, with a good conſcience, pray for it, and aim at it, as they may do for things neceſſary, viz. health and peace, &c. yet can it hardly be thought, that believers are warranted to pray to be rich, and to have a temporal dominion, we being commanded, Heb. xiii. 5. and 1 Tim. vi. 8. to be content, if we have food and raiment. 7. If abundance of outward things were a part of this good condition promiſed, then were it generally and equally to be applied to all ſorts, whereof yet all, young and old, maſter and ſervant, rich and poor, if ſuch be ſuppoſed to continue during that time, are not, nor cannot be capable. 8. This opinion giveth too much way to carnal luſts, to let out themſelves on creatures; and therefore is ſo well entertained by ſuch pallats, as Euſebius ſaith of Cerinthus, that being delighted in theſe things, he moulded a kingdom agreeable to them. But what do theſe taſte to a ſpiritual man, being compared with pure doctrine in the church, with ſpirit and power amongſt hearers, and with theſe other things wherein this kingdom conſiſteth? If any aſk, but what ill is in that laſt opinion? *Anſw.* Beſide that it is againſt truth, and wrongs the word, to

father any thing on it which it will not own, and ſo proveth an untender meddling with the holy word, to which nothing ſhould be added. It doth, 1. Alter much the nature of Chriſt's kingdom, and promiſes to his people, which are ever ſpiritual. 2. It doth draw affections from things heavenly and ſpiritual to earthly, and inſtead of exerciſing and engaging their faith to a ſpiritual dependence on, and delight in God himſelf, it doth rather awake their carnal humour to warm with, and to be deſirous of, theſe ſuppoſed brave things that are expected, it being eaſier to engage our carnal part, than our ſpiritual. 3. It often occaſioneth want of ſobriety among good people, that while they ſhould be taken up in thinking much of the goſpel, and bleſſing God for what they enjoy of it, and deſiring the furtherance of its ſpiritual ſucceſs, they are by this brought to a leſſer eſtimation of their preſent condition, ſtill expecting and deſiring theſe ſtrange things. And hardly get theſe opinions place, but they carry a ſway beyond the ſimple goſpel promiſes and privileges in men's eſtimation, as if theſe ſaints were bleſſed beyond others, that are brought to heaven any other time, beſide that it doth readily engage men in an untender purſuit of earthly things, as if from theſe ſuppoſed promiſes they had right and allowance ſo to do.

LECTURE IV.

Verſe 1. *And I ſaw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomleſs pit, and a great chain in his hand, &c.*

2. *And he laid hold on the dragon that old ſerpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him a thouſand years,*

3. *And caſt him into the bottomleſs pit, and ſhut him up, and ſet a ſeal upon him, that he ſhould deceive the nations no more, till the thouſand years ſhould be fulfilled: and after that he muſt be looſed a little ſeaſon.*

THAT which reſteth now to be cleared, is, the time, which is ſix times repeated in this firſt part of the chapter, and ſaid to be *a thouſand years*: and this leadeth to the third thing propoſed.

Concerning it, there is the leſs hazard what be concluded, if theſe ſtrange events, formerly rejected, be eſchewed: yet, theſe things concerning it, we take for truth.

1. That, ſimply conſidered, it pointeth at ſome peculiar definite time of the church under the days of the goſpel, and taketh not in, nor belongeth unto, all that time betwixt Chriſt's firſt coming in the fleſh, and his coming again to judgment. For, then, 1. It would not anſwer the ſcope, which is to point out ſome peculiar thing belonging to one time, and not to another. 2. It is expreſsly differenced from the time following it, wherein that peaceable eſtate is marred by Gog and Magog, and not unclearly contradiſtinguiſhed from ſome looſing or liberty of Satan againſt the church, before his apprehending here, verſe 1. This therefore (which is alſo Auguſtin's judgment, De Civit. Dei, lib. 20. cap. 6. and 7. with many ſchoolmen) we think not ſafe. 2. Whatever definite time it be, this is certain, it deſigneth a long time ſimply, and comparatively the longeſt time of a proſperous condition againſt enemies, that the church of Chriſt is to have in the days of the goſpel; for ſo certainly the often repetition of this number of *a thouſand years*, doth import. 3. Whether it be definitely taken for a thouſand years, properly ſo underſtood, is more queſtionable: although there be no great abſurdity ſo to take it, (if they be placed in their own room) as, for the moſt part, interpreters do; yet, I think, there is no neceſſity in it, 1. From what is ſaid of times generally; chap. xi. 2. Becauſe this viſion is as obſcure in all things, as any in this book, and it will be very unlike then, that this time only is literally to be taken, whereas in all this propheſy, no other time, by any judicious interpreter, is ſo literally underſtood, even thoſe who make them moſt definite, do yet make them improperly and prophetically to be underſtood; and, to ſay, all other expreſſions in this viſion are figurative, and only the time (which continually to all is improperly ſet down formerly) ſhall here be literal, is not very conſiſtent with the ſtrain of this propheſy: for, where days, and years, and months, are formerly mentioned, no ſound interpreter can take them literal-

ly for ſo many and no more; and what reaſon can be given of altering the common ſtrain in this obſcure place? 3. And, that ordinarily ſome give it for a rule, that broken times are definite, (tho' they be not alway literal) as three years and an half, &c. yet whole times are ordinarily indefinite in the ſcripture, as Pſal. xc. 4. *A thouſand years in thy ſight*, are taken for a long time, and *a thouſand generations* for many, Pſal. cv. 8. and *ten days*, Rev. ii. 9. According to this rule then, an indefinite acception will ſuit beſt with this place. If any object, or aſk, why this time is ſo often definitely repeated? It may be anſwered, 1. Becauſe uſually by a thouſand, a great number or long time is ſet out in ſcripture, as we have ſaid before. 2. Becauſe ordinarily a good condition is ſet down in a long time, or in expreſſions ſetting out a long time, whereas difficulties are mentioned under hours, days, &c. ſee chap. xvii. and this is done for the church's comfort, but this cannot infer, that ſo they are for ſo many years peremptorily to be underſtood: for, 1. It is not ordinarily to the ſcripture in reckoning of times to be ſo peremptory, even in hiſtorical places, as by comparing of ſcriptures is clear. 2. That number, three years and an half, forty two months, one thouſand two hundred and ſixty days, time, times, and half a time, in equivalent expreſſions, chap. xi. xii. and xiii. is five times ſet down; yet no judicious writer will count them: therefore literally to be underſtood, even thoſe who make them definite; though it may be obſerved, that Papiſts, who make the former time literal, yet make this, that is as often repeated, indefinite.

The greateſt queſtion concerning the time, is, in the particular application thereof, to a certain beginning and cloſe, which is queſtioned even amongſt thoſe that in other things agree, viz. whether it be wholly paſt, i. e. begun and ended? Or, 2. If fully to come, as not being as yet begun? Or, 3. If current, that is, begun, but not ended? In all which there is diverſity. Thoſe who make fully paſt, begin at four periods, 1. Some at Chriſt's birth, and end at Pope Sylveſter the II. a magician. 2. Some at his death, and end at Benedict the III. ſuffocated by the devil. 3. Others, at the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and ſo end it in Gregory the VII. or Hildebrand. 4. Moſt begin it at Conſtantine's reign, making this cotemporary with that of Satan's being caſt from heaven, chap. xii. This is alſo ended, anno 1300. in Boniface the VIII. when the wars againſt the Waldenſes began. Prideaux de mille annis Apoc. doth thus ſum thoſe of that opinion.

Theſe that make it fully to come, are of four opinions, 1. Some (as the old Chiliaſts) make it after the day of judgment. 2. Some make it after all the vials, including the day of judgment, as Archer and Alſtedius. 3. Others put it under the ſeventh vial, after the beaſt's deſtruction, in an interval before the end of the world, and the ariſing of Gog, ſo doth Mede, and ſome others. *Laſtly*, Some make it, as it were, to be a current day of judgment all that time, and to follow upon Chriſt's coming to judgment, thus Tyllingaſt: the former alſo, in their explication, would ſeem not much to differ from this.

Theſe who make it running, are of two ſorts; 1. Some begin about the year 1300. when the Waldenſes aroſe, and when, according to their account the thouſand years of Satan's binding from Conſtantine's time, expired: this is Brightman's opinion, who maketh theſe two of Satan's binding, and the ſaint's reigning, to be ſucceſſive; but this ground at the entry is rejected. 2. Others (only Cotterius I find alledged for this) begin at Luther's days, 1517. How to decide here is difficult; yet having laid the former grounds, there is the leſs hazard, conſidering well the nature of the events, which make theſe thouſands years famous: neither is it uſeleſs to enquire in it, not only for clear applying of this ſcripture, but for underſtanding all the controverſy about it; for if it ſhall be found, that all of it, or a part of it, is paſt, it will ſerve much to clear the nature of all, and be the beſt refutation of many errors about it, and will help to ſtay the gadding expectation of ſtupendious things to come.

That we may proceed, theſe two generals are certain, 1. That theſe thouſand years belong unto, and are cotemporary with ſome of the former principal propheſies of ſeals, trumpets and vials, which continue the ſeries of events from the beginning to the end. 2. Then this is certain, that the binding of Satan, with the kingdom following thereupon to the ſaints, muſt relate and be ſubjoined unto ſome one of theſe notable looſings that are contained in this propheſy, which Satan hath againſt the ſaints, and muſt be cotemporary with ſome victory they have over him after theſe. Now

four of these are mentioned, sect. i. In all which, Satan's liberty precedeth; his overthrow in part followeth, and then the church's good condition is subjoined. The first, is, his keeping the world under darkness and idol-worship; from this he is removed by the white horse of Christ, conquering in the gospel, chap. vi. 2. He is loose after that in persecuting by the red horse, chap. vi. and seeking by the red dragon to destroy the woman and her child, chap. xii. where he is overcome and casten to the earth. 3. He is loose under the first six trumpets, by raising Antichrist; and chap. xiii. by warring with the saints in him; by the seventh trumpet, chap. xi. the victory is obtained, and the everlasting gospel preached, chap. xiv. The last, is, his loosing in Gog and Magog, in which he is overthrown, at, or a very little before, the end of the world. Now the question will be, to which of these overthrows we may apply these thousand years of his binding? and so whether it cotemporateth with the seals, or trumpets, or vials, for to one of these, or some part of them, certainly it relateth; and so may we know, whether it be past, presently, current, or to come? For clearing whereof, we shall, 1. See what light this place giveth of itself to the timing of it. 2. We shall shew, it is neither fully past, nor yet to come fully. 3. That it is current under the vials, beginning with them at the binding of Satan after his third loose. 4. We shall give the scope and coherence of this chapter on it.

And, *First*, Here, concerning the close or expiring of these thousand years, we may gather, 1. That it is a little, how long, none can tell, before the end of the world; for, Satan's loosing, verse 7. goeth before the end, and these thousand years expire before that: therefore these thousand years are not to be expected after the day of judgment, neither at it, or immediately before it. 2. It is clear, that it is the last great binding before the last interval of Satan's loosing, which precedeth his final binding; for, after this immediately Gog is loose, and Satan is not again restrained, but finally judged. Hence we may gather, 1. That this good condition of the saints, is the last they are to have on earth, seeing nothing followeth it but Satan's loosing, and final judgment. 2. That when this must end, Gog and Magog succeeds; and so hardly can we say, that these thousand years are expired, except we say, 1. Gog and Magog is come. 2. And that be applied to such an enemy as continueth for a little season, in comparison of the good condition that the church hath had for a long time before that. 3. If so, we must say, there is no freedom to the church to be expected after this, such as she hath had before, (for, nothing cometh after Gog and Magog) which seemeth contrary to the nature and tenor of this prophesy, especially of the vials, which increaseth Satan's binding and overthrow, and their reign, still to the last.

Again, for the beginning of these thousand years, it is clear here, 1. That it cannot begin at the entry of the gospel, except we say, there is but one interval of the church's peace under it, contrary to experience, and so divide all the time of the gospel in these thousand years, and the little persecution of Gog and Magog, which cannot be granted, for the former grounds. 2. The binding supposeth a loosing to go before it, and what loosing? It seemeth clear by the raising of some martyrs for the testimony of Jesus Christ: whereby it appeareth, that the great persecution of the church, even by Antichrist, is to intervene betwixt Christ's first coming, and this good condition of the saints, it being ordinary that their suffering condition goeth first, and that their reigning condition and Satan's binding cometh thereafter. Beside, 3. It is the last good condition going before the end, contradistinguished from her hard condition going before.

From this second we may proceed then, and say, that it was not fully past, not only from the former considerations, but also, 1. Because that would make the church's low condition, and her good condition to be confounded, (which yet are expressly distinguished) if that reign fall either cotemporary with Antichrist's, or heathenish persecution. 2. It presupposeth the Antichristian tyranny before its beginning, which cannot be if all the thousand years shall be past already, see verse 4. 3. That which belongeth to the church's best condition on earth, is not yet come, viz.

1. Antichrist's ruin. 2. The fulness of the Gentiles. 3. The incoming of the Jews, which are certainly to be looked for; and to make this good condition which relateth to her best condition on earth, as has been said, to be already past, would separate it from all these excellent events, which cannot be done, see Rom. xi. verse 12, 13. where

the Jews incoming is called the riches of the Chriſtian world and life from the dead, which, not upon the matter only, but in expreſſions, alſo, ſuit well with this place.

From all which then we conclude, 1. That theſe thouſand years are not, nor cannot be cotemporary with the ſeals or trumpets in the firſt two ſpecial periods of the church's condition, ſhe being in both theſe, low; therefore muſt it belong to the time of the vials, which followeth the other. 2. We may conclude then, that this binding of Satan, or good condition of the ſaints, is not that victory of the goſpel, merely ſpiritual, by the white horſe, chap. vi. nor that over Satan in Conſtantine's days, chap. xii. (both which agree either with ſeals or trumpets) much leſs is it that of Gog and Magog at the end yet to come: It muſt needs follow then, that it is the third binding of the devil by the witneſſes riſing, chap. xi. the goſpel's ſpreading after Antichriſt's begun ruin, chap. xiv. that is underſtood here, there being but four in all.

This then we take for certain, that it belongeth to the propheſy of the vials, God having ſhown in them the down-bringing of her enemies expreſsly, but leaving the church's condition to be gathered by conſequence; here expreſsly he ſheweth the church's good condition muſt be cotemporary with that which may further be made out, 1. The church's good condition muſt be cotemporary with the loweſt eſtate of her enemies; (for their falling and her riſing, *et contra*, are ſtill knit together) but the vials hold out the longeſt ſeries of judgments againſt her enemies, and the moſt full, therefore it belongeth to them; for during the ſeals, ſhe is perſecuted by heathens, during the trumpets by Antichriſt, in the vials the Lamb, and theſe that were with him prevail. *Secondly*, The great things belonging to the church's good condition, as, 1. The removing or reſtraining of open enemies. 2. The fulneſs of the Gentiles. 3. The incalling of the Jews, belong all unto, and fall under the vials (as may be ſeen by the expoſition of chap. xvi. xvii. xviii. xix. preceding,) *Ergo*, this good condition, (being the church's beſt eſtate) falleth under them alſo, *Thirdly*, This good eſtate of the ſaints, and this binding of Satan, cotemporary with it, is the laſt freedom, and greateſt, that the church hath before the laſt day, but that is under the vials. *Ergo*.

It remaineth now therefore only to enquire, if the beginning of theſe thouſand years, be to be reckoned from the beginning of the vials, or to be reſtricted unto the ſeventh after Antichriſt's fall, as the learned Mede doth? We ſay, it cannot be reſtricted unto the laſt, but muſt take in more, even them all. We ſhall firſt confirm the negative part, then the affirmative. 1. It is not to be reſtricted to the ſeventh vial; for, then it would make this reign to be a very ſhort time; or, it would make the continuance of the ſeventh vial diſproportionable exceedingly to all the reſt: for, Gog and Magog's oppoſition certainly falleth under the ſeventh.

Theſe thouſand years then, according to this, would intervene betwixt the ſixth and that oppoſition, which apparently would be no long time; or, it will fall into other inconveniencies.

2. We grant, that it may be under the ſeventh at its height (as under the ſixth trumpet, the church's low condition was at its height) yet, not only in it, becauſe the church's good and ill conditions are not counted by their higheſt degrees, but by the kind and ſeries of their eſtate, good or ill. Hence, the church's low condition is not aſtricted to the fifth or ſixth trumpets only, but it is reckoned for one thouſand two hundred and ſixty days, (which taketh in all the trumpets) becauſe the ſame ſtrait which came to an height under the fifth or ſixth ſeals or trumpets, is to be reckoned from the firſt, where it began, and from which it did ſtill grow, from one ſtep to another, till it came to its height, it being all but different degrees of one condition, and not divers conditions: For, that ſame Antichriſt is ſtricken at by the firſt vial, though not overturned wholly, at leaſt, till the ſixth; and that goſpel is preached and profeſſed under it, which groweth ſtill, till it come to this height, in a continued victory.

3. If we paſs the firſt vial, it will be hard where to fix its beginning, there being ſtill a gradual difference only amongſt them, therefore theſe who do paſs the firſt vial profeſs unclearneſs here, how far to bring on the ſixth trumpet with the vials, and where to begin this time; and indeed, if we leap over the periods ſet by the propheſy itſelf, we will not eaſily ſettle: Thus Mede, otherwiſe moſt accurate and particular in applying this propheſy, is yet put to this ſtand here, upon the former ground.

4. We have ſeen, that Antichriſt's deſtruction falleth under the ſixth vial; then Chriſt and his armies ride proſperouſly, and ſo doth the Jews converſion fall to be then alſo, as the ſame author interpreteth it; and are not theſe events and effects of Satan's binding, and the church's reign? So, by the fifth, the whore is deſtroyed, and, chap. xvii. and xviii. all kings are bound up from impeding it: there the Lamb maketh war, and overcometh, ſo do the called and faithful that are with him, chap. xvii. xviii. which belongeth to the fifth vial, the effect whereof is a proof of this: and this certainly muſt belong to the ſaints good condition, and it is oppoſed to that, chap. xiii. where they were overcome, and it intimateth a change on their condition. This then is the firſt confirmation of this, that theſe thouſand years are to be reckoned from the beginning of the vials, thus, if theſe thouſand years can begin neither after the vials are begun, nor yet before they do begin, then their beginning muſt be together, even as almoſt they end together; but they cannot begin before the firſt, as is ſaid, nor yet after the firſt; therefore they muſt begin with it, ſeeing, at the beginning of theſe vials, the goſpel began to ſpread, and continueth thro' them all to the laſt interruption, all of them carrying judgments of the ſame kind. 2. The third binding of Satan, after his liberty and tyranny againſt the church, beginneth by the vials; but this reſtraint here mentioned, is that third reſtraint, *ut ſupra*, *Ergo*, it is to begin then. 3. This binding of Satan, and good condition of the church, is to follow immediately after the church's return from the wilderneſs, and the expiring of theſe one thouſand two hundred and ſixty days, chap. xi. and xii. and xiii. of Antichriſt's height: for, here the thouſand years begin, when the martyrs are raiſed, and when theſe, who were perſecuted by Antichriſt before, do get liberty; but the liberty that the church hath under the vials, beginning at the firſt, is that which followeth upon her low condition in the wilderneſs, and Antichriſt's height immediately, and by it the ſaints get breathing and liberty to profeſs the goſpel again. *Ergo*, it is that that is meant here. 4. The reign of the ſaints, and the good condition of the church here, certainly is cotemporary with the riſing of the prophets, and their taking up to a church-ſtate, chap. xi. after the thouſand two hundred and ſixty days are expired of their propheſying in ſackcloth; for if, when ſhe ſuffereth, they propheſy in ſackcloth, and their low condition ſetteth out her low condition, why muſt not their good condition denote her good condition alſo? Theſe cannot be ſeparated, but when the prophets die, in ſome reſpect the church dieth, and when they ariſe and live, the ſaints again muſt ariſe and live; but their ariſing and living, and being received to a public profeſſion, and preaching again in their ſucceſſors, is at the beginning of the vials, as was ſhewed, chap. xi. Therefore this of the ſaints riſing and living, muſt begin then alſo, ſeeing prophets and ſaints make but one church, and the one cannot riſe without the other, they not being an organized church, but together. 5. This reign, or good condition, of the ſaints, muſt, neceſſarily, be the ſame, and cotemporary with the eſtate of the church on earth after Antichriſt's height, ſet out by the ſeventh trumpet, chap. xi. But the vial in their riſe, progreſs and cloſe, are cotemporary with that ſeventh trumpet, as is cleared in chap. xi. verſe 15. Therefore they muſt begin together. 6. Theſe thouſand years are cotemporary with that palm-bearing company that are mentioned. chap. vii. (cleared alſo, and acknowledged by Mede) for they ſucceed the ſealed company going before, (who are cotemporary with Antichriſt under the trumpets) as was ſaid on the words; but theſe alſo begin and go alongſt with the vials: for, immediately they ſucceed upon Antichriſt's begun ruin; therefore theſe thouſand years muſt be ſo alſo. And as there were then, after the vi. chapter, two principal propheſies to follow, one holding forth the church's ſtrait condition, and the other its enlargement; ſo was there a touch of both given by that ſeventh chapter, in two parts, as was there cleared. And if there be but two ſtates following, one of the ſealed one hundred forty and four thouſand, which expireth under the ſixth trumpet, before the vials begin, another of the innumerable company that follow: we cannot therefore reckon five or ſix of the vials to that ſtrait condition of the church, but muſt take them all in under the church's enlarged condition, which is oppoſed to the former: for all the vials muſt either belong to the laſt good eſtate of the church, in the laſt part of that ſeventh chapter, or many of them muſt be comprehended under the firſt part, and be cotemporary with that ſealed company; but the laſt cannot be: for, 1. That ſealed company and ſealing,

ſpeaketh a height of ſtrength in Antichriſt, and an hiding of the ſaints, cotemporary with her being in the wilderneſs, whereas the vials ſpeak judgment againſt her enemies, and the church's return. 2. That ſealing expireth when the church cometh to have a public profeſſion, and multitudes flock in to her, at which time the vials do but begin. Therefore by this it appeareth, that there is a miſtake in cotemporating the ſix firſt vials with the ſixth trumpet, it being certain, that the ſixth trumpet cotemporateth with this ſealed number of one hundred forty and four thouſand. Now, if the vials, all of them, ſucceed that ſhut up and ſtraitned condition of the church, then muſt they be cotemporary with that enlargement, ſet out by the palm-bearing company, and ſo with theſe thouſand years. It is alſo there obſervable, that the low condition of the church under Antichriſt, and her ſealing, is reckoned from the ſixth ſeal, before ever the ſeventh be opened, tho' Antichriſt be not in the vigorous purſuit of the ſaints, till the fifth trumpet; ſo that enlargement, which is contradiſtinguiſhed from it, *ibid.* is to be accounted from Antichriſt's turn, and the removing of that ſtrait for which the company of one hundred forty and four thouſand were ſealed, which beginneth by the firſt vial, tho' it cometh not to its height till the ſixth or ſeventh: there is one reaſon for reckoning both alike from their firſt beginnings. Beſide, to ſhew that theſe vials, or any of them, cannot cotemporate with the ſixth trumpet, the ſixth trumpet and they are of divers matters: that trumpet ſpeaketh Antichriſt's tyranny againſt the ſaints, and his prevailing: the vials, Antichriſt's ruin and God's judgment on him. 2. We can hardly give contrary effects to one trumpet, it is not ſuitable to any other of them. 3. This would make the vials (which are one principal propheſy) cotemporary with another (at leaſt in part with that) of the trumpets, whereas no more the vials can cotemporate with the trumpets, than the trumpets with the ſeals, as is ſaid in the preface on chap. vi. As for that which is ſaid, that Antichriſt's kingdom is ſhaken, chap. xi. before the ſeventh trumpet blow, *Anſw.* It may be anſwered, that it appeareth that Antichriſt's height there, is when the witneſſes are killed; for then he inſulteth, and in the exerciſe of his tyranny and dominion is in the higheſt degree: there is no more there mentioned but their riſing, Antichriſt's fear, and a part of the great cities falling, which is mentioned, not to cotemporate theſe events with the ſixth trumpet, but to ſhew what is the connection betwixt, and the march and term differencing the ſixth from the ſeventh, that when the one (the ſixth) endeth, then the ſeventh beginneth, which is then at the ſame hour, when the witneſſes are raiſed up; then the ſecond wo is paſt, and the third cometh quickly, there is ſuch connection betwixt them, as is more fully cleared, chap. xi.

By all which it appeareth, that theſe thouſand years, beginning at the end of one thouſand two hundred and ſixty days, mentioned, chap. xi. fall to begin about the year 1560. and ſo are running, being in part paſt, but in their vigor to come, as the vials carry on by ſteps the caſting down of enemies, and bring on the flouriſhing of the goſpel. I ſee no great abſurdity in this, but ſome conveniencies: for, 1. It ſhunneth the miſtakes that are in the firſt opinion, which ſay, that all is paſt, wherein many, who truly think that the ſcripture ſeemeth to hold out a better condition to come cannot acquieſce: this is granted here; for, the vials are on the growing hand, and theſe events are coming, which doth confirm the ground laid. 2. It avoideth that abſurdity which followeth the other extreme, which ſaith, that all is yet to begin: for, 1. This continueth the church's condition no longer than the vials do, it being certain, that the fourth is almoſt but begun, (if we be that length) there will be yet even by the reckoning of the vials, and the events to be fulfilled under them, a conſiderable time to the end, though not neceſſarily ſo much as would be, if after ſix vials theſe thouſand years were to begin. 2. This preventeth the fear of expecting any ſtrange and uncouth events during that time: for, 1. This giveth ground for no more but what ſuiteth with the vials, and what is otherwhere clear in this propheſy, and grounds formerly laid down. 2. If for ſome years the churches of Chriſt have been under this good condition, we may then gather, that no ſtrange thing is to be expected: we may expect a further degree of holineſs, number of profeſſors, extent of a church, &c. But that is not the thing which any will conceive to be dangerous: for, if the church thrive when enemies are brought down, then the more they are brought down, the more her good condition groweth, and that is neceſſarily inferred from the ſeries of the vials.

There want not objections from both hands, as, 1. Did not Chriſt and the ſaints reign after his death by the goſpel? *Anſw.* Yes, and ſhall do ſo continually; but the queſtion is about the peculiar reign mentioned in theſe words. See chap. xi. xii. and xvii.

Object. 2. Then the world is yet long to ſtand, and the church to have a long good condition. *Anſw.* That is not abſurd, (for we define not how long) but that both follow is cleared before.

Object. 3. From the other hand, the Jews are not yet come in, therefore it cannot be current. *Anſw.* The Jews incoming belongeth not to the ſaints good condition ſimply, but to its height and fulneſs, which we grant: we take that in before it end, but cannot ſuſpend the church's good condition until it be, becauſe it is by the Gentile church's flouriſhing condition, that they are to be provoked. Beſide, Antichriſt's height belonged to the church's low condition, yet is not her low condition of the 1260 days to be reſtricted in their beginning to his appearing and height, but to his preparatory working, as often it is ſaid.

Object. 4. Men cannot think that theſe are the thouſand years they live into. *Anſw.* This proceedeth from miſtake and prejudice concerning the events; only they believe it not, becauſe they expect ſome uncouth thing all that time. 2. It cannot be ſtrange to theſe who ſay it is paſt; for they place as ill, and worſe, times under theſe thouſand years: nor again, can it be any abſurdity to ſuch as are found in the nature of this kingdom; for, in a great part, we enjoy, and have enjoyed in many places ſince Antichriſt's begun ruin, in a good meaſure, all theſe ſix things, in which properly this kingdom conſiſteth; as, 1. Purity. 2. Power in ſaving ſouls. 3. Diſcipline, and viſible church profeſſion. 4. Many profeſſors in reſpect of what was before. 5. Much peace almoſt where there is a church, it hath had for a time law for its peace, and hath not been perſecuted on that account ſo as formerly. 6. A long continuance of all theſe, tho' with other difficulties, ſuch as are not inconſiſtent with this condition. There are troubles, but they take not away viſibility from the church ſo as before, and things of this kind are warrantably to be expected from this word, therefore it is not abſurd, to apply it to our time in its beginning.

Object. 5. But Satan is looſe under the ſixth vial, when he ſtirreth up all to war againſt the ſaints and Antichriſt is not defeated before that. *Anſw.* This good condition of the ſaints is not only in their peace, but in their victories; tho' the devil and the beaſt fight ſtill, yet they loſe ground, chap. xvii. verſe 14. and to fight and overcome, is not a great impediment of a good condition; and this is oppoſed to their former conditions, not in this, that they ſhall not have enemies, but that they ſhall fight and overcome them, (I mean rightly underſtood and it ſhall not be as it was, chap. xiii. 8. 2. The binding of Satan, we ſhew, was not abſolute, and this ſheweth only that he was not keeped from eſſaying ſomething to be an occaſion of God's praiſe in the church, and yet it ſaith, that he was much reſtrained and weakened, this being the laſt eſſay of the beaſt after many defeats, which alſo ſucceedeth not well with him, and is but like Pharaoh's following of Iſrael to the Red-ſea, wherein was the church's victory, and not his.

We may then knit the ſcope (as in the entry, to this xx. chapter) thus John being now to ſhew the devil's laſt overthrow, beginning where he left, chap. xii. and xiii. where he is caſt down, and for a time rageth and getteth up a new worſhip in the world by Antichriſt's means, when open perſecution failed him. It might be queſtion'd what came of him then? It is anſwered, I ſaw, ſaith he, (after he had done much hurt to the church) the angel that had caſt him from heaven to earth, purſue him there, and take him by his power, and reſtrain him from that dominion, and deluding of the world by that beaſt Antichriſt, as he had done, and that as ſtrongly for a long time as if he had been kept in bonds, during which time I ſaw that church which was by Antichriſt perſecuted and ſpoiled, and theſe ſaints that durſt not before be ſeen, brought to a pure, free, and peaceable profeſſion of that truth which was formerly born down.

We come now to go particularly thro' the words (which may be more eaſily done) according to the former grounds: they contain two notable events, but cotemporary, 1. Of Satan's binding. 2. Of the ſaints rejoicing.

That of Satan's binding hath theſe circumſtances in it. 1. The deſcription of the party that bindeth Satan, verſe 1. 2. His executing that errand, and actually binding him, verſe 2, 3. 3. Some things added for clearing the end of this binding, and that for ſuch a definite time, verſe 3.

The party is firſt called an *angel*, which we take

to be Chriſt, called Michael, chap. xii. 1. Becauſe it is he that deſtroyeth the work of the devil, and is the ſtrong man, who is ſtill contending with him for his church. He, chap. xii. did caſt him down; he, chap. vi. did conquer him on his white horſe; he, chap. xix. defeateth him in his lieutenant the beaſt, which is a part of the ſame event. 2. Becauſe it is Chriſt who carrieth the keys of hell and death, chap. i. 18.

2. Again, He is ſaid to *come down from heaven:* this is to diſtinguiſh it from that battle in heaven, chap. xii. where ye heard the devil was caſt to the earth, and, as a ſerpent, poiſoned many there, now, Chriſt, by his power, followeth and putteth a reſtraint on him, in reſpect of that link he had looſed after his former down-caſting.

3. This angel is deſcribed by two things, 1. He *hath the key of the bottomleſs pit;* this ſignifieth ſovereignty and power: it differeth from that, chap. ix. 1, 2. For, 1. That was a *ſtar falling down*, not coming down. 2. That was one who got the keys, this hath them as his due place; that but got them for a ſpecial uſe. 3. That opened the pit, and ſent out locuſts and ſpirits, this ſhutteth it; and, it is like, a reſpect is had to that looſing in this binding, this here being the reſtraining of that dominion, which Satan uſurped there, and ſo theſe thouſand years muſt be reckoned from the ſhutting of the pit of Antichriſtian errors, and liberty of his miniſters through the earth, as that of the opening of the pit, ſheweth their beginning: and this ſheweth, that as Antichriſt was gaining ground before the pit was opened, ſo may he have ſome being for a long time after the begun ſhutting thereof.

4. He hath *a great chain in his hand.* The devil is in ſome chains alway, Jude ver. 6. under ſome reſtraint. This ſheweth, 1. The power of the angel. 2. His errand to link up the devil from his former liberty, as men chain maſtiffs. 3. It ſheweth the devil's malicious nature, that muſt be bound. And, 4. His ſubordination to Chriſt's ſovereignty, who effectually reſtraineth him.

The executing of his errand followeth, verſe 2, and 3. *He layeth hold on him* by his power, as one in fury and anger, he grippeth him. 2. The party gripped and bound is deſcribed, juſt as chap. xii. to ſhew, 1. That it is the ſame devil that was caſt down to the earth, that is now further bound. 3. That we may have ſome help to knit this ſtory of this ſerpent to the foregoing ſtory of that ſame party. 2. He *bindeth this ſerpent*, tied him up, as it were, and that for a long time, even a *thouſand years.* 4. He *caſteth him into the bottomleſs pit*, or abyſs, which he feared, that is, put him not only from magiſtracy, and open perſecution, as before, chap. xii. but alſo reſtraineth him from ſuch underhand dealing as he had before, and diſcovereth him and his working in a conſiderable degree beyond what was: and he *ſhutteth him up*, and *ſealeth it*, as Dan. vi. and Mat. xxvi. To ſhew the certainty of that reſtraint, and the ſuperiority of the angel over him, that he ſhall no more ſuffer Satan to go by his order and march to ſee him, than one ſhut up in priſon can go forth either by violence or ſubtilty.

2. Two ends, or reaſons, are ſet down to clear the angel's proceeding, 1. He is bound, *that he ſhould deceive the nations no more*, that is, keeped from having ſuch influence to delude the world, as he had done before, who firſt made them all heathens and idolaters generally, then after that made them all to worſhip the beaſt, and himſelf in him, ſo that there was ſcarce the face of a viſible church. Now, he ſhall not get that liberty ſo univerſally to delude nations, (for nations are collectively to be underſtood here, all nations) and eclipſe the face of Chriſt's church, as he had done. Nor, 2. Ever after that ſhall he get the world ſo generally to ignorance, ſuperſtition, idolatry and perſecution againſt the godly, as formerly he had done.

Thus *deceiving no more*, is not to be underſtood ſimply, but with reſpect to ſuch extent and ſucceſs, and is here added to ſignify a new reſtraint put upon him, beyond what is in his caſting to the earth, chap. xii. where tho' he was put from open perſecution, yet did he follow, and that not without ſucceſs, a new way by deceit, chap. xiii. but now is he reſtrained in a great meaſure from that alſo; ſo it is qualified as to the time, that is, during the determinate time of his reſtraint of a thouſand years: but *after, he muſt be looſed a little ſeaſon;* this reſpecteth what is following concerning Gog and Magog: he was not reſtrained finally, but for a certain time, (it would ſeem yet indefinite, for if it were juſt a thouſand years, then might one preciſely know the time of this event before it come, if they can reckon the beginning of the thouſand years) for, ſaith he, when it expreſſeth, God will give him liberty to exerciſe his church (poſſibly ſhe abuſing this good condition, when Antichriſt is away, therefore a new ſcourge is provided) but for a little ſeaſon.

Little, 1. Compared with the former looſings. 2. Little, compared with this time of the ſaints peace and good eſtate. So that when after the church ſhall enjoy liberty a long time from Antichriſt's perſecution, a new trial is to be expected to her before the end come. By which alſo it appeareth, that that reckoning of the thouſand years cannot begin at Chriſt's birth or death; for, then it would not be a *little time* after its expiring to the end (there being yet ſo many of the vials with their effects to come) and although all the time of the goſpel be called a ſhort time, yet that is not as compared with a definite time, but with eternity; whereas here it is called little comparatively with the thouſand years going before.

LECTURE V.

Verſe 4. *And I ſaw thrones, and they that ſat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I ſaw the ſouls of them that were beheaded for the witneſs of Jeſus, and for the word of God, and which had not worſhipped the beaſt, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands: and they lived and reigned with Chriſt a thouſand years.*

5. *But the reſt of the dead lived not again until the thouſand years were finiſhed. This is the firſt reſurrection.*

6. *Bleſſed and holy is he that hath part in the firſt reſurrection: on ſuch the ſecond death hath no power, but they ſhall be prieſts of God and of Chriſt, and they ſhall reign with him a thouſand years.*

THeſe words contain the ſecond event cotemporary with the former, viz. the good condition of the ſaints during that time of Satan's binding. What was their eſtate during theſe thouſand years? I ſaw, ſaith John, them *ſit on thrones, and they lived and reigned a thouſand years.*

In this we are to conſider, 1. The perſons whoſe condition is ſet forth. 2. The condition itſelf, 1. Generally ſet out, verſe 4. in the beginning and end thereof. 2. They are deſcribed by the condition of the reſt of the world oppoſite to it, verſe 5. 3. It is ſet out in that wherein their happineſs and difference from others conſiſted, verſe 6.

Although the relative they be in the words placed before any antecedent, yet we take *they that ſat*, or, were ſet, on the thrones, not to look to judges, as if they were different from the perſons afterward deſcribed (as a party complaining, or pleading, are from the judges) but we take them for one, viz. they ſat on them, or ſome ſat on them, that is, *theſe that were beheaded for the witneſs of God*, &c. for their ſitting on thrones is after expounded by living and reigning.

2. They ſit to whom judgment is given, that is, for whom, and in whoſe behalf, as will after appear. Now they are, 1. *The ſouls of them that were ſlain for the witneſs of Jeſus, and for the word of God*, that is, as is cleared before, the ſucceſſors of theſe martyrs who profeſſed the ſame truth with them, ſo the witneſſes raiſed, chap. xi. are the ſame with theſe who were killed, and John is one with Elias, Matth. xi. and xvii. It is then martyrs who ſuffered for Chriſt, 1. By heathens. 2. By Antichriſt: for, to that end, that is added, theſe *who had not worſhipped the beaſt:* to ſhew, 1. That the cauſe of their martyrdom, was adhering to Chriſt, and ſhunning Antichriſt. 2. To ſhew the time they belong to, viz. heathen perſecution and Antichriſt's tyranny. 3. They are partakers, who neither *worſhip his image, nor receive his mark*, that is, all who keep themſelves free, chap. xiii. and ſo were by that obnoxious to his perſecution, as all ſuch were, *ibid.* verſe 17. all theſe now, viz. ſerious and honeſt profeſſors of the goſpel, are underſtood here; for, all ſuch, whether actually martyrs or not, were comprehended under theſe deſcriptions in the church's low condition, chap. xiii. now they are of the ſame extent, while he ſpeaketh of the church's good eſtate.

The good condition they are made partakers of, is ſundry ways ſet out, 1. By the preparation made to it. *I ſaw thrones*, &c. Where three circumſtances are, 1. He *ſaw thrones*, &c. that is, whereas before, ſuch a thing was not viſible, now I ſaw a way made for a good condition to the church, and thrones (which are an evidence

and ſign of ruling and ſovereignty) ſet for them; this is not literally to be underſtood, but metonymically for the thing it ſignifieth. 2. They *ſat*, or were *ſet on them;* that is, theſe martyrs and confeſſors, who formerly had ſcarce a ſeat to ſit on, had now thrones, a good, free, and thriving condition, unto which, by God, they were exalted, as the witneſſes, in their ſucceſſors, were, chap. xi. 3. *Judgment was given them. Judgment* is taken ſometimes actively, for power and ability to judge, Pſal. lxxii. 2. ſometimes paſſively, for a righteous ſentence paſt, Pſal. xciv. *Judgment ſhall return to righteouſneſs;* ſometimes righteouſneſs, or a good cauſe, or innocent perſon, and juſtice, are ſeparated: ſometimes God maketh them meet, and juſtice is upon the ſide of a good cauſe, or innocent perſon, and ſo it is here; that is, theſe that wanted juſtice, and had none formerly to decide in their favours, now the caſe is altered, and they get law and men's juſtice for them, which formerly ſtood againſt them, ſee chap. xiii. that they might not buy nor ſell: now, as it were, their long lying appeals before God, crying for juſtice, are called, and ſentence paſſed in their favours, even when they are gone. In which conteſt, becauſe theſe martyrs began it, and it is one deciſion for all; and becauſe men thought the martyrs had no more a hearing left them; therefore is the ſentence, eſpecially, as it were, intimated, and decided in their favours, out of honour and reſpect to them who were paſt, and alſo, to theſe who were preſent, as being ſucceſſors to ſuch, and accounted one with them. See, Job xxvii. 2. and Iſaiah xxvi. 18. where judgment is taken thus, and by this ſitting on the throne they are declared to be ſo, if otherwiſe we take judgment, it will be the ſame that reigning is afterward, or qualifications fitting for reigning, ſuch as are promiſed to Solomon, Pſal. lxxii. 2.

This good condition is ſet further out in itſelf, in the end of the verſe, as that which followed this preparation, in three things: 1. *They lived;* I take it to be all one with what is ſaid, verſe 5. *To riſe again;* for there this life is called the reſurrection and the *dead;* their not riſing is called they *lived not again*, i. e. in proſperity. Hence theſe phraſes, *Let the king live for ever;* and among heathens, *non eſt vivere vita, ſed valere.* This *life* includeth: 1. That they enjoyed a ſpiritual life, and had fellowſhip with God in Chriſt, ſuch as others had not. See Gal. ii. 20, 21. *I live, not I, but Chriſt liveth in me:* this is included, as being oppoſite to the reſt of the dead world. 2. *To live*, includeth a comfortable life, even in oppoſition to external diſcourgements, and dying daily by hazards. Paul, in that reſpect, ſaith of himſelf, 1 Corinth. xv. he died daily, and ſo it is underſtood, I live, if ye ſtand faſt I have enough, I am chearful; this living muſt be here taken in, as it is oppoſite to theſe martyrs former dying, while yet they lived ſpiritually, and is oppoſed to the troubles following, when after the thouſand years they ceaſe to live ſo, which cannot be underſtood of ſpiritual or heavenly life only, which is alway the ſame. 3. *They live*, taketh in not only living ſeparately, (and to ſpeak ſo) individually in ſome perſons (which might have been in the ſaddeſt times) but in a church eſtate, and a public combined profeſſion. So the Jews in-coming is called *life from the dead*, Rom. xi. and the Jews reſtauration, Ezek. xxxvii. *a raiſing up again of dry bones;* and thus here, their living is oppoſed to the church's fleeing formerly, wherein ſhe had not the public liberty of ordinances, but was ſhut up in the temple, chap. xi. verſe 2. 2. By *reigning* is underſtood but a further degree and qualification of the life mentioned, being oppoſed to the ſame three ſtraits, as their life is, eſpecially to the ſuffering and reproached condition which the ſaints and martyrs formerly had.

Now, when the church is revived, and getteth new life after ſuch a deadly condition, it not only liveth but reigneth, that is, enjoyeth theſe in a good meaſure of abundance and freedom, in reſpect of what they had. That as the former is called life from the dead, Rom. xi. their preſent condition being compared with what it was, ſo this is reigning oppoſite to ſlavery, as Dan. ii. The ſaints are ſaid to have the kingdom in reſpect of their freedom under the Maccabees, in compariſon of their former ſtraits under Antiochus.

The third thing is the time, a thouſand years: which ſheweth, that this freedom is to be of a long continuance, at leaſt comparatively with any other time. This is, in ſum, the meaning, during that time of Satan's reſtraint, the church had a good free condition, in reſpect of what ſhe formerly had for a long time, ſo that theſe, who for their honeſty were martyred univerſally by heathens and Antichriſt, are now brought in God's

providence, to a free profeſſion of the truth, and ſome light and ſhelter provided for them until this time expire.

From which it appeareth, 1. That theſe reigning here, are the whole church and profeſſors of the faith ſincerely, and not ſome few only.

2. That Antichriſt's height and tyranny muſt go before the computation of this time, they being ſuch who have ſuffered by him that are now admitted to reign; and therefore the words cannot bear to be applied to a ſuffering condition of the church outwardly, and a good condition ſpiritually; for then, it muſt ſet out her moſt difficult ſtrait, wherein moſt martyrs ſuffered under Antichriſt; but that cannot be, ſeeing the firſt thouſand years do not reach that time; or it muſt ſet out her condition after that time is paſt, and that immediately after the turn.

3. It followeth then, that the computation is to begin when the church getteth a living, and being in any good condition and freedom after Antichriſt's height. For, 1. Their killing goeth before. 2. Their living followeth next. Hence are we to account them living, after the interruption of Antichriſt's univerſal kingdom, wherein none were admitted in any part of the world by law to have life or being, but ſuch as had his mark. See chap. xiii. and xi. which will fall under the vials, and begin with them, as is ſaid: for, at their beginning began the ſaints to have viſible church profeſſion allowed them, as chap. xi. 11. For, tho' at that time, Antichriſt's kingdom hath not a full end (till at leaſt the ſixth vial end) yet it cannot be ſaid they live not, nor have a viſible church profeſſion till that time. So we are to term this beginning at the change of the former time, when the church and ſaints lived not ſo, even as after Conſtantine the church ſuffered much by heathens here and there, yet ſtill that perſecution is brought no further than his time, becauſe there in its height it was interrupted and ſtopped. Hence alſo we may gather not only the cotemporating of the thouſand years with the vials, but of the vials with the ſeventh trumpet, by the ſame reaſon: for the thouſand years cotemporate with the ſeventh trumpet, as is granted by Mede; and, therefore, with the vials, the cotemporary of the thouſand years, according to the rule, *Quae conveniunt uni tertio, inter ſe conveniunt.* As alſo, we may gather the ſucceeding of the vials to the one thouſand two hundred and ſixty days of the church's flight immediately; for, if the church's condition under the vials be living and viſible reigning in part, then it cannot be fleeing, but ſuppoſeth her return, and ſo muſt immediately ſucceed to that, as is formerly ſaid.

4. It muſt follow from this, that Antichriſt's beginning muſt be reckoned ſooner than many do, and that the opinion of Papiſts three years and an half, is but a groundleſs conceit and dream, oppoſite to this word, which ſuppoſeth Antichriſt to be much ſooner in the world.

In their good condition, particularly, they are ſaid to reign, not ſimply, but with Chriſt: which ſheweth, 1. He and they reign on earth together, that ſo, when he is interrupted, as it were, as chap. xi. So are they. 2. To ſhew the nature of their kingdom, that it agreeth with his in time, when he reigneth, ſo doth it in the things wherein his reigning conſiſteth; ſo that, in what reſpects Chriſt, as head to his viſible church, and king to them, is ſaid viſibly and eminently to reign, ſo are they, according to their ſeveral relations, he as head, they as members, that is, as he reigneth in purity, and power of ordinances, and multitude of profeſſors and liberty to be worſhipped, ſo do they by partaking jointly of all theſe in and with Chriſt. So *to reign with Chriſt*, differeth, 1. From reigning ſimply. 2. From Chriſt's reigning with them, as if he took ſhare with them; no, but he admitted them to ſhare with him. 3. It differeth from Chriſt's reigning in them, which is merely ſpiritual, and always continual; this is in outward enjoying of the ordinances viſible (as fellowſhip inviſible) and a freedom in theſe, and their reign is more or leſs, according as Chriſt is, therefore muſt neceſſarily conſiſt in enjoying ſuch things as theſe by which he reigneth.

2. The good condition of the church and ſaints, verſe 5. is ſet down, by the ſad condition that all the reſt of the world were in, *All that time they lived not again:* and, that it might be known what life they lived not again, it is added, *This is the firſt reſurrection*, not the ſecond, which is common both to good and bad, Dan. xii. 1, 2.

There are three things in the firſt part of the verſe to be cleared: 1. Who theſe reſt of the dead are, who are oppoſed to theſe who *lived*, verſe 4. In a word, it is the ſucceſſors of theſe heart enemies and perſecutors, who had ſtill a ſucceſſion of the like in the world. They are all by

nature *dead that live in the world*, Eph. ii. but ſome continue ſo, 1 Tim. v. 6. *as the widow that is dead while ſhe liveth;* and, Matth. viii. *let the dead bury their dead.* So here, they are counted the reſt of the dead, even all who are oppoſed to the ſucceſſors of the martyrs, as all contradiſtinguiſhed from the martyrs who formerly were dead, but now live.

2. It is ſaid they did not live, that is, enjoy the former happy condition of the church, or did not come to that way of perſecuting the church actively as they had done before, and were to do after theſe thouſand years. In which tyrannizing over the church, conſiſted in the life of their predeceſſors the perſecutors, as theſe, that are ſaints now, died in their predeceſſors their martyrs; ſo *contra*, theſe wicked did live and reign in their predeceſſors the perſecutors, while the church was martyred, but now are as dead men bound up and reſtrained from acting that live in a great meaſure (as if they were not living) and thus it ſeemeth to conſiſt with their living after the thouſand years are paſt, which is not as if they were converted, but letten looſe again to their old exerciſe; theſe that were hypocrites before, vent now their enmity more; and wicked men formerly reſtrained, now aim to bring under again Chriſt's church.

3. From this we may expound what is ſaid *till the thouſand years expire*, as a term of their deadneſs: for, 1. It is not bodily riſing again (for yet the reſurrection is not come) nor ſpiritual riſing again; for the number of ſaints is rather fewer after this reſurrection, and the thouſand years are paſt, than more, but as there is a life of grace, and of the ſaints, ſo is there a life of corruption, and of the wicked and wickedneſs, which may for a time be reſtrained. Now after the thouſand years wickedneſs and wicked men live, that is, do break out in their enmity againſt the church, to perſecute again by Gog Magog, as if perſonally they were riſen, and perſecution (that was almoſt ſeeming to be dead) is revived. Thus, ſeeing Satan's binding hath a term, and the ſaints reign a term, it is ſuitable alſo that the death of theſe wicked men, here underſtood have a term alſo, which can be no otherwiſe than this. Hence theſe three are ſtill obſervable, 1. Satan's looſing, the ſaints dying, and the perſecutors living before the thouſand years. 2. Satan's binding, the ſaints living, and the perſecutors dying, during that time (not ſimply, but in part;) ſo after the thouſand years. Satan is looſe again, the church in hazard again, and her good condition interrupted, and ſo the perſecutors they get life and heart again, which is like that healing of the wound, chap. xiii. of the head of the beaſt, not in the ſame perſon, but in a ſucceſſor with the ſame principles, and the giving life again to the image of the beaſt, ver. 13, 14. And ſo the ſaints their living and dying, will anſwer well to the perſecutors dying and living.

If any object, that theſe dead, are ſuppoſed to be dead before the thouſand years, *Anſw.* Obſerve for clearing it, his manner of compariſon; for the world preceding that time, is, as it were, divided in theſe two, martyrs and confeſſors keeping themſelves free, and perſecutors; both theſe are ſpoken of as dead. Again, the church or generation ſucceeding, during theſe thouſand years, are looked upon as the raiſing again of that former generation: now, ſaith he, the difference between this generation and what went before, ſhall be ſo great, that men would think that all the former martyrs and honeſt Chriſtians were brought to life again, they ſhall be ſo many: but for the perſecutors that lived in their times, they ſhall not appear ſo as they formerly did, during that time, in which reſpect they are ſaid to be dead, and not to riſe, becauſe once they were numerous and now it is not ſo; and tho' this cannot univerſally as yet be ſaid; yet in this and other nations, bleſſed be God. If it be aſked, what hath become of former ſincere Chriſtians? It may be anſwered, they are living again in their ſucceſſors; but if it be aſked, what is become of the Pope, and open perſecutors that once prevailed here? it may be ſaid, they are dead, and not ariſen, but are in their graves, and by God's bleſſing, may not that which in ſo great part is fulfilled in ſome nations, be in due time extended to others? And ſo here, the *reſt of the dead*, importeth no more but that they are found in a dead ſtate during theſe thouſand years, and that they do not again recover what they loſt by it, till theſe thouſand years were expired: and thus they are rather ſuppoſed to be living before it, and interrupted by it, which again they recover in their ſucceſſors Gog and Magog, when it is finiſhed: and this we conceive doth anſwer the ſcope.

This is called the firſt reſurrection. It is, 1. Applied to ſpiritual living again, John v. 23. &c. And is ſuppoſed to ſinful death, or death in ſin, and ſo reſurrection to glory is diſtinguiſhed from

it. Thus all saints, at all times, rise as they are made to believe, and this is personal, and cannot be secluded here. 2. *Resurrection* is taken oftentimes as of churches and nations, as Rom. xi. of the Jews incoming and conversion, and Ezek. xxxvii. when as the church spreadeth so, as if a nation were born in one day, Isa. lxvi. or as if all the former saints, which were lost as to men, were again, like Rachel's children, restored, as it is Jer. xxxi. verse 15, 16, &c. This is after an eclipse, when visibly the church was decayed almost, and hath again multitudes brought out of that darkness to the profession of the truth formerly obscured. And so we take it here, 1. It is called the *first resurrection*, in opposition to the general death and darkness over the church in Antichrist's time, which being as a death, this may well be called a *resurrection*. 2. It is called a *first*, as distinguished from the general resurrection to come, when God shall raise good and bad, Dan. xii. and bring them to judgment. These both meet here, yet it would seem, that seeing he speaketh here of the church together, as living after the death and darkness she had been in, as if her former honest members were arisen; it is most agreeable to the scope, to take in especially the outbreaking of a general profession of truth by saints in a visible church-state, yet so as including the former; therefore it is not called *living* simply, in respect of the second death following, but living again, or rising, in respect of what is past, and the first resurrection, as being compared with that resurrection coming. Hence it is, that this first resurrection is the same here with *living* formerly mentioned, and opposed to the death that the rest of men ly still in; and therefore is cotemporary with, and peculiar unto, these thousand years, it being one of the expressions which summeth up the saints good condition during that time. This, saith he, is the *first resurrection*, that is, this *living*, &c.

In the sixth verse, he subjoineth two things to this, 1. The qualification in general of these who shall be partakers of this great privilege of the *first resurrection*. 2. The advantages and prerogatives that follow it. Both which will confirm, that by this resurrection is understood the church's good condition, outward and inward sincere reality of grace in all the parts of it. Their advantages in general, (which is all one with their qualifications) are two, 1. *They are*, or, *he is*, *blessed:* that comprehendeth all, he is a happy man who shall share of this condition, and shall believe in Christ. *Obj.* But, may it be said, are not all happy, who ever believed, why is it so said now especially? *Answ.* So are all that ever die in Christ; yet is there a peculiar blessedness that belongeth to some time, as chap. xiv. 13. so it is blessedness here now in this time. It hath to believers more clearness, more light, liberty, and public profession of the gospel, and that with fewer temptations and straits, generally, than at other times before and after it; it is a good time to fall in, and happy is he who shall have his lot in it, as chap. xix. Blessed are they that are called to the supper of the Lamb, *ut supra*.

The second qualification will clear this, and *holy is he:* that doth hold forth, in general, an abounding in holiness during this time, when the Jews shall be provoked to jealousy, seeing here this is the scope. Think not that all who shall profess during this time, are partakers of this resurrection, no, that is a singularly happy man and blessed, and a singularly holy man, he must be, and he shall be, so qualified and fitted for it, in more holiness than ordinary. This is not as if all saints then on earth, were more holy than others that were before that time, or shall follow after; but that, in general, holiness shall at that time be more rife in the church; and therefore that reigning of all saints must not be so understood, as if all individually should flourish in the world, but that generally their condition should be better than formerly. Or, take these words generally, to shew the effects of that resurrection, or what they are the better that partake of it; (for, both may be, they are blessed singularly, and holy: which sheweth, 1. Wherein their blessedness especially consisteth, viz. in holiness, that is their happiness, which is more than any outward liberty to deborde. If it be asked, what singular thing of holiness is spoken of in that time? *Answ.* The degree, it is like, will be more eminent. 2. The extent more universal. And, 3. It will be much now when hypocrites abound, (as always they do when religion is in request) to be holy then, hypocrisy and prosperity being greater enemies to grace than open profanity and persecution: but he that partaketh of this *resurrection*, he is both happy and holy together.

The advantages, more particularly, are exprest; and they are three in number. The first is ne-

gatively expreſſed, *on ſuch the ſecond death ſhall have no power.* This *ſecond death* was ſpoken of, chap. ii. and it followeth, chap. xxi. 8. In a word, it is to be caſten in the lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone, that is hell. If any ſay, ſo we here make three deaths or four: 1. Spiritual. 2. Natural or temporal death, which cometh on all. 3. Eternal death. And, 4. We have ſpoken of a general death or deadneſs in reſpect of the defections of churches. *Anſw.* Look to every death, and put it with its own contradiſtinguiſhing member, and there will be but two, as, 1. A ſpiritual death of the ſoul in ſin; And, 2. Of wrath in hell. Again, a temporal death of the body, common to all. And, 2. An eternal death of ſoul and body, that is the ſecond here. 3. There is a general deadneſs in the church's great eclipſing under Antichriſt, and the woman's fleeing, and the witneſſes killing; and there is a ſecond death fore-againſt that of the general paſſing of the ſentence againſt all the wicked together. However, theſe that are partakers of this *reſurrection*, they cannot partake of any of theſe. Hence it appeareth, 1. What their prerogative is; it is freedom from hell, they even then are not always kept from the firſt death, but from the ſecond death. 2. It ſheweth it is not a bodily *reſurrection* here, (for many ſuch are not neceſſarily kept from hell) but ſpiritual in faith and holineſs with fruits.

The ſecond advantage is, they *ſhall be prieſts of God, and of Chriſt:* that was, chap. v. prieſts *to God*, here it is *of God.* I conceive the ſcope is the ſame, to ſhew their advancement to ſerve and worſhip God, as prieſts, in a familiar way. Or, it may be, *prieſts of God*, excellent prieſts, as trees of God, harps of God, &c. when any thing is excellent, ſo it is called. However, the words imply, 1. That is a great privilege to get God worſhipped, and to be true worſhippers, as it was to be high-prieſt. 2. That believers are eminently admitted to this freedom at this time by this *reſurrection:* for, 1. There are two ſorts of ſacrifices, one proper to law; and another, common to the goſpel, Mal. i. *pure offerings, a contrite heart*, &c. So there are two ſorts of prieſts, one by office, that is gone, there being now no proper material ſacrifice; and that is not meant here, this privilege being applicable to woman and children, who are not capable of that office. 2. Another improperly, in reſpect of free and full admiſſion to ſpiritual ſacrifices to him, without the intervention of any high-prieſt but Jeſus Chriſt, which may be in oppoſition to the plurality of mediators and interceſſors, formerly had recourſe to. If any object, that theſe are common privileges to all believers at all times, Rev. i. 6. and chap. v. 10. *Anſw.* So is reigning with him. See chap. v. 10. where prieſts and kings are together. By which it appeareth, that theſe days bring no new thing in kind, but in degree. Theſe ſhall be eminently under that time, and more frequent in the church, and have more to partake of them than formerly.

The third, which is before, *they ſhall reign with him a thouſand years*, ſo as verſe 4. and is in place of what is ſaid, chap. v. 10. *They ſhall be prieſts to God, and kings;* which confirmeth the anſwer formerly given, and muſt be underſtood as it agreeth with all believers; for, all of them are *kings* and *prieſts*, which ſheweth it to be ſpiritual; and if *prieſts* here be parallel to that, chap. v. why not to reign alſo, only allowing to the church in general a more eminent degree of this life and reign?

LECTURE VI.

Ver. 7. *And when the thouſand years are expired, Satan ſhall be looſed out of his priſon;*
8. *And ſhall go out to deceive the nations, which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the ſand of the ſea.*
9. *And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compaſſed the camp of the ſaints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.*
10. *And the devil that deceived them, was caſt into the lake of fire and brimſtone, where the beaſt and the falſe prophet are, and ſhall be tormented day and night, for ever and ever.*

WE have heard the firſt two cotemporary events, viz. Satan's binding, the ſaint's living, and the world's lying ſtill in death: now followeth the little looſe that was foretold to be given to Satan after theſe thouſand years expire; when, for a time, their caſe is turned, the devil is looſed, the

wicked fall again to their former practice of perſecution, and the ſaints are ſtraitened: yet thus it is qualified: 1. It is for a ſhort time. 2. It is not an univerſal overturning and laying waſte all, as formerly, but encompaſſing, and, as it were, a beſieging and putting to a pinch. 3. A glorious and immediate delivery, God raiſing the ſiege himſelf.

This event is ſet out in theſe ſteps, 1. Satan's looſing, and the time when it ſhall be; it is, *after the thouſand years expire*, verſe 7. 2. There is his deſign and enterpriſe to ſtir up nations againſt the church, that hath had long quietneſs, and now poſſibly have fallen ſecure under it, verſe 8. 3. His ſucceſs, he getteth them together in a great number, and they proceed to encompaſs *the holy city*, verſe 9. 4. There is the event and reſult of this as to them, and comedy as to the people of God, the deliverance of the one, and overthrow of the other, and that in two ſteps: 1. Temporal, verſe 9. The ſecond, eternal, verſe 10. The dragon is caſt into the lake to be tormented for ever, there being, after that, no liberty given him to mar the peace of the church of Chriſt, which ſheweth this muſt be near the end.

This looſing of Satan out of priſon, muſt be in reference to his former binding, *et contra*, that as he was reſtrained from engaging the nations in ſuch open and univerſal hoſtility againſt the church as had been. Now, his looſing muſt be the giving of him ſome link looſe, to be able to bring more of that about than during the time of his reſtraint, as appeareth in the two verſes following, 1. In that, *he went out to deceive*, and more vigorouſly ſet about it. 2. In that he did it more ſucceſsfully than formerly, yet not without a link upon him; ſo that his binding is not abſolute before, more than his looſing is now, but comparatively. *Secondly*, Conſider the time when he getteth this liberty, and ſo of all this event that is foretold, 1. It is clear after the thouſand years expire; and therefore it is yet to come, much of the thouſand years being to paſs, for which cauſe we may be, yea, muſt be, the more general in the events themſelves. 2. We may ſay, it is not a long time, but, as was ſaid, a little ſpace, verſe 3. comparatively to his former looſings, and the church's intervening tranquility; ſo this fury of the devil will not be ſo long as former outbreakings, and he is ſoon taken by the Lord, even, as it were, after rendezvouſing, when they are thinking to carry all before them; but how long it is, cannot be determined, the Lord having kept it in his own hand and power. 3. This certainly falleth within the ſeventh vial, ſeeing it comprehendeth the dragon's overthrow, who outlived the beaſt, the object both here, verſe 10. and there, being the devil's kingdom, and that after the beaſt's overthrow. The end following both, and phraſes relating to both, will clear it: we take it to belong to the latter part of the ſeventh vial, the church's good condition probably after the ſixth expired, and the ſeventh begun, being at its height: even then Satan is let looſe, and when he cometh to a height again, he is taken, and the vail, with hailſtones from heaven, as chap. xvi. cometh upon Gog and Magog, as Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix. and with fire alſo, as here. *Fourthly*, (which cleareth both the former) This is not long before the day of judgment; for, it is Satan's laſt looſe: thereafter he is in the lake, not for a thouſand years, but for ever; which ſaith there is no more to do with him on earth, and the judgment alſo is reſerved for him till the laſt day. Beſide, it being the explication of the ſeventh vial, the judgment cannot be long after. And therefore, in order of matter, (as well as of words) it is ſubjoined, and ſo to be underſtood. It is therefore, probably, the laſt event preceding the day of judgment, though there may be ſome interval after this of Gog, as there was betwixt that Gog, Ezek. xxxix. and Chriſt's firſt coming: but long it cannot be, ſo much of the vial being ſpent before it come to this.

If it be ſaid, this ſeemeth not conſiſtent with what is ſaid of the world's ſecurity when Chriſt ſhall come again, if now there be ſuch troubles? *Anſw.* Chriſt's ſpeech, Matth. xxiv. holdeth forth ſecurity in the profane world as was in the old, oppoſite to Noah: and theſe two agree well to the condition of the wicked, proud, profane world: beſide, trials being ordinary, and battles not ſo ſtrange, it may poſſibly be little taken notice of by many of the church, eſpecially if any interval be, or help be given to conteſt with theſe enemies, men may be more taken up with the one, than the other; yet that peace is beſt applied to the world, and, it may be, this event of Gog, is even unexpected to the church.

The devil's improving this liberty (for he is not long quiet afterward) is ſet down, verſe 8. And it is, 1. Set down generally, *he ſhall go out*, that is, with more vehement onſets and temptations, *to deceive the nations*, that is, to bring them againſt Chriſt and his church, as if they might prevail over them, or as if there were ſome advantage to be gotten by bearing them down, or by ſome ſuch thing to engage them to battle againſt the ſaints, wherein is the greateſt beguile of the world. Theſe nations are ſaid *to be in the four quarters of the earth*, 1. For their number. 2. For the univerſality of this uprore and rage that ſhall be on all hands, and from all quarters, raiſed up againſt the church, who ſhall be as a city beſieged by them.

More particularly they are deſcribed whom he deceiveth, Gog and Magog. By ſome Gog is expounded *ſecret*, from the Hebrew GAG *tectum*; Magog *open*, from the Hebrew word MIGAG *a tecto*, and ſo taketh in ſecret and open enemies: of which I ſhall ſay nothing: only it cannot be applied to the Pope or Turk, theſe being enemies to ariſe after the thouſand years expire; who have a conjunct intereſt in fighting againſt the church, and that upon an eccleſiaſtic account, which the Turks profeſs not, their power withal moſt probably being before this broken. It ſeemeth reſpect is had, 1. To Magog, whoſe poſterity is ſpoken of, Gen. x. 3. of whom, as Joſephus, cap. 6, 7. Ant. Jud. and others with him, write that the Scythae are come, and by theſe are meaned barbarous nations at a diſtance brought upon the church while ſhe hath peace in herſelf: for, their encompaſſing ſeemeth to hold forth an external force and violence from without. 2. It relateth and alludeth eſpecially to that Gog and Magog in Ezek. xxxviii. 39. where, as the hurt the Jews got after their peace and return from Babylon, was by theſe; and as that ſtir was bitter, but ſhort by Antiochus, and the laſt before Chriſt's firſt coming; ſo in alluſion to that, theſe are the church's laſt enemies, ſetting upon her after deliverance from myſtical Babylon's tyranny; ſo theſe laſt enemies that trouble the church's peace, after her reſtoring from ſpiritual Babylon, before Chriſt's ſecond coming, are called Gog and Magog, even as there is an alluſion in the names and titles, that all the enemies of the church of the goſpel get, unto the names of the church's enemies under the law: for both had three great and eſpecial enemies, 1. Of old Egypt, who oppreſſed the church of the Jews in her infancy; in alluſion to that, the heathen emperor, the church's fifth enemy, chap. xii. is called a dragon, Pharaoh was, Pſal. lxxiv. and Ezek. xxvii. ſee chap. xii. 2. Their next great oppreſſing enemy was Babylon, that led them and kept them long time captive, anſwerable to this Antichriſt's captivity, is frequently compared to Babylon's in this book. The third enemy the Jews had after they had gotten a little peace at home, was the Lagidae and Seleucidae, eſpecially under Antiochus Epiphanes. Theſe by Ezekiel, chap. xxxviii. and xxxix. are called Gog and Magog: anſwerable to this are theſe enemies here called ſo; partly, becauſe they follow the peace and outgate the church hath after her delivery from myſtical Babylon; partly, as being of the like nature, cruel, violent, &c. yet ſoon reſtrained, ſo that they never come to vent and execute their malice againſt the church as former enemies did; partly, becauſe they go immediately before Chriſt's ſecond coming, as theſe did, as the laſt enemies before his firſt coming. And this we think the ſafeſt reaſon of theſe names Gog and Magog, without enquiring for any further myſtery in them. More particularly, the end of his gathering them, is ſet down, to battle: he mindeth it againſt the church, but God turneth the battle againſt them: I take it not for one ſingular battle, but to war againſt, to oppreſs and perſecute the church openly and avowedly.

Laſtly, Their number is expreſſed to be exceeding great, even *as the ſand of the ſea*, alluding to ſome places where that expreſſion is uſed, Judg. vii. 12. 2 Sam. xvii. 11. whereby it appeareth, 1. What number of wicked are in the world, even in the church's beſt time. 2. That if they were not reſtrained, the church in her beſt eſtate would be little in compariſon of them. 3. That they want but a looſing, and ſoon are ſtirred, as afterward followeth.

The ſucceſs followeth in two ſteps, verſe 9. *Firſt*, he prevailed ſo with them, that *they went up on the breadth of the earth*. Not only uſed he endeavours, but many were engaged, and almoſt the face of the earth was covered with them, they were ſo many. 2. They come ſo far without reſiſtance, that they *compaſs the camp of the ſaints about, and the beloved city*. By *the camp of the ſaints*, and *the beloved city*, are meaned one thing, viz. the viſible church. It is called, chapter xi. 2. the

holy city. Then here a camp and a city, to ſhew it was not ſo to be trod on, but encompaſſed, the ſtrait is not ſo great now as then, chap. xi. only before it was in freedom, now it is beſet as a beſieged city round about. She is called the *camp of the ſaints*, 1. In alluſion to Iſrael's marching in the wilderneſs, to ſhew that the viſible church is on her way and march like an army. 2. In alluſion to wars, wherein the weaker keeped themſelves within fortified camps, and the enemies encompaſſing, is as ſetting on them, as it were, in their fortifications, when they have all the field at their command. And this ſuiteth with the ſcope here, where the church is brought to that ſtrait as a little army intrenched are, when a greater lieth down round about them, as Iſa. i. 8. They are called the beloved city, 1. In alluſion to Jeruſalem which was ſo called, the ſaints being a ſpiritual city and incorporation in a church eſtate to God. 2. To ſhew their ſtrait alſo, that not only in the fields was the camp beſieged (which was a great ſtrait) but at home their chief city, as it was in Hezekiah's time, when no other place almoſt but Jeruſalem was free, and it was beſieged alſo.

4. The event followeth, verſe 9. ſhewing what came of this. 1. A temporal overthrow on the devil's inſtruments, *Fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.* It alludeth to that terrible deſtruction of Sodom, Gen. xix or, to that delivery of Jeruſalem, which God wrought by ſending an angel from heaven to deſtroy Sennacherib's army, Iſa. xxxvii. when Jeruſalem was ſtraitly beſieged; but eſpecially to that of Gog and Magog, Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix. whom God is ſaid to deſtroy from heaven with fire, as it is expreſſed in the prophet's words; it is, upon the matter, all one with that of hailſtones, chap. xvi. under the ſeventh vial, that being another mean uſed in Gog's deſtruction with this mentioned here. It ſaith, it will be terrible and unexpected, and that wherein God's hand will immediately and eminently appear beyond, if not without, all human appearance and means. And tho' the words expreſſing the judgment, be borrowed, as John's manner is, from Ezekiel, as alſo the names Gog and Magog; yet do they not neceſſarily tend both to one ſcope.

The temporal judgment on the inſtruments of this trouble, is paſt: followeth now the eternal judgment on the head, the devil ſpoken of, verſe 10. *He is taken and caſt into the pit:* and although he ranged a while after the beaſt, yet both meet together now. This judgment is ſet out, firſt, By deſcribing the party judged, it is the devil, that deceived theſe nations: whereby it appeareth, 1. That it is the devil himſelf, the old ſerpent, that is bound here, it being he who eſpecially deceiveth the nations and draweth them to enmity againſt the ſaints and church. 2. That his deceiving, though he be principal, keepeth not off wrath from theſe that are deceived by him, but the judgment often firſt lighteth on them. 3. It ſheweth all the great projects that the devil putteth the men of the world unto, the furtheſt length and ſucceſs they have, it proveth ſtill deceit to them. 4. That the devil's reſtleſs deceiving of others, turneth to his own judgment in the end; and his deceiving is marked as an eminent aggravation of his guilt, that ſeeing theſe who were deceived, ſuffered juſtly, much more he who did deceive them.

2. This judgment is ſet out, in ſhewing its nature what it was, or, where it was, he *was caſt into the lake of fire and brimſtone*, that is, hell, verſe 14. compared unto a great lake that is continually boiling with fire and brimſtone, for its horribleneſs and painfulneſs, that being one of the terribleſt tortures we can imagine, it is in ſuch a torment he is caſt; a fire for torment, a lake for abundance. Concerning which it may be aſked, is not the devil caſten at firſt to hell when he fell? *Anſw.* From Jude it is clear, he is condemned to it: yet, 2. It is clear from the goſpel, that the actual and final ſhutting him and them up, for there are many devils, is ſuſpended till the end come. Therefore are theſe words, *Art thou come to torment us before the time?* Matth. viii. 11. And Jude, verſe 6. *They are kept in chains*, &c. Alſo in God's juſtice, he having a link looſe to deceive the wicked world, and ſometimes to exerciſe his own people, till the end come; now he is actually condemned to that place and pain. Schoolmen ſay he hath three judgments, 1. When he was caſt from heaven. 2. In Chriſt's death. 3. At the day of judgment, when not only the prince of the world is judged by the goſpel, but puniſhed finally.

2. It may be aſked, where it is, (for that there is ſuch a place it is clear,) if beneath in the center of the earth, if the air, beyond, or without the world? *Anſw.* This needeth not much be debated, it is, and was of old, prepared for the

devil and his angels, and that it is down and beneath, as to the place of the glorified ſaints (it is probable) ſeeing the ſcriptures ſpeaketh ever ſo of it; and that example of Korah, Dathan and Abiram's deſtruction, Numb. xvi. ſeemeth pregnant. It is certainly a moſt horrible place, fitted with darkneſs and torment for the declaring of God's juſtice: this being the devil's dwelling, folks would be loth to dwell with him.

3. They aſk, whether any material fire be there or not, really to burn? *Anſw.* Certainly there is a great pain there, even the greateſt as we count of fire; yet certainly ſeeing it is ſouls eſpecially that are tormented there, and it is ſuch a fire as the devil is tormented with, who is a ſpirit, it muſt therefore be a fire of far other natural vehemency and penetrancy than ours is, which now we make uſe of, it being kindled by God's wrath without, and within, for ſuch an end, if any ſuch material fire be, which may alſo more directly affect bodies.

4. This place or judgment is ſet out by its companions, or former in-dwellers, it is the lake, chap. xix. *where the beaſt and falſe prophet were caſt*, and where now they are; the devil, whoſe judgment was a little ſuſpended, is now ſent after them. And this we conceive is added.

1. To ſhew that this part is the continuation of what remained in that chap. xix. of the devil's laſt judging. 2. To point out a joint partaking of the beaſt and the devil, the ſuperior agent, in judgment, even in the ſame judgment. 3. That this event of the devil's caſting into the fiery lake, is poſterior to the beaſt's deſtruction, which muſt be ſeeing the beaſt is there before him; which maketh ſome, who plead for Antichriſt's ſtanding till Chriſt's ſecond coming, find a neceſſity here to make the devil's judging poſterior to his. Neither can the ſupplying of any word alter it (which ſome would be at, to evite this) as *where the beaſt was to be ſeen, or was to be caſt.* For, 1. It is ordinary, even in the verſes before, to omit in the original the ſubſtantive (*eſt*, is, are, or were) but not ſo in other words. 2. The ſcope here is to ſhew, that it was the ſame with the beaſt's judgment preceding, and therefore relateth to it, as a thing going before indeed; and not only ſo expreſſed in words, ſeeing the events are different; and this is declared or explained by that, chap. xvi. Therefore that muſt be clearer than the other and ſo before it in time; eſpecially here, ſeeing the ſcope is to ſhew that now the devil, as the laſt enemy, is put down, and ſhareth with thoſe that went before.

4. The judgment is ſet out in three, 1. It is torment, horrible pain that affecteth even the devils. 2. It is without intermiſſion, night and day: there is no night's eaſe, not a dropt of cold water there. 3. It is eternal, it is for ever and ever, it never endeth, even after thouſands of years are expired; when millions of years are by, it is but beginning. Hence appeareth, 1. The falſhood of the errors of thoſe who ſay, that length of time ſhall end wrath, and that devils and reprobates, after a long time will be relieved, which was Origen's opinion. 2. See hence the benefit of the firſt reſurrection now, and aim at it to be keeped from this death. All this concerning Satan's laſt judgment may, by anticipation, be ſet down now for continuation of the ſtory of that event. It is indeed after the laſt judgment, when ſaints ſhall judge angels, 1 Cor. vi. Hell is a cruel place, even to devils: well are they that are freed from it, and never know it in experience. If it were believed, men would rather put their head in the fire than ſin.

LECTURE VII.

Verſe 11. *And I ſaw a great white throne and him that ſat on it, from whoſe face the earth and the heavens fled away, and their was found no place for them.*

12. *And I ſaw the dead, ſmall and great, ſtand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of thoſe things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

13. *And the ſea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.*

14. *And death and hell were caſt into the lake of fire: This is the ſecond death.*

15. *And whoſoever was not found written in the book of life, was caſt into the lake of fire.*

WE have hitherto had a view of the ſtate of the viſible church to the cloſe of its warfare, ſo long as it ſhall be militant, till her great and laſt enemy, the devil, ſhall be taken and ſhut up in his everlaſting priſon, which was hinted at in the former verſe. Now, unto the end, followeth a moſt plain deſcription of the day of judgment, when all good and bad that ever lived, ſhall be raiſed and brought to appear before their great judge, to receive ſentence every one according to their works. The ſtate of the wicked, (becauſe it is moſt ſhortly inſiſted on) is, in the firſt place, ſet down in this chapter. Then the ſtate of the godly and their happineſs, is more fully inſiſted on in the two chapters following. So, in ſhort, the ſtate of the church ſeemeth to be, 1. Spreading under the firſt ſeal, as to the thriving of the goſpel. 2. Perſecuted under the ſecond, third, fourth and fifth ſeals. 3. Delivered temporally by the ſixth. All this is chapter vi. This is the firſt period. 2. Then beginneth Satan to work under-hand till he bring Antichriſt to an height, and by the Turks overrun a great part of theſe that carry the name of Chriſtians; that is under the firſt ſix trumpets, with the propheſies cotemporary with theſe. 3. By the ſeventh trumpet, and firſt vial, judgment beginneth on Antichriſt: the caſe turneth, and is carried on during the vials, and the thouſand years, wherein Babylon is deſtroyed, viz. Rome, by the fifth vial, the Pope fleeing from it to new help; and the Turks are deſtroyed by the ſixth; Gog and Magog are letten looſe, and ſtirred up by the devil under the ſeventh, whereby they temporally, and after ſome little interval, he eternally, and all the wicked are judged by the judgment of the great day: which was, as to him, hinted before (that the ſtory of his ruin might be together) but here more fully ſet down.

That this deſcribeth the laſt judgment, is almoſt paſt controverſy, even amongſt theſe who apply the chapters following to the ſtate of the militant church, and it is clear, not only by the native context and ſeries, which is not to be interrupted, eſpecially where the things do ſo well agree: for having ſpoken of the devil's laſt judgment, which by Jude is called *the judgment of the great day*, it is conſentaneous therefore to underſtand this of ſuch a judgment, whereby he is ſo judged. Beſide, being now at the cloſe of the ſeventh vial, which bringeth the end, and the expreſſions and judgment, both in the verſe before and following, jumping with theſe of the ſeventh vial, ſuch a judgment as cloſeth that vial muſt be underſtood, which can be no other but the laſt; but the expreſſions are full, and the matter and circumſtances ſo convincing, that they leave no place of doubting, being ſo like Dan. xii. 1. and other places where the day of judgment is ſpoken of: for at what other judgment are all the dead judged, all the reprobate ſent to hell, the elect delivered, death and hell caſt in the lake, &c. which are all expreſſed here, to what other judgment can they agree but to the laſt, whereof they are particular properties? as in the explication it will appear.

This judgment is notably deſcribed in theſe four, 1. In the preparation for it. 2. The parties. 3. The manner of accurate proceeding, and the ſentence. 4. The execution thereof, as to the wicked here, and as to the godly, chap. xxi. and xxii. Let your ears hear of, and your eyes behold, this judgment, as that before which every one of you will, before long, appear, and ſo frame yourſelves to be ſuitable to it, as if with John you ſaw this great court fenced, this judgment ſet, and the ſentence pronounced, the like whereof never was, nor ſhall be.

There are four things in the preparation, 1. *A great white throne, and one ſat on it.* This maketh way for what followeth, that we may know that it is a great thing that is meaned here, it alludeth to Dan. vii. There is a throne, to ſignify majeſty, glory and ſtatelineſs, as well as authority; for when this judge cometh, he ſhall come in power and great glory, as in the glory of his father, and with all the holy angels, with the ſound of the arch-angel in the clouds, &c. all ſheweth that never was there ſuch a glorious parliament holden nor ridden, or ſo royal a throne ſet.

It is called, ſecondly, white, as he was on a white horſe, becauſe of purity and holineſs; juſtice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, Pſal. lxxxix. and righteouſneſs goeth before his face: there is no wrong nor injuſtice there; as alſo for its ſhining glorioufneſs, its power and majeſty is infinitely pure, ſpotleſs, and incomprehenſibly glorious.

It is called *a great white throne*, for the ſame reaſons: the thrones of the kings of the earth, even Solomon's golden throne are but petty, not to be accounted footſtools to this; when this is ſet, theſe

will evaniſh; he that ſitteth on this is a great King, and a great God above all Gods.

The ſecond thing in the preparation, is, that *one ſat on this throne;* he *ſaw him that ſat on it:* It was not empty, but one was on it, whom he ſaw; he nameth him not, poſſibly becauſe he had no name every way ſuitable to him: for his name is, chapter xix. ſuch *as none knoweth, but himſelf;* or becauſe it is without all controverſy who this judge is, an article of faith to believers, the Son of man who ſhall come in power and great glory from the Father's right hand to judge both the quick and the dead, he is called, verſe 12. God, before whom they ſtand; to ſhew that this judge is ſo, and then will appear to be ſo, howbeit as men, viſibly he will here proceed, and ſhall be ſeen by all, even by theſe who pierced him: they ſhall behold him coming in this glory. See Mat. xxv. 1 Theſ. iv. Rev. i. 7.

The third thing preparatory, or going before, is, *before*, or *from whoſe face, the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them.* This is the great conſummation, and the univerſal change that ſhall be on all things, when the faſhion of this world ſhall be changed, and it ſhall depart like a ſcroll, and the elements melt with fervent heat: what this is, may be ſpoken to, chap. xxi. verſe 1. But certainly here is ſuch a change as was not before this time, even that ſpoken of under the ſeventh vial, chapter xvi. that heaven and earth ſhall flee away as *not to be found*, that is not ſo as formerly they were, there being now a change on them.

They are ſaid *to flee before his face*, to ſhew with what facility and eaſe that change ſhall be wrought. 2. Of what glorious majeſty and power this great judge ſhall be, that theſe creatures cannot abide his preſence but do flee. 3. To ſhew that it is the end becauſe this conſummation, and great change on the creation is inſtantly before the judgment, when the living elect ſhall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, as 1 Cor. xv. and 1 Theſſ. iv. now time and place, as we make uſe of them, are gone.

The fourth ſtep of this preparation, is the raiſing of all parties to be judged: which includeth the reſurrection in two ſteps, 2. That all are again brought to a bodily life, wherever their bodies were buried or deſtroyed. And here we take in the change that ſhall befal theſe, who ſhall be living, inſtead of their dying. The ſecond ſtep is their appearing before the judgment: for, where the carcaſe is, there will the eagles be gathered together. Hence it is ſaid, that the Son will ſend out his angels to gather them from the four winds, and Jeſus the judge ſhall have them perſonally preſented before him: which alſo in part belongeth to the procedure. This is the order of the matter, though this of the reſurrection be ſubjoined after the procedure in judgment, verſe 13.

The ſecond thing cleared in this judgment, is the parties, who is the judge; and 2. Who are judged. The judge certainly is Jeſus Chriſt the Mediator, who hath the keys of hell and death, chap. i. 18. and is appointed judge of the quick and dead, Acts xvii. 30, 31. called God, verſe 12. before whom all do appear: (for he was perſonally to be underſtood) having theſe divine attributes of power to execute, omniſcience to take up, and juſtice to proceed: he hath divine authority and commiſſion for this; he hath divine glory, and will appear to be God in our nature, in that day, going about this laſt and ſolemn act of his mediatory ſervice and kingdom.

The parties judged, who ſtand before the throne. are, 1. Generally the dead, all however lived as after, verſe 12. under which are comprehended theſe who then ſhall be alive, (as alſo Enoch and Elias.) 1. Becauſe there change ſhall be as death to them, in changing their bodies to an immortal condition. 2. Becauſe they are few and comprehended under the greateſt number; for if the dead appear, much more theſe who ſhall be living.

More particularly, they are deſcribed in *ſmall and great:* which taketh in all ſorts, 1. Kings and mean ones; none ſhall eſcape. 2. Rich and poor. 3. Mighty, powerful, ſtrong and weak. 4. Old, at the greateſt age and ſtature, and young who have not attained to their perfection. In a word, all that ever breathed and had life, none are exempted but all are made to appear.

If any aſk, what young ones have to be judged for? *Anſw.* They are under one of the covenants either of works or grace; if of works, then have they the breach of that covenant to count for, they being the ſerpentine brood of a tranſgreſſing ſtock. 2. If they are elect, they are to be judged by the book of life.

For that queſtion agitated, in what pitch every one appeareth, whether of a lower or taller ſtate, old or young, according as they died? we inſiſt

not on it. The ſchoolmen decide all to be raiſed about the age of thirty years, that being the prime of man's ſtrength, and about the age that Chriſt was at when he ſuffered, which will be found to be thirty three years, and ſome more, having entered to his public miniſtry in the thirty; but this degorateth from the myſtery of the reſurrection, 1 Cor. xv. for though the ſame body be raiſed, yet it will be another kind of body then ever formerly it was at any age. We may ſay of the elect, they ſhall be perfect, in whatever condition they died (all that which is imperfect being done away) their perſon, ſtature, judgment, &c. being perfected. And we think that that perfection which conſiſteth in conforming them to Chriſt's glorious body, is of another kind than to reſpect either age, ſtature, or the like. We may ſee from this alſo, the abſurdity of that Popiſh conceit, whereby the judged are diſtinguiſhed in four ſorts by the ſchoolmen, one whereof doth judge and is not judged, being of a degree of perfection beyond coming into judgment: here none that hath life, whether elect or reprobate, are ſecluded, but all being in theſe books, all that are written it them muſt appear, and none there are but they are written in them: and no need there were of this book of life, if the elect in it were not alſo to be judged; it is true, believers, none of them ſhall come to judgment, as judgment importeth condemnation according to the word, John iii. 18. ſo no elect cometh into judgment, yet for abſolution they come. It is a truth alſo, that the ſaints ſhall then judge, even angels, 1 Corinth. vi. and poſſibly the apoſtles and ſome others may be more eminent in that judgment, Matth. xix. 28. yet that doth not exclude them from being judged themſelves (they being among the dead, now ſtanding before the throne) but includeth an aſſeſſory aſſent to the great judge his ſentences, and is a ſpecial prerogative put on all believers that day, who ſhall be caught up on the bench with the judge, when the reprobate, like felons and pannelled malefactors, ſhall be ſtanding at the bar, while they ſit, as it were, on the ſteps of the ſides of his throne, being caught up to him, when others are left, 1 Theſſ. iv. which alſo may admit of degrees.

Followeth now the proceeding, when God is on his throne, and all the world ſtanding before him: It hath three ſteps, 1. Generally, *books are opened* for all. 2. A ſpecial book for the elect, *The book of life is opened.* 3. Sentence is paſſed and pronounced upon all *according as was found in theſe books, and according to their works.* In all which, there is an alluſion to mens proceeding: where, when men are guilty and brought to judgment, 1. Their libels are read, called by the Hebrews, books, Job. xxxi. 35. 2. The witneſſes depone; or, their depoſitions, already on record, are made known. 3. The law is conſulted, concerning the matters that are found, what ſentence is due to them, ſo it is here: which is not, as if Jeſus Chriſt were literally ſo to proceed, for nothing eſcapeth him, but to ſhew, that the judgment ſhall be as accurate and particular in the trial, and juſt in the cloſe, as if all were regiſtrated and put on record: nothing ſhall be miſſed or miſtaken in its circumſtances, but things ſhall be ſo juſt in themſelves, and ſo manifeſted and put beyond all doubt to others, as if an exact regiſter of them had been keeped, and now publiſhed. In all which, alluſion is to Dan. vii. tho' this book of life is not mentioned there, becauſe it is but a temporal judgment that is principally intended in that place.

Let us enquire, 1. What theſe books are? 2. What this is to open them? they are certainly expreſſed ſo with reſpect to mens courts. And therefore we take the firſt to hold out, 1. That there is a book of challenges and accuſations, wherein and whereby all that ever men did, is manifeſted and brought to their minds; ſo Job xxxi. 35. This may be a record of events in the Lord's omniſcience, and in the memory and conſciences of men, wherein every thing paſt is made freſh to them; ſo is there a book of remembrance, (a book containing, as it were, a dairy of all their lives) Mal. iii. 16. 2. There is a witneſs, a book of the creatures without, who have been abuſed; and from within, the conſcience, according as it now ſeeth, it excuſeth, or accuſeth, Rom. ii. 14. and ſo is a law and evidence ſufficient to man. Thus the matter of fact is made out, ye did thus and thus with ſuch and ſuch aggravations, the conſcience cannot refuſe it. 3. The book of the law is produced, whereby actions are examined, whether conform, or diſconform unto it. And ſo Chriſt ſaith, John xii. 48. *The word that he ſpeaketh, ſhall judge them in the great day;* theſe are the books: for, theſe books in general, are in the plural number, becauſe they are more than one, whereas there is but one book of life: the reaſon is, 1. Becauſe grace, ariſing

and flowing from free election, hath but one way to all comprehended in it; but juſtice, in its dealing with others, taketh notice of their ſeveral actions and guilt. 2. Election conſidereth men without any thing in themſelves, or reſpect to the law, and is no act of juſtice but of ſovereign grace. Again, juſtice conſidereth men as ſuch, and therefore enquireth in their carriage, looketh to proofs, and compareth all with the law, which maketh that judicial proceſs to be more exactly ſet out by ſeveral books.

Theſe books are opened, in compariſon of what they were before, viz. ſealed, neither was it known what was in them. Now, 1. All actions and events, mercies or rods, leſs and more, are made manifeſt, even that which was moſt ſecret, idle words, Matth. xii. every ſecret thing good or bad, Eccl. xii. laſt verſe. 2. As nothing is forgotten, ſo every thing is known as it is, the ſpiritual meaning of the law, and ſo the deſerving of ſin, and all the aggravations of it are better known, many truths and threatnings believed then, that were dallied with before. The firſt is neceſſary to perfect the challenge and libel; the ſecond is neceſſary to make all aſſent to God's juſtice, and know their own deſerving, which could not be if they underſtood not the law. By the one many ſins will occur, whereof they never dreamed; by the other, the leaſt ſins will have huge aggravations beyond what they appeared. 3. The conſcience book will be opened, when blindneſs is taken away from the ſight, and judgment and hardneſs, and deadneſs from the conſcience; ſo that theſe who looked but on ſin before, are now affected and pricked with it, and the conſciences becometh reſtleſs and ſenſible: not only bearing witneſs to the truth of ſuch things convincingly, but alſo with inward pangs, accuſing ſuch things now, and ſentencing for them, whereas it formerly ſleeped under them, as Pſal. li. They are now ever before them, yea, within them, thus all is cleared. By which we may ſee, 1. That nothing will be miſſed in that day, God's regiſter is ſo exact. 2. That what is ſecret now will be revealed then, not only to the parties own conſcience, (for which end every one will have their own diſtinct book) but even to others, becauſe they alſo muſt know and aſſent to God's juſtice in general, why ſuch a one is condemned, &c. which cannot ſo well be without the knowledge of their guilt. Beſide, this is aimed at by this day, to make God's juſtice manifeſt; therefore is it called the revelation of God's righteous judgment, Rom. ii. Hence it is ſaid, that nothing is hid which ſhall not be diſcovered, even as to others, before men and angels: yea, in that place, Mat. xxv. the reaſon of the ſentence reſpectively is given. Neither doth the manifeſtation of theſe deeds prove derogatory to the elect's joy, nor that capacity of knowledge uſeful to the reprobate: for, 1. That manifeſtation glorifieth God, it being manifeſted as the ground upon which grace is glorified, and ſo wrongeth them no more than theſe known ſins of Solomon, Saul, or Paul, &c. which are not for their infamy remembered then. 2. Their repentance and faith in Chriſt, with the pardon and glory that Chriſt putteth on them, is alſo manifeſted; ſo that this is furthered by the other, and not leſſened by it: and that knowledge in reprobates tendeth more to the aggreging of their horror and pain when they ſee others (poſſibly alike in ſome things guilty) admitted to glory, and themſelves ſhut out; when they ſee the cauſes of God's proceeding, the more knowledge they have, they have the more challenges and aggravations of grief; ſo that glad would they be to forget many things which they cannot then be rid of.

2. When theſe general books or records of all men's deeds are produced, their is a peculiar book added; like as a commander or judge, who having produced generally what ſuch a mutinous army, and ſuch a rebellious people, deſerved, yet after, taketh out a peculiar paper, whereby grace and mercy is deſigned for ſome particular perſons, that they ſuffer not with the reſt; ſo here, before ſentence paſs, the book of life is looked, becauſe, John vi. 39, 40. all theſe elect that were given to him, are to be accounted for now, and, as it were, the roll is taken out, to ſee that the event anſwer his commiſſion. This ſheweth alſo, that it is not by the former books, of their own reckoning, but by grace, that even the elect are abſolved. By this book of life is underſtood, 1. God's peculiar purpoſe of, and election to glory of ſome beſide, and diſtinct from others. It is ordinarily thus expreſſed, becauſe,

1. He hath them deſigned by name and ſirname, as in a particular record.

2. Called *Book of Life*, becauſe that is the end of it, why he hath written ſuch and ſuch in it and not others, the effect following to them, is

life; ſo it is often expreſſed by a writing, or book, Exod, xxxii. 33. Iſa. iv. 3.

3. By this *Book of Life*, we would not underſtand election ſtrictly, as it reſpecteth the end only, but as it comprehendeth all conducing to that end, there being but one election, or book written, concerning the end, *life*, and all midſes leading thereto, as redemption, and the executing of that covenant, Pſal. xl. 7. as repentance, faith, &c. which book containeth God's purpoſe, and the ſeveral means and ſteps whereby he hath made it effectual.

Again, theſe are compared to a book, 1. For exactneſs; there is no change or miſs can be here, all is one record. 2. To ſhew Chriſt's faithfulneſs in his truſt, who got the elect to ſave, John vi. 40. and now produceth them all by name. 3. It is produced to ſhew the riſe of the elects ſalvation, and what put the difference between them and others, and from whom all their ſalvation dependeth; it is nothing in them, but in God's electing grace.

This *book is alſo opened*, 1. Becauſe now it is known to all who are elect, and who not, and never till now: and therefore ought it never to be enquired into, as to others, it being never opened till then. 2. Becauſe then God's good reaſon of proceeding in this ſovereign work of election in having mercy on whom he will, (which till this time hath been and ſhall be a myſtery) ſhall then ſatisfyingly be clear why he chooſeth ſo many and no more, why ſuch, and not others, this man living in ſuch a time, and not this at another time. Here reaſon cannot ſee, therefore faith and fear ſhould ſubmit, and forbear ſearching in ſome of theſe things, ſeeking rather to have the privileges and qualifications of theſe here inrolled, and waiting for ſatisfaction unto many queſtions at this day when we ſhall ſee him as he is.

It is *an other book*, different from the former books, which are common to the reprobates, this is peculiar to the elect: that of juſtice and judgment; this of ſovereign grace. If any aſk why the book of life is produced here, and not God's decree of reprobation alſo? *Anſw.* Condemnation is an act of juſtice, God condemneth, but according to and for their works, therefore there is no need of that decree; for he judgeth impenitent ſinners; but abſolution is an act of grace, not going on our deſervings. Therefore there is need of this rule, or book, to proceed by, as diſtinct from our deſervings. Beſide, now God will have reprobates acknowledging juſtice, and none ſhall blame him for their condemnation or reprobation, when their own guilt and God's decree ſhall be manifeſted together: whatever man can avail now, no weight is laid on that decree in this ſentence as a cauſe of it, but upon their own ſins. On the contrary, he ſhall have all the redeemed knowing that the weight of all their ſalvation lieth on his grace and his purpoſe, before any thing was done by them.

Now both theſe being cleared, 1. What men did. 2. Who amongſt men are appointed to life. The third thing, viz. the ſentence that is paſſed on theſe dead, followeth, *they were judged*, that is, received their laſt doom: but becauſe it is a day of juſtice, and ſundry ſorts, both ſheep and goats are judged, therefore there is not one ſentence to all, but two qualifications of the ſentence are added. 1. *They were judged out of thoſe things that were written in the books;* who wanted the written law, have the law of nature in their hearts for a law, Rom. ii. 12. who lived under it, are judged by it; who heareth the goſpel, are judged according to it: mens receipts come into this reckoning. In ſhort, it is, thoſe written in the book of life are entered in poſſeſſion of it according to the word, *Come, ye bleſſed, inherit the kingdom prepared for you*, Matt. xxv. Others are charged with their guilt, and have this ſentence, *Depart from me*, &c.

The ſecond qualification ſheweth the juſtice thereof more, that it is *according to their works*, not for their works: works here are, to the elect, the rule, not the cauſe of proceeding; and it importeth theſe things, 1. Generally, that there ſhall be juſtice in the ſentence, or rather it ſhall be a juſt ſentence, not paſſed on any by gueſs, or contrary to their deſervings, but juſtly ſhall it be paſt, by a vidicative juſtice on the reprobate wicked, and by a faithful righteous ſentence of grace on the godly elect: which is alſo juſt.

1. Becauſe Chriſt hath paid for them, their debt is diſcharged by the cautioner.

2. Becauſe God hath promiſed and engaged to pardon them in that book of redemption or life, and now he performeth and keepeth it. Hence it is ſaid, *God the righteous judge will give the crown at this day*, 2 Tim. iv. 8. 2. It is ſuitable to folks works, he doth in that day good to theſe who are good, and to the froward and wicked he

pronounceth evil, as it is cleared, Rom. ii. 6, 7, 8, 9. when it is ſaid, *He ſhall give to every one according to their works:* it is then thus diſtributed. Thus juſtice hath our works, not as the ground or cauſe of it, but as the evidences whereby the elect are differenced from others. 3. It is proportionable, that is to ſay, not only glory to thoſe that do well, but to thoſe that abound in well-doing, great glory, and ſo it is not wrath only to the ſoul that doth much ill, but great wrath: therefore it is ſaid, Gal. vi. he that ſoweth ſparingly, ſhall reap ſparingly: for as a man ſoweth, ſo he ſhall reap, not only as to the kind, corruption from the fleſh, or life from the ſpirit; but even, as to the degree, leſs or more according to their ſowing, as in the parables of *talents* and *pounds*, is clear, Matth. xxv. and Luke xix. 4. It importeth a neceſſary connection betwixt good works and glory; for, without holineſs, none ſhall ſee the face of God. What is meant by *according*, Chriſt holdeth out, Matth. xxv. 29. in that neceſſary connection, that *he that hath*, ſhall get *more*; but not becauſe he hath, but in order certainly it followeth, *et contra;* yet it is *freely given.* If any retort, that *according to works* in the wicked, importeth merit; therefore ſo alſo in the godly. I ſay it importeth not, of itſelf, merit, to ſay, *according to works*, as appeareth by the like phraſes, *according* to your faith be it unto you: and in diſtributing the talents, Matth. xxv. 15. He gave *according* to their ſeveral abilities. Their abilities may imply fitneſs in them, and proportionableneſs in diſtributing of them: yet none can ſay, *according* (*kata*) implieth merit in theſe places; and that it can import no merit properly taken here (though there be juſtice in the ſentence, and it be juſt, yet our works are not the ground of it) appeareth, 1. Becauſe grace, and the book of life, is here mentioned as the ground of proceeding in reference to the elect. Now, if in as ſtrict juſtice their works deſerved life, as the wicked deſerve death, there were no need of mentioning this book ſo oft: yea, 2. If *according to works*, were to be taken ſtrictly, then it were inconſiſtent with this book, which maketh all to be of grace, and of a like nature with its riſe, even as it is grace: here grace and works are oppoſed, if of grace, then not of works; yea, *according to works* (ſo underſtood as cauſal) is oppoſed to this purpoſe of God, or his election, as 2 Tim. i. 8. *who hath ſaved and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his purpoſe and grace in Chriſt Jeſus:* where, 1. He joineth *ſaving* (which taketh in all) and God's purpoſe together, and maketh the one grace as the other is. 2. In both he oppoſeth works to grace, which cannot be underſtood ſimply, but as they look to merit: otherwiſe both take in works: what reaſon can there be given here why this book is ſo often mentioned in this judgment, but to ſhew that this laſt ſtep of ſalvation is of the ſame nature with the firſt, which certainly, as to election, can be called no other than of grace. 3. Conſider, that when Chriſt ſpeaketh more fully to this ſentence, Matth. xxv. He mentioneth ſome works, as viſiting, clothing, &c. which certainly, as to the condignity of merit, can have no proportionableneſs to heaven and glory. And if any ſay, he ſo accounteth them, though they be not worthy. *Anſw.* 1. Then that is improperly merit, whereas the other properly deſerveth hell; therefore the expreſſion is not alike in both ſides. 2. Then it followeth, it is grace that maketh the ſentence paſs on them, and not ſtrict juſtice, as on the other. 4. Conſider here, that all, ſmall and great, are judged, infants poſſibly never breathing out of their mother's belly: and can any ſay that ſuch cannot be written in the Lamb's book of life, or that they have done any thing to deſerve this laſt abſolving ſentence? It muſt therefore not be underſtood to infer merit to them.

To ſay, by baptiſm, their ſin is taken away. *Anſw.* 1. That is contrary to grace's way, and the nature of God's covenant to believers, and their ſeed, baptized or not; for, it condemneth all unbaptized; or, the argument will hold in them. 2. In baptiſm, children are paſſive, it is not their deed, if childrens baptiſm deſerve any thing, it muſt be here accounted on their ſcore who performed it, not on the childrens who muſt be judged according to their own works, and not to the works either of parent or miniſter; yet, if it be conſidered, that the judgment paſſeth according to the book of life, there is clear ground to lay it on grace, and not on themſelves, or others; and the rule is one to all the elect. 5. Conſider, that theſe works and books take in all the elect, many of whom have many ſinful actions and a few good, and even thoſe few are much corrupted and imperfect. Now, it muſt either be ſaid, 1. That no elect cometh here to be judged, but he hath more good, at leaſt, to deſerve heaven, than evil to deſerve hell (which will

ſeem hard to be ſaid of profane men, converted poſſibly an hour before death) or we muſt ſay there are different rules to proceed by in judging the elect, ſome by grace, and ſome by works, which is contrary to the text, that maketh one rule for all: and certainly any that is well verſed in theſe books, will ſee no cauſe to plead thus, and all others ſhall ſee it, when theſe books ſhall be opened; it is the ignorance of theſe that maketh men ſo plead. So this *according* then importeth a ſuitableneſs and connection, as is ſaid, but no merit.

Inſt. But it is deſerving to the wicked, therefore to the righteous. *Anſw.* 1. This word here may import no deſerving, that being (as to the wicked elſewhere clear) but a connection with, and ſuitableneſs of one of theſe to the other, viz. wicked living, and impenitent dying, with damnation. This is enough to vindicate juſtice, that he thus proceedeth. 2. Although it do imply merit in them, yet it will not follow, that it doth ſo in the elect: not only for the former reaſons; but, 1. Becauſe the ſins of wicked men are perfectly ſins, the good actions of the godly are not ſo. 2. Becauſe with the one, God proceedeth according to the covenant of works, puniſhing for want of perfect holineſs, aggravated alſo in ſome by their unbelief who heard the goſpel; but God proceedeth not by that covenant with the elect, but by the book of life, that hath the covenant of grace depending on it. 3. Becauſe any ſin deſerveth wrath, even the leaſt (being a tranſgreſſion of the law) but many good works will deſerve heaven, becauſe they are debts, and cannot plead the performance of that covenant, except they be always and in every thing perfect: for life dependeth not on living well this year or two years, or for this good work or that, but on a perfect righteouſneſs, which is marred by one ſin, (even original ſin) though there be never more: for, *bonum non eſt niſi ex omnibus, malum ab unoquoque defectu;* if any aſk, why works are mentioned here, and not faith? *Anſw.* 1. Faith and repentance are certainly included, not as works deſerving, but as fruits of the Spirit in the regenerate, and the want of them is ſinful in the reprobate, who heard and believed not. And certainly according to this, they who are more ſeverely judged: and therefore works here, muſt be underſtood generally, as it ſetteth out one's condition, good or evil, according to which the judgment proceedeth eſpecially as they believed, or not. 2. Faith is not expreſly mentioned, becauſe it is implied in God's purpoſe of grace under the book of life, which taketh in faith as a midſt, that it may be of grace, Rom. iv. 16. 3. Becauſe it is not juſtification from ſin before God that is here recorded, (that is paſt) but the manifeſtation of that before men, and it is one to juſtify before God, and another to ſave one that is juſtified, and declare them to be ſo, and works contribute moſt directly to this. 4. Works are eſpecially mentioned in oppoſition to the wicked, who are condemned for their ſins, and want of good work; this ſtoppeth their mouth, and ſheweth the juſtice of the difference even before men; yet, upon the matter, (chap. xxi. 8. unbelieving is reckoned to the wicked, even as murder and adultery is, and ſo among the works of the elect, muſt be comprehended their fleeing to Chriſt by faith, whereby merit is overturned.

Verſe 13. By clearing an objection, he openeth further what was ſaid, which may be, many are rotten in the grave, called here *hell*, are drowned in the ſea, eaten with fiſhes, &c. under which are comprehended all deſperate-like deaths, as burning, ſowing in aſhes, rotten heaps of dead bodies together: it may be ſaid, how can theſe dead be ſaid to be raiſed, and judged? It is ſhewn, that even the ſame bodies, by God's power, are judged with theſe that live in the fleſh, by which, that which looketh moſt impoſſible-like is brought about) even as if willingly *the ſea and the grave had given up theſe*, which from God they had only in keeping till this day.

By *hell* here, may be underſtood, as ordinarily, the *grave*, (there being one word for both in the original) or theſe bodies, if any be, that are in hell, ſuch as Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and others. But generally this is ſure, that by theſe places, *ſea*, *hell*, and *death*, are meant all places where dead bodies are ordinarily buried, or extraordinarily cruſhed and deſtroyed: they ſhall all compear wherever they be.

They are ſaid to *give up their dead*, that is, not by any faculty in theſe creatures, but it is eaſily, ſpeedily and ſimply, as if in boxes they had been kept all diſtinct, and now they lay them out; which is done by God's power, as he made the fiſh, only by a word, caſt out Jonah on the dry land whole. It is called *their dead*, or *the dead* which was in them, to ſhew, 1. An account, as it were,

every one maketh of their dead, as if they were anſwerable for them: it is ſo accurate, none is miſſed or kept back. 2. To ſhew, it is the ſame dead that are judged, and in the ſame bodies that died, and were buried, or periſhed. It is, as Job ſaith, chap. xix. he and none other for him; ſo it is they and none other for them: the ſame body, as it is the ſame ſoul, compeareth to get judgment according as they did in the fleſh, it being ſuitable that the ſame body ſhould ſhare with the ſoul in its eternal condition. Here is a wonder, a thouſand bodies are rotten together, poſſibly men feeding on others, and living on others dead bodies, yet now all are put to their own maſters, none are wrong marrowed in the leaſt pickle of duſt.

It is added, and *they were judged:* this ſheweth, that this reſurrection goeth before their ſentencing, and that, as every one aroſe, and none were miſſed, ſo every one is judged, and none miſſeth a juſt ſentence; there is one rule, as there is one judgment: for ſin taketh impenitent ſinners to hell, and none but the holy (though not for their holineſs) are admitted to life. Concerning this judgment, I would only add, 1. That it is not unlike, that as our Lord the Judge, ſhall viſibly, as man, appear, ſo ſhall he vocally and audibly pronounce the ſentence to the hearing of all (at leaſt as the main of the ſentence, *Come ye, and depart ye, &c.*) This ſcripture ſeemeth to ſpeak, and it is not inconſiſtent with the order of proceeding, and the intimating publicly of the ſentence before men and angels, agreeing to that day, but very ſuitable to it: I ſay, as to the general ſentence on the body of the elect, and of the wicked reſpectively. And, therefore, *Secondly*, It is not neceſſary to aſtrict this judgment to ſuch a long time, as ſome do, as if every ones account and particular ſentence were diſtinctly and ſucceſſively to be handled. He ſaith, at once, to theſe on his right hand, and again one ſentence to theſe on his left, together, Matth. xxv. Particulars, indeed, are manifeſted, which are the grounds of every one's ſentence, but that may be done at an inſtant by our bleſſed Lord Jeſus, by opening the books, much more than the devil could at the twinkling of an eye, Matth. iv. and Luke iv. ſhew Chriſt the world, and the glory of it.

The execution of this dreadful ſentence followeth, in the laſt two verſes, as it concerneth the wicked, 1. Conſider the parties condemned. Then, *Secondly*, The judgment or death they are adjudged unto. The parties ſentenced, are, verſe 14. *Death* and *Hell*, that is, the laſt enemies of Chriſt who are to be ſubdued, and now generally all his enemies, as may be gathered from 1 Cor. xv. 16. they are all in hell now, none in heaven, the earth is removed, and death and the grave have no power on the elect: therefore there is no ſervice for them in time, which now is gone, the wicked are in hell, and death goeth with them, as having no more to do here.

By this, then, *death and hell were caſt in the lake*, is not meant any proper judgment on *death* and *hell*, or the grave; but it holdeth out, *Firſt*, That now all effects of ſin, and of the curſe, as to the godly, are removed; and now all theſe go together to the pit with the reprobate, and the company of the now glorified elect is fully freed from them all, as chap. xxii. 3. which relateth to this. *Secondly*, That Chriſt's victory is compleated, when death and the grave, that are amongſt the laſt enemies, are ſubdued, and have acceſs no longer to trouble or detain any of his people, being now confined within the lake, ſignifying thereby both the abſolute freedom of the elect from them, and the full dominion, to ſay ſo, which they ſhall have over the reprobates, 2. All who are not written in the Lamb's book of life, they are caſten in this lake, all that are not elected: in a word, all the reprobate, all that are not pardoned though Chriſt, and by grace, not exempted from the deſerving of their works, whether great or ſmall, rich or poor, noble or ignoble, old or young, more civil or profane, &c. The ſentence is ſeen, and may be known in the execution; they are caſt into the lake, wherein the devil was caſt, verſe 10. This is expounded to be *the ſecond death:* that proveth this to be the general judgment, when all the reprobates, put together, are ſent thither. In a word, all theſe ſhare with the devil and his angels in hell's fire: where we may again ſee, 1. That the book of life, or way of grace, is that only which keepeth the elect from this damnation: yet, 2. That others get no wrong, for they deſerved it; only God pardoned them not, which he was not obliged to do. 3. That there is a good agreeance and connection between election and holineſs; therefore they are judged according to their works: and none can ſay, let me live as I will, if I be elected, I will be

ſaved; God putteth works and this book together as the rule, 1. To ſtop their mouths that periſh, and to vindicate even his election in its execution from reſpect of perſons. 2. To ſhew, that it is yet grace that ſaveth: let not therefore thoſe two be ſeparated.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. XXI.

Verſe 1. *And I ſaw a new heaven, and a new earth: for the firſt heaven and the firſt earth were paſſed away; and there was no more ſea.*

THE laſt ſentence being paſt in the former chapter, and the execution of it, as to the wicked and reprobate, ſhortly pointed at: followeth now the execution of the ſentence as to the elect, in this chapter, and chap. xxii. In the lake were caſten all not written in the book of life; unto this holy city admitted are none, but ſuch as are written in it: whereby it appeareth, that they are two eſtates and conditions that are oppoſed, eternal life to eternal death; Of two oppoſite parties, the one including all the reprobates not written; the other taking in all theſe who are written in the book of life, and no other. And ſo this is to be looked on as the continuance of the former narration, concerning the execution of the laſt ſentence, which he now proſecuteth, as to the elects happineſs, whereof nothing was ſpoken in the preceding chapter. This happineſs is ſet out, Firſt, More generally, in ſome antecedent circumſtances concerning it, to ver. 9. Then, Secondly, More particularly, by viſion the new Jeruſalem is manifeſted to John in a full view, to verſe 6. of chapter xxii. Then, Thirdly, By word the angel addeth ſome explication to John, till verſe 16. where Jeſus cometh in himſelf, which continueth till the cloſe.

Whether this viſion belongeth to the church militant or triumphant, is diſputed by many, and by ſome ſober and learned interpreters is applied to the church militant. Some making it to hold out a ſtate of the church cotemporary with the ſeventh trumpet, and the thouſand years: others making it to belong to the ſtate of the church after the vials, when the fulneſs of the Gentiles and Jews ſhall become worſhippers of our Lord Jeſus; and ſo to them the former deſcription of the day of judgment is but by anticipation ſet down, and here John returneth again to point out the militant church in her moſt glorious poſture. It would be needful therefore to confirm this order and ſeries laid down for clearing of the ſcope of theſe chapters.

1. Then, the debate here is not ſimply, if a more flouriſhing eſtate of the militant church be propheſied of in this book: for, in chapters xvi. xix, and xx. we have ſeen much of that to be ſpoken of, but only whether the viſion doth further explicate theſe former propheſies, or proſecute the deſcription of the triumphant church after them. 2. We acknowledge many expreſſions here to be borrowed from the prophets, by which, in ſome holy hyperbolic manner, they did ſet out the ſpiritual eſtate of the church in the days of the goſpel, 3. We grant, that the ſame expreſſions in themſelves, may in part be applied to the gracious eſtate of Gods church here, and her glorious eſtate hereafter: yet this we aſſert, that what is intended by the Spirit here, as the ſcope of this viſion, is principally, and chiefly, if not only, to be applied to the ſtate of the elect after the general judgment, and can be properly applied to no ſtate of the church militant, which we do thus clear and confirm.

1. From the native ſeries and order laid down, if the judgment preceding be general to reprobate and elect, and the ſentence in its execution be ſet down in reference to the reprobate before; then it will follow, that natively the ſcope of this viſion is, to ſet out the good condition of the elect in oppoſition to the former; the execution of the reprobates ſentence is firſt ſet down, becauſe more ſhortly the wicked's condition is paſt by, and the good condition of the elect is more fully inſiſted on, as making moſt for their conſolation. And tho' the matter and order of words do not alway agree in this propheſy, yet certainly it were unwarrantably rejected, where it ſuiteth well with the ſcope as here, when natively a good condition is ſet down, oppoſite to the evil condition going before, and that orderly

to ſupply what was formerly wanting, viz. what became of theſe that were written in the Lamb's book of life, while all others are caſt into the lake. This chapter ſupplieth that, ſhewing, that they entered into an excellent Jeruſalem, out of which, verſe 27. all others were excluded: which ſheweth clearly, that the ſcope here is to continue that part of the execution of the ſentence, as to the elect, which was, until now, defective, Beſide, it is not like, that the Spirit would inſiſt ſo much in ſhewing what came of the reprobate, and what effect the ſentence had on them, and would no where ſhew what effect the ſentence, or book of life, had on the elect, which is no where elſe in this propheſy, if not here. And this would not ſuit with the ſcope of this propheſy, to neglect a thing of ſo much conſolation and concernment unto the church at all times, as this of the eternal good condition of all the elect, which is the happy reſult of all their former wreſtlings.

This argument from the ſeries and *Acoluthia* of the propheſy, will bind the more ſtrongly, if we conſider, that there will hardly be found any ſuch *Hyſteroſis* or *Hyſterologia* in one and the ſame explicatory propheſy, ſuch as this is; for, tho' an explicatory propheſy may go back over events contained in a principal propheſy, yet that in one and the ſame explicatory propheſy, there is ſuch retrogreſſing over one event, to ſet down ſome other wholly antecedaneous to it, and having no connection with any thing ſucceſſive unto it, as this would be, if it did belong to a ſtate of the church before the final ſentencing of the wicked mentioned in the cloſe of the former chapter, will not be eaſily found.

2. If it were any ſuch good conditions of the church militant, it behoved to be either before the thouſand years, which none aſſerteth, or after it, and ſo after the ſeventh vial, which is impoſſible, (becauſe that bringeth the end with it;) or, it muſt be cotemporary with it, which cannot be: for, 1. That thouſand years good condition is not abſolute. Satan is bound, (but not caſt in the lake) and that for a time, only, Gog and Magog are afterward looſed; but here Satan is laid faſt in his priſon, and death and the curſe are no more among any of this company. 2. Their reign here is not for a thouſand years, or a long time, but uninterrupted for ever, chap. xxii. 5. And certainly by theſe, and the like expreſſions, it is contradiſtinguiſhed from the beſt and longeſt peace that the church at any time hath had on the earth, and particularly from that of the thouſand years. Again, that reign of the thouſand years followeth, but the firſt reſurrection, this followeth the ſecond; that is particular, this is general. Add, that good condition of the thouſand years was applicable only to ſaints of that time, as there was cleared, but this agreeth to all the elect living in whatſoever time, and none are ſecluded from it, but ſuch as are not written in the Lamb's book of life.

3. This new earth, ſpoken of here, verſe 1. is certainly in oppoſition to the former, mentioned, chapter xx. 11. which paſſed away; but that paſſing or fleeing away of heaven and earth, being antecedent and preparatory unto the laſt judgment, it muſt certainly be the laſt conſummation of all things, and ſo this new heaven and earth, (and this Jeruſalem that cotemporateth with it) which ſucceed, and are oppoſed to the former earth and heaven, muſt be after the day of judgment; and therefore inconſiſtent with any eſtate of the church militant.

4. This new Jeruſalem coming down from heaven, is the ſame ſpoken of, chapter iii. 12. in the promiſe made to Philadelphia; but that is heaven: therefore it is ſo here. And that all theſe promiſes in the Epiſtles, chap. ii. and iii. do look to eternity, the ſcope (which is to provoke wreſtlers to overcome, at all times) maketh it clear, and none will think that that can be any peculiar condition belonging to a particular ſtate and time of the church here, which all overcomers have ever partaked of at all times; it muſt then be heaven.

5. That which is ſpoken of this holy city, will not in ſundry things agree to the church on earth; as particularly, 1. That there was no temple there, verſe 22. Now, by *temple* here, is underſtood, conform to this propheſy, one of two, 1. Either ſome midſt or ordinance leading to Chriſt, which was typified by the old temple; and ſo the church militant, though called ſometimes *heaven*, yet never wanteth a temple: and under the ſeventh trumpet particularly, chapter xi. verſe laſt, it is marked, that then the temple was opened in heaven, and light and religion in the ordinances flouriſhed: and that ſeventh trumpet is cotemporary with the thouſand years, as all acknowledge: or, 2. By *temple*, is underſtood hea-

ven itſelf improperly, as chap. iii. 12, *I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, &c.* becauſe the temple held out more eminent and glorious enjoying of God; in which reſpect, verſe 22. God and the Lamb are called the temple here, becauſe by immediate enjoying of them, all ordinances are ſupplied, and the uſe of them, and all light, chapter xxii. 5. is taken away. Now, by *temple* here, is not underſtood any excellency of immediate enjoying of God; for, that is in this city: it muſt be therefore underſtood of mediate means, ſuch as the temple was, the taking away whereof, is a part of the perfection of that bleſſed ſtate, whereas the enjoying of theſe ordinances fully, is a part of the church's happieſt condition here on earth; ſeeing therefore this city hath no ordinances: and it is a part of its perfection to want them; it can be applicable to no ſtate of the church militant, but only triumphant, wherein the church's happineſs exceedeth her happieſt condition on earth, more than the opening of the temple exceeded its ſhutting: and it is ſet forth in this expreſſion, to ſhew, that this is not that ſtate of the church, mentioned chap. xi. 15. but one ſucceeding to, and exceeding it, as it did what was before it.

Again theſe who plead for Chriſt's perſonal preſence during the thouſand years on earth, do argue the ſame conſequent from this place, and ſay, that ordinances ceaſe then; for, what need is there of a glaſs to behold Chriſt when himſelf is preſent? So Tyllingaſt, &c. *Anſw.* 1. This argument will indeed conclude againſt theſe who diſclaim that opinion in that part. But, 2. Even this place will conclude againſt that preſence alſo; for here, not only is there an immediate enjoying of Chriſt the Lamb, *but of the Lord God Almighty;* alſo, verſe 22. and chap. xxii. verſe 4. They *ſee his face;* and, in ſcripture, there is no immediate enjoying of God ſpoken of, but as in heaven, viſion being the form of our bleſſedneſs in our country. Hence this is a ſecond inſtance, that this cannot agree to the church on earth, but in heaven; thus, immediate enjoying of God belongeth not to the church on earth, but in heaven; but the church in this new Jeruſalem, hath that, *ut ſupra. Ergo,* 3. If we conſider alſo the parties admitted to this city, we will find, that it will agree to no ſtate of the church on earth, they are elect, and only elect, ver. 27. And this muſt be underſtood of elect, not only who are ſo in appearance, but who are ſuch indeed, *ex veritate rei:* for, they are here ſo written who are admitted, as they were not written who were mentioned, chapter xx. *ult.* and are not admitted, (the writing of the one being directly oppoſed to the not writing of the other) but there, they mentioned who were caſten in the lake, are not only theſe who ſeemed, or outwardly appeared not to be written, but theſe who really were not written, whatever ſhew they had (for, they were caſt in the lake.) The difference betwixt them is not put here in ſhew, but in reality and verity of deed. Beſide, where is writing in the Lamb's book taken in this propheſy, or in the ſcripture, for appearing to be ſo? For ſo one might be ſaid to be written in the Lamb's book of life, and yet caſt into the lake of fire, and ſo not to be written into it at the ſame time, which were abſurd. But we ſhall weigh this argument more on the words.

6. If all without this city, or, if to be without it, be all one as to be in the lake, then this muſt be heaven, or the ſaints eternal happineſs, oppoſed to the eternal miſery of the wicked; but all without this city are in hell, and to be without it, and in hell, are one. The firſt is clear: the city mentioned, wherein all mens happineſs conſiſteth, chap. xxii. 14, 15. is this city deſcribed here, that hath ſuch excellent gates, and the tree of life growing in it. See *ibid* ver. 3. But, to be without this, is hell, compare ver. 15. chap. xxii. *dogs, &c. are without,* and not thus happy: what that condition of theſe *dogs* and *ſorcerers* is, is ſet down, chapter xxi. verſe 8. It is to be caſt *into the lake,* that is *the ſecond death.* This then muſt be eternal life, which the elect are admitted unto, that being the life only which is oppoſed to the ſecond death.

7. Add, To be a partaker of this city, and to eat of the fruit of the tree of life that groweth in the paradiſe of God, is a privilege promiſed to all believers, and is performed to all overcomers, at all times, as chapter xxii. compare verſe 2. with 14. 1. He is bleſſed that cometh to this happineſs. 2. It is they that do his commandments. So it is a happineſs that followeth holineſs, and by holineſs men come to enter to it. 3. Beſide this, to eat of the tree of life, is promiſed to all that ever ſhall come to heaven. See chapter ii. ver. 7. and all the ſcope

here. See chap. xxi. verſe 7. and xxii. verſes 12, 14, 15. holdeth forth the laſt good condition, and great encouragement and promiſe which is made to all wreſtlers; which certainly ſheweth, that heaven is intended here, that being only the laſt great and common encouragement: for if this ſet out the eſtate of the militant church, it muſt either ſet out what is alway common to her at all times, as ſuch, this none will aſſert, or it muſt deſcribe ſome peculiar condition applicable to ſome time only, but that is not either; for, if it were ſo, then the privileges ſpoken of this ſtate of the church, could not be applied at all times to believers; but they are applied at all times to believers under any croſs, for their encourgement, therefore it ſetteth out no peculiar ſtate of the militant church, and ſo by conſequence none at all.

Although it ſhould be ſaid, as ſome do, that this will not prove that theſe promiſes are not to be fulfilled on earth, but only that then all ſaints that ever lived ſhall partake of them: and therefore an author of late, maketh uſe of this ſcripture to prove the reſurrection of all the ſaints before the day of judgment, unto an happy condition upon earth; for, ſaith he, this here ſpoken of is to be fulfilled on earth; but this belongeth to all overcomers, to eat of the tree of life, &c. Therefore all overcomers muſt be raiſed and brought to the earth to partake of it. This, I ſay, will rather confirm our argument than elude it. For, 1. That conſequence of his goeth upon the ſuppoſition that this belongeth to the church on earth; which we deny: theſe who aſſert otherwiſe would look that they ſtrengthen not ſuch a conſequent. 2. Seeing theſe happineſſes are promiſed to all overcomers, are they not verified to them at all times? And can any think that ſouls, immediately after death and victory, were not brought unto this city, or made partakers of the tree of life? Is that promiſe ſuſpended till Chriſt's ſecond coming, when this church ſtate ſhall be ſet up on earth? Yea, on the contrary, doth not this ſtrongly conclude againſt it, this tree of life groweth in paradiſe, but paradiſe is heaven, to which the thief on the croſs was brought that very ſame night he died? Luke xxiii. And is he not then a partaker of the fruit of that tree? If then that was paradiſe to which the thief was admitted at Chriſt's ſuffering, then the paradiſe in which the tree of life groweth, can be no particular ſtate of the church on earth: but heaven is that paradiſe where the tree of life groweth. Compare, chap. xxii. 2. with chap. ii. 7. Again, there is no promiſe, chap. ii. and iii. made to the overcomers, but are generally ſuch as are fulfilled to the overcomer after death, and when theſe that here are given; are for that ſame ſcope, and ſome of them intermixed in the ſame places, it will be hard ſo to difference them, as that they did not partake of theſe formerly mentioned until theſe thouſand years did begin: for this paradiſe was in the thief's time, Paul's time, 2 Cor. xii. 4. Therefore ought not to be reſtricted to this.

It may alſo not be without weight to conſider, that this being the laſt thing deſcribed in this propheſy, upon the back of the church's temporal difficulties, and alſo agreeing in itſelf well to heaven, that it is more ſuitably applied to it than to any other condition, this being the great reſult of all the church's former trials; and it is more comfortable to have the narration of her eſtate, at the deſcription of her eternal happineſs, than at any other period whatſoever, ſhewing, that God's care of his people ſhall continue till they be in heaven, and ſo concludes, becauſe their condition is eternal.

Although I mind not to inſiſt on the objections, but to leave them to the opening of the words following, and their ſeries; yet, conſidering that ſome do alledge many things for the contrary opinion, I ſhall ſay two words in reference to two ſorts of them.

1. Learned Mede goeth about to cotemporate this ſtate of the church here with the ſeventh trumpet, chap. xi. or, as he ſpeaketh, with that interval which is to be betwixt the beaſt's deſtruction and the end of the world. But, 1. There is a twofold miſtake in the very riſe of this Synchroniſm, 1. That it ſuppoſeth the ſeventh trumpet to preſuppoſe the utter abolition of the beaſt, and ſo only to cotemporate with the ſeventh vial, of this was ſpoken, chapter xi. laſt verſe and 20. lect. 4. The ſecond miſtake is, that it ſuppoſeth this new ſtate of the church to ſucceed immediately upon the beaſt's overthrow, which it doth not till the dragon be taken and caſten where the beaſt was before him, as in the former ſeries, chap. xx. appeareth. Again, beſide this, the grounds upon which he buildeth this Synchroniſm, will not ſuſtain it. 1. Note this, that the bride here is the ſame with chap. xix. 6, 7, &c. Becauſe ſhe getteth the ſame

name, therefore is this cotemporary with that; for though it may be the ſame church, yet will it not follow, that it is the ſame church ſo conſidered, and at the ſame time, becauſe it getteth the ſame name: certainly Chriſt's church at any time on earth, is his bride, and ſo is ſhe at the day of judgment, Eph. v. 27. &c. Yet, it will not follow, that where ſhe getteth theſe names, ſhe is ſtill to be taken as militant, more than we might argue, that church, chap. xxi. is the triumphant bride, therefore ſo is that, chap. xix. 7. The ſame will anſwer the ſecond argument alſo, which ſaith this is called the *holy city;* but, chap. xx. verſe 8. the *holy city* is compaſſed after the thouſand years; therefore this *holy city* was before that time. This will prove, indeed, that there was a church then, or that the church, now glorified, did at ſuch a time ſuffer, and was encompaſſed, for there is ſtill but one bride, one catholic church and family in heaven and earth, Eph. iii. But it will not prove, that the church, as here conſidered, was put to ſuffering: yea, there ſeemeth to be expreſs difference, this is not only Jeruſalem, or *the holy city* that is the bride, but it is *new Jeruſalem*, to diſtinguiſh it from what it was formerly, ſuch a city as cannot be compaſſed; therefore are its gates never ſhut; ſuch a city as no enemy can moleſt, or no dog can approach unto, and that not for a thouſand years only, but for ever: all which are certainly to oppoſe it to the church's militant condition formerly expreſſed. The other two grounds which he addeth, are ſuſpected by himſelf. Neither can any think, that becauſe, chap. xvi. 17. it is ſaid, *it is done*, which words are again repeated, chap. xxi. 5, 6. therefore they belong to one time, it is rather thus, chap. xvi. 17. It is ſaid to be done, becauſe near the conſummating, that ſeventh vial bringing with it the end, chap. xxi. 6. becauſe actually conſummated. His laſt preſumption, becauſe its one of the angels of the vials that ſheweth it to John, can conclude nothing, except we ſay, that God could not make uſe of an angel to ſhew John his church triumphant as well as militant: and if this be concluſive, it may plead to have it cotemporary with any one of the vials as well as this; for no particular vial is mentioned: yea, it is like, all this propheſy being ſhown to John by one angel, chap. i. It might therefore plead for a cotemporineſs amongſt all the parts of it; but himſelf doth not lay weight on it.

A ſecond word is to ſuch as think it belongeth to the Chriſtian church after the Jews converſion, becauſe of the expreſſions that are made uſe of in it. I ſhall not inſiſt on all, (leaving particulars to their proper place) but ſay, however this be applied, it is certainly not literally to be taken; and therefore, that the *kings bring their glory to it*, &c. Is not to be underſtood of temporal glory, more than by gold or precious ſtones we muſt conceive a material building, becauſe ſuch matter is mentioned. If therefore the expreſſions muſt be figuratively taken, and may as pertinently be applicable to heaven as to the church militant, we are to conſider to which they are to be applied by the ſcope and other arguments in itſelf, whereof we have ſpoken, and by which we are content that it be determined. And therefore we ſay, that the like expreſſions in the prophets are not to be made equipollent to theſe here, except it be clear that they aim at one ſcope; for it is not words and expreſſions that we conclude from, but from many things put together, as is ſaid: for, although the prophets, here and there, dropped ſome ſuch expreſſions, to hold forth the excellency of the goſpel adminiſtration before it came, beyond what then was; yet is there in any of them ſuch a full and heavenly deſcription put together as this? Or can any future eſtate of the goſpel church beyond what was in John's time be looked for, which will exceed it as far as the goſpel church doth the Jewiſh, that John ſhould go ſo far beyond their manner in the deſcribing of it? And we are ſure that the application thereof to heaven, hath with it a far more convincing impreſſion on the hearts of the readers, as finding therein a more comfortable reliſh for their refreſhing, which another application would mar, beſides, that ſtraining of it, will hardly be eſchewed, by ſo carrying on the application thereof.

We come now to ſpeak of the firſt general deſcription of heaven that is ſet down in more general ſteps, yet exceeding ſignificant, to verſe 9. 1. What John ſaw, verſe 1. And, 2. Then what he heard, and was told of for confirmation of the firſt, in the reſt of the verſe. Both tend to ſet out this happineſs of the ſaints eternal condition.

The firſt thing he ſaw, is *a new heaven, and a new earth.* 2. A proof that it is ſo, or a reaſon why it is *new*, is given, becauſe *the former was paſſed away.* 3. It is particularly noted, *there was no more ſea.* That this relateth to the great change

that ſhall be by fire on all the world, we take for granted, as being a thing following the great judgment and making way for the ſaints eternal bleſſedneſs. It is the very former change, mentioned, chap. xx. verſe 11. which ſheweth, that this is the continuation of that narration: as if one aſked what followed then, when the heavens and the earth paſſed away? I ſaw, ſaid he, a new heaven and a new earth; for the firſt heaven, and the firſt earth, &c. are paſſed away, whereby the ſucceeding of this to the former is clear. There are three particulars here to be enquired in, 1. What this paſſing away of the *heaven and earth is* ſucceeding to the former, and therefore not cotemporary with it, which is here called the firſt heaven in reſpect of that which followed. 2. What this new *heaven and earth is*. 3. How it is ſaid *there was no more ſea*. Of theſe we are not curiouſly to enquire: but ſeeing it is a part of God's word given for conſolation to believers, we ſhall ſoberly aſſert what we think truth in this.

Therefore we ſay, 1. That theſe words ſpeak of a change (even on the univerſe itſelf, literally ſo to be taken) and that ſame which is mentioned by Peter, 2. Epiſt. ii. 13. where, when he hath ſpoken of the diſſolution of the world by fire, (which by the ſchoolmen is called *ignis conflagrationis*) he addeth as a conſolation, *but we look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs*, of this doth the preſent place ſpeak: where, on the by, we ſay, it is wonderful to us how learned men, as Mede in his treatiſe *de oikoumene mellouſe* ſhould apply that place of Peter, to a condition of the church on earth, ſeeing there this new heaven and new earth is expreſly ſaid to follow the earth that now is, and that after it is diſſolved by fire, is there a church to be in the world after that diſſolution? and whereas he faſteneth that expoſition upon that place of Peter from Iſaiah lxv. and lxvi. we conceive it were fitter to expound that place of Iſaiah, as the obſcurer, by that place of Peter, as that which is more clear, and ſo both to ſpeak of the church's eternal condition properly after theſe elements ſhall be diſſolved, if it be neceſſary to apply both to one thing.

2. This ſuppoſeth a great change, ſuch as ſhall put all in a far other ſhape and frame than now they are in; this cannot be queſtioned; how far and in what manner, is only diſputed: for, that all muſt be deſtroyed and burnt with fire, is granted by all, and therefore juſtly what remaineth is called new.

3. We take this for a certain alſo, that this paſſing away looketh but to the viſible heavens, air, earth and water, and doth neither extend to that bleſſed manſion of the elect ſouls (called *Caelum Empyreum*) or kingdom prepared for them, nor yet to the place of torment, where damned ſpirits and reprobates are for ever to ly under the wrath of God: for, 1. That place of joy, it is ſaid to be prepared from the foundation of the world for them. Matth. xxv. Which expreſſion prepared, being compared with Heb. xi. ver. 10. doth not only hold forth a moſt excellent glory, and ſingular exquiſite workmanſhip, for which cauſe God is ſaid to be the builder and maker thereof, *techinites*: not elſewhere applied to him in reference to any other piece of his work, as having given a ſpecial proof of his admirable art and ſkill in that; but alſo doth aſcribe the ſame to its firſt creation, which admitteth not of any intervening change. Again, this being the manſion of glorified ſaints, and the ſame heaven unto which all the elect will be gathered at the reſurrection, and ſtill ſpoken of in ſcripture as one and the ſame; and it being fully glorious for their ſatisfying happineſs in the enjoying of God's preſence therein, we can apprehend no change incident thereunto, beſide that is called eternal, 2 Cor. v. verſe 1. In oppoſition to other things that are called temporal. Neither can there be any effect of ſin, or of the curſe ſuppoſed to have any influence on that bleſſed manſion. And therefore it not being, as other creatures, made ſubject to vanity, no unclean thing entering there, there can be no neceſſity of purifying it, or making ſuch a change on it, as on the reſt. 2. For hell, it is alſo ſaid to be prepared for the devil and his angels, wherein alſo many reprobates are before this laſt judgment as by the parable of the rich glutton is clear, Luke xvi. therefore it is not a new hell they go unto that day, more than a new heaven. Neither can any end of renewing hell be given, it being no way to be bettered (as other creatures are by this change) except we ſay, as Aquinas and the ſchoolmen, that this conſummation putteth every thing in its perfection, and doth ſo to hell alſo, by tranſmitting the droſs of all creation, devils, reprobates, death, &c. unto it. But this confirmeth what we ſaid.

4. We take it for granted, that there is not a full annihilation of this univerſe by this change, ſo that there ſhould be nothing after it, but heaven and hell; but a change only it muſt be, though a wonderful great change. This all the places, that ſpeak of a new heaven and a new earth, do confirm, as ſucceeding in the room of the former. Beſide, the phraſes holding forth this change, will import but a change and no annihilation, as will appear: yea, this exception, that there ſhall be no more ſea, confirmeth it, for it ſupponeth ſomewhat more to befal it than the heaven and the earth, which could not be if the annihilation of all were abſolute.

5. The queſtion therefore lieth mainly in this, whether that change be ſubſtantial, ſo that theſe heavens and this earth being removed, there are new heavens and new earth again created: or if that change be but in reſpect of qualities, as it is with the body of man, which is raiſed the ſame, as to its ſubſtance; yet ſo as to its qualities, it may be called another for its ſpiritualneſs, purity, glory, incorruptibleneſs, &c. (I mean of the bodies of the elect) even as in that compariſon uſed, 1 Cor. xv. The corn that groweth up is called another grain than that which was ſhown, in reſpect of its accidents and appearance; ſo may this earth be called a new earth in theſe reſpects. We conceive this laſt to be truth, that as the heavens and earth are not ſubſtantially changed, nor annihilated, ſo the new earth and heaven ſucceeding, are the ſame for ſubſtance, but for nature more ſtable, for beauty more glorious, for uſe free from the abuſes ſinful men put them unto, and from the effects of the curſe put upon them for man's ſin, they are altogether freed and ſet at liberty from theſe. Therefore, Acts iii. 21. it is called *the time of the reſtitution of all things*.

For confirmation whereof, we may conſider, 1. Theſe places wherein this change is moſt expreſly mentioned, as Pſal. cii. 8. 16. with Heb. i. 10. *They ſhall periſh, but thou ſhalt endure; yea, all of them ſhall wax old like a garment, as a veſture ſhalt thou fold them up, and they ſhall be changed.* Which words bear out, 1. A total overturning of heaven and earth, as to its outward frame: yet, 2. That upon the matter, in its ſubſtance, it is but a change, but ſo univerſal and great, as maketh it not to be then what it is now. A ſecond expreſſion, is, 1 Cor. vii. 31. *The faſhion of this world paſſeth away*, the word is *Chiema*, uſed to ſet out the change on our bodies, Philip. iii. 21. whereby he would ſeem to hint, that this change is more on its outward appearance, than on its ſubſtance. A third place moſt plain and full is, 2 Pet. iii. verſe 10, 12, and 13. *The heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat*, &c. See alſo, verſe 5, 6, 7. where the deſtruction by fire is compared with that which went before by water; where, 1. It is to be gathered, that that fire melteth the elements, and conſumeth them not, even as a goldſmith doth with metal that he hath a mind to put a new form or mould upon. 2. That out of this reſulteth the new heaven and earth as a refined lump, from which the droſs is taken away. 3. That as there was no ſubſtantial change by water, ſo neither by fire, though, in that reſpect, it is called the *old* world, and the other the world that *now is*, only that made the change to the worſe, this of fire to the better.

For a ſecond confirmation, we would conſider that famous place, Rom. viii. 19, 20, 21, 22. where the ſcope purpoſely is to prove the glorious condition the ſaints have to expect after this, and that ſuch, that even ſenſeleſs creatures wait and long for, as being to be made partakers of it at the general manifeſtation of the ſons of God; where obſerve, 1. That by *creature*, in the ſingular number, verſe 19. and 20. is underſtood the univerſe, as contradiſtinguiſhed from the elect, and ſuch a creature as by the ſin of man is made ſubject to vanity, and ſo is not to be underſtood of the whole creation ſimply, as certainly neither of angels, nor of the ſeat of the bleſſed. 2. That man's ſin had had much influence on the curſing of this creature; partly, with barrenneſs, tempeſts, &c. contrary to its firſt nature; partly, by making it the theatre where much ſin, and many changes have been acted; partly, by abuſing it againſt the end appointed by God to our vain ends. 3. That there is a time of delivering God's ſons from the bondage of ſin they ly under fully. 4. That the creature here mentioned, is to be fully delivered from the effects of ſin, and the curſe alſo; therefore, 1. It is ſaid to be *ſubdued under hope*, not for ever. 2. It expecteth that, and groaneth for it, not as if it were ſenſible, but by a natural inclination to it, and this is ſo ſure, as if it had knowledge, it would groan:

ſo it is ſaid, *The high-ways mourn*, Lam. i. 4. 3. Becauſe verſe 21. it is expreſly ſaid, that it is to be delivered from bondage, and to ſhare of that liberty of the ſons of God; and as their change is not ſubſtantial, but qualitive, from the worſe to the better; ſo ſhall it, in ſome proportionable ſuitable manner, be freed from changes, corruption, &c. and be in an other way glorious. Theſe excellent privileges waited for by the creature, cannot conſiſt either with annihilation or ſubſtantial change, but with a qualitive mutation far to the better, tho' we cannot in every thing ſatisfy our curioſity about it, neither ſhould we aim at that.

If any aſk, what can be the uſe of this earth? or, to what end it is, ſeeing Peter ſaith, righteouſneſs is to dwell in it. *Anſw.* It is enough that God maketh it for his own glory, which was the end he made all things for, Prov. xvi. 2. Are there not many things now made, whereof we cannot give the uſe, poſſibly, many parts of the world never yet inhabited? Or, may there not be many reaſons which we cannot now tell, tho' we will know in that day his deſign in that? Again, are there not many members in man's body, who is raiſed with difference of ſex, and yet who can tell the uſe of them, only God thinks it meet, there being then no marrying nor eating, men living like angels? But, 3. Will it not evidence God's power and greatneſs, and be a ſtanding monument of that? And will it not be ſome trophey of the full and final abolition of death, when the effects of it, as to the creature, are taken away? which, it is like, would never have periſhed either by fire or water, had not ſin come in and unwilling made it to be ſubject, therefore ſome way it is meet, that it ſhould alſo be freed.

The laſt obſervable thing in the great change of the world, is, that *there was no more ſea:* for underſtanding this, we premit, 1. That ſea is not allegorically or improperly to be underſtood for troubles and ſtorms, which then the world is to be free of, tho' that be a truth. But the ſea here, muſt be underſtood properly, as the earth and heavens in the word before, it being that ſea which is a part of this univerſe. 2. It would ſeem, that to ſay, that the ſea were new alſo, would not agree, there being ſome peculiar thing ſaid of the ſea in its paſſing, more than is ſaid of the earth and heaven. 3. Yet hardly can it be ſaid, that the fire of conflagration ſhall deſtroy all the element of water, and ſo dry up the ſea, becauſe there is now no uſe of it: for, it may be ſaid, 1. That there is no uſe of the earth either. 2. That that conflagration purgeth the elements, but annihilateth them not, but bringeth them into their perfection, as it doth all the world, a great part whereof is the element of water. We ſhall without inſiſting, lay down three ways how we may take the words, 1. *There was no more ſea*, becauſe by that fire all the elements are melted, and made to run together, as it were, in one lump; and ſo there is all that was, but not diſtinctly ſea, from earth, but altogether; that world to come being a reſult of their melting and intermixing one with another, when all of them are purified. 2. But becauſe the heavens and the earth are looked on ſtill as diſtinct, it will be hard to confound the water, and the earth, and heaven, tho' it may be probable. It is ſaid, that by ſea, is not meaned the element of pure water, but that body of ſalt mixed waters, ſeparated from the earth, and put in bounds by itſelf: which differeth alſo from other waters, and hath a moving fleeting nature, as it is the ſea uſeful for commerce amongſt men. The ſea thus underſtood, ſay they, is no more: not that all waters are dried up, but this ſea is purified, that it is no more ſea, having the properties, uſes, and differences, which now it hath from other waters; and to this purpoſe do they make uſe of Gen. i. where mention is made of waters, before ever there was a ſea. And ſo they make the taking away of ſea, not to be an annihilating of waters ſimply, but the reducing of the ſea to the original nature, if not to the place, of the firſt waters, ſo that it is not now ſea, as by that firſt appointment of God, Gen. i. 9, and 10. it was. 3. It may be underſtood thus, the former heaven and earth were paſſed away, *and there was no more ſea*, that is, the change extended itſelf not only to heaven and earth, but to the ſea alſo, even although folks would think it leſs probable that the ſea ſhould be altered with fire; and as they went away, yet not ſimply, but the former heavens: ſo here is to be underſtood, the ſea was no more, that is, the former ſea, but it was changed alſo. And this we think the ſimpleſt meaning, and may ſomeway be reconciled with what went before; and what is ſpoken of the ſea here, is the ſame which was ſpoken of the earth, chap. xx. 11. only the change is more palpable on it; for altho' it continue to be water, yet it continueth not to be ſea, it not being of the ſubſtance and eſſence of water to be ſea.

From this great change we may learn, 1. Not to fix too much on creatures which are paſſing, but on God who is the ſame, and changeth not, Pſal. cii. 27. It is the apoſtle's advice, 1 Cor. vii. 27, 29. Mortification is a good ſtudy, for this world paſſeth away.

2. It would preſs us to holineſs, ſeeing ſuch a trial and change will be, 2 Pet. iii. 11. *What manner of perſons ought we to be*, ſeeing all theſe things muſt come to paſs? In all godly converſation, waiting for that diſſolving. Aſſure yourſelves it will be, and where will the ſinners appear in that day?

It is much diſputed by the ſchoolmen, how the godly then living, and theſe that are again raiſed, are differenced from the wicked at that time, and what pain this fire is to them: and here ignorantly and ſuperſtitiouſly they conclude, that it ſerveth inſtead of purgatory to theſe that were living, or ſhall be at that time. But, to leave curioſity, this is ſure, 1. That the end of that fire is neither to pain, nor to fire or purge the elect, it being impoſſible that fire material can take away ſin, (except it be meritoriouſly) and that cannot be, tho' they did ſuffer; for many ſuffer then and merit not, but this is founded on the rotten grounds of ſelf-righteouſneſs. Beſide, this fire is not voluntary, therefore, according to their own principles, cannot ſatisfy; but the end of this is the changing of this viſible world, and the putting an end to time. 2. It is like, the change of the living godly will not be by this fire, 1. Becauſe if Paul were living, he would be changed, 1 Cor. xv. yet would he not, likely, ſuffer fire. 2. Their change is done in the twinkling of an eye, which cannot be by fire. 3. It is not death (for all ſhall not die) but in place of death, whereas certainly fire would infer dying, it being a material fire. 3. However, we conceive the order of proceeding at the laſt judgment, yet, it is like, that the reſurrection of the dead elect, and the changing of the living, with their taking up to meet the Lord, 1 Theſſ. iv. (if not the final ſentence on all) ſhall go before this fire, the opening of the graves, which muſt be before this fire, and the ſeas giving up of her dead implieth this; the glorified condition therefore of the elect being begun, and the ſentence having paſſed, belike, on the wicked alſo, (Chriſt thereby continuing laſt on the field, as conqueror and victor) before this fire, the elect are all without the reach thereof: for all the elect that are then living, or formerly dead and glorified, muſt be in one condition, (the bodies of the one being on the earth, as the perſons of the other are) and ſeeing it cannot be ſaid of the glorified elect, that they ſuffer fire, or are to be purged; ſo neither can it be ſaid of the other.

LECTURE II.

Verſe 2. *And I John ſaw the holy city, new Jeruſalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her huſband.*

3. *And I heard a great voice out of heaven, ſaying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they ſhall be his people, and God himſelf ſhall be with them, and be their God.*

4. *And God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there ſhall be no more death, neither ſorrow, nor crying, neither ſhall there be any more pain: for the former things are paſſed away.*

5. *And he that ſat upon the throne, ſaid, Behold, I make all things new. And he ſaid unto me, Write: for theſe words are true and faithful.*

6. *And he ſaid unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end: I will give unto him, that is athriſt, of the fountain of the water of life freely.*

7. *He that overcometh ſhall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he ſhall be my ſon.*

8. *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and ſorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, ſhall have their part in the lake, which burneth with fire and brimſtone: which is the ſecond death.*

THis is the first thing John saw, as an antecedent to the discourse following of the glory of the elect; for if all the earth be new and glorious, much more they. Now followeth more particularly, the change that is made on the church of the elect, when they are gathered together, and the world now is new, and another thing than it was, so is the glorified church new, and another thing (as to her qualities and glory) than before. After I had seen the new earth, saith he, I saw also the new church exceeding beautiful, no city, no bride so adorned on her marriage-day as she is, she is so glorious, when he getteth but a little view of her. Concerning the glorious description we would premit.

1. That it is almost all one, whomsoever or whatsoever we understand as the party described: 1. Whether it be heaven, the place of blessedness; or, 2. The glorified elect, who are blessed and adorned in this place; or, 3. The happiness and blessedness of the enjoyment of God by these elect saints in this place of glory. Certainly none of these can be excluded, this being clearly the scope to shew the good condition of all those who are written in the Lamb's book of life, opposite to the misery of those who are not written: all must be taken in, both who are thus adorned, where and with what they are made thus happy. We shall not therefore be curious to distinguish them, the scope being to shew, that the elect are in a most happy condition.

2. That this happiness is figuratively set out two ways, 1. By such things as are most precious unto men, and of greatest value, as of *gold*, *precious stones*, an *excellent building*, *a bride*, &c. though the things themselves infinitely exceed any thing they can be represented by. 2. By these things that are most precious, even to the people of God, as the *tabernacle*, *outward ordinances*, *God's presence with them*, &c. which being to them of more worth than the former, do deserve notably to illustrate, and to commend this happiness unto them.

3. That the manner also is figurative, holding forth these things in such a manner, and by such expressions, as may make them most intelligible unto men, who here are strangers to these mysteries: and therefore we are to conceive of the expressions as they conduce to this scope.

4. Hence it is not needful to enquire in every particular part of the allegory or similitude, as if it did set forth some different thing: it is enough they all concur to set out one general, viz. the excellency of this good condition: therefore are we not to understand one thing by this stone, another thing by that; one thing by the city, another thing by the bride, (tho' in a good sense it may be;) it is enough that they together shew that it is glorious; so that this city cometh down from heaven, that it hath twelve gates, and that the tree of life hath twelve manner of fruits, &c. They are but expressions accommodated to our uptaking of them, and so discovered to John in the vision, that they may be known to be more than a common city, tree, &c. that are here. They are heavenly, even as the taking of John to a great high mountain, ver. 10. is set down to make out the coherence of the allegory. It is marked, that the city came down, and he was taken up, whereby the more conveniently he might see it, which yet is not locally done, but in vision.

Particularly, there is here a city, 1. Named. 2. Described. 3. Commended. John putteth to his name here, *I John saw it*, to confirm it by such a witness, whose testimony is true, John xxi. and to make it pass with credit; he feigned it not, but saw it in vision, tho' far short of the thing itself.

1. The city is named, *the new Jerusalem*. That by Jerusalem is signified the church, is clear in scripture, for the special privileges Jerusalem had in her. There is a threefold Jerusalem in the scripture, 1. Legal Jerusalem, which long since is destroyed, and as to its ceremonies is in bondage, Gal. iv. 2. A Jerusalem that now is, (i. e. the gospel church) called the *mother of us all*, Gal. iv. 3. It is taken for the heavenly Jerusalem, or the glorified triumphant church, where God immediately dwelleth with his people, whereof that earthly Jerusalem was but a type, Heb. xii. 22. So we understand Jerusalem there, as including heaven, where angels and just men made perfect are, and the church militant, as it is the first step to this, and by which we have right to it through the covenant of grace in the church. It taketh in the elect glorified and militant; for there is but one family, Eph. iii. 15. This is called Jerusalem, 1. Because typified by the first Jerusalem. 2. Because it is the same church glorified that was before, even as it is the same world now which shall be then. Only it is called new Jerusalem, not only to distin-

guiſh it from the Jewiſh Jeruſalem, but even from the Evangelic, which is called the *holy city* before, chap. xi. but not the *new city*. It is *new Jeruſalem*, as the *earth is new*, in the words before, that is, fully freed from all corruption, and by its qualifications another thing than it was, though as to the perſons the ſame, yet now perfectly glorified and glorious, another ſort of church then, not now, though the ſame church, yet now preſented, without ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, Eph. v. 27.

The ſecond part, is its deſcription; it is ſaid to be *coming down from heaven*. This ſuppoſeth no local mutation of the place deſcribed, but the excellent nature and quality of it, (whether place or perſon) that ſuch a city was never on the earth, it was a thing that was of a heavenly original; therefore, Heb. xii. 22. called *heavenly:* for, to be in this city, ſuppoſeth aſcending, and is all one with having Chriſt's new name written on them, which is heavenly glory, as appeareth, chapter iii. ver. 12. This *coming down*, is either generally to ſhew that it is heavenly; 1. It riſeth not out of the earth, no, not this new earth, it hath a more glorious riſe. Or, 2. So it appeareth to John as deſcending, that he may ſee it: yet, as would ſeem, it was ſtill high; therefore needeth he to aſcend, ver. 10. to ſee it. Both which are but to clear this, how John here ſaw the heaven; it deſcended, and I aſcended, would he ſay, to ſee it, though it be in viſion. 3. It may be ſaid *to deſcend*, not as to have its abode upon earth, but as looking to the church in its firſt preſenting before God at that day, as it is, Eph. v. 27. he ſo expreſſeth it, as beholding all the ſaints and glory in heaven deſcending, (it being otherwiſe impoſſible to conceive of heavenly things) as it were, like a *bride* on the great marriage-day; and, poſſibly, it may relate to Chriſt's coming with his ſaints to judgment by a local deſcenſion at the diſſolation of this earth. But, as we ſaid, the expreſſions are not too much literally to be ſtrained.

This *deſcenſion*, or *coming down*, is alſo, chiefly, for its commendation: that, 1. It is of God's building and dreſſing, it cometh from him. 2. It is to be a conſtant dwelling to men, (as the firſt voice cleareth, ver. 3.) as if it did deſcend to them, they ſhall have heaven for earth: that ſhall be the exchange.

The third thing is, the commendation of this city: it is, 1. Called *a holy city;* for now the ſpirits of juſt men are made perfect, and ſo are their bodies; and no unclean thing entereth here, but ſuch as are holy. Jeruſalem alſo is ordinarily for God's preſence and worſhip in it, called the *holy city;* much more may heaven be for that reaſon.

The commendation more particularly is, that *ſhe is prepared as a bride adorned for her huſband:* ſhe is right every way, and excellent in her glorious apparel and new clothes, braver than any bride that ever was, as having a more excellent huſband than any, yet that is not all. Before ſhe was a preparing, now ſhe is prepared, and fully made ready; formerly there was calling to the marriage-ſupper, but here the bride is brought to her huſband. In a word, now ſhe is fitted in a ſtately manner, ſuitable to the bridegroom, who now is not the wooer, but her huſband. And all theſe adornings are heavenly, ſuch as ſhe from heaven bringeth with her, and he hath put on her. And there is nothing wanting that may adorn her, and, as it were, her marriage-day being come, not a wrong pin is in her. The general keepeth the ſcope of the ſimilitude fully, ſhe is, as Pſal. xlv. 14. *brought unto the king in raiment of needle-work:* which is ſpoken of this ſame glory, when the bride, fully glorified, ſhall be made ready to enter the King's palace. And this new church being diſtinguiſhed from this new world, and not the ſame, (as it would be, if it were to be underſtood on earth) but ſucceeding to that change, we may clearly ſee that it is not that here, but that ſame, chap. iii. ver. 12. which is more particularly afterwards inſiſted on.

This glorious ſtate of the elect, and the ſolace which they enjoy in this happineſs, being diſcovered in a little glance to John's view, followeth now a further confirmation thereof by two voices to his ear. The firſt is general, out of heaven, from ſuch as knew beſt; the ſecond from God himſelf, or the Lamb, verſe 5, &c.

The voice is firſt deſcribed; then the matter ſpoken is ſet down, as of more credit from ſuch a voice. It is a *voice*, for its diſtinctneſs and intelligibleneſs, not confuſed, like thunderings, or waters, but that which he heard was plain to his ear, as that which he had ſeen was to the eye. It will take up all ſenſes to diſcern heaven rightly, and there is happineſs there to delight them all. Beſide, one ſenſe is more eaſily deluded than two; here there-

fore both by ſeeing and hearing John beareth witneſs. It is called a great voice, 1. To ſhew that it is a concerning matter that is expreſſed. 2. To ſhew that it is no ordinary herald that crieth it: and therefore men would be ſtirred up to hear and believe what is ſpoken concerning heaven. 3. It is from heaven, becauſe only thoſe are beſt acquainted with the glory thereof here mentioned. Beſide, if there be joy in heaven at the converſion of a ſinner, much more when the marriage is ſolemnized; it would ſeem to relate to that.

2. The matter beginneth with a *behold*, for the former reaſons. It is a wonderful thing to be obſerved by all, that ſuch a nearneſs ſhould be betwixt God and men. Hear, obſerve, believe, and wonder. The matter ſetteth out the happineſs of the ſaints two ways, 1. In their poſitive happineſs and good condition. 2. In their freedom from all difficulties.

Their poſitive happineſs is ſet out under the moſt excellent ſimilitudes and promiſes of happineſs that Iſrael had. Now, all theſe are fulfilled, becauſe heaven cannot be ſet out of itſelf, therefore theſe two ways it is ſet out to us, to bring us in love with it. 1. To our eye it is repreſented under the types and ſimilitudes of earthly things that are moſt glorious and delightſome to the eyes, as *gold*, *pearl*, *precious ſtones*, *cities*, and what men of the world are moſt taken up with. 2. To our ear and faith, or apprehenſions and conceptions, is ſet out by the things that taſte not to the men of the world, but to God's people and church, have been more excellent than any thing of the world. So that as the former is not literally underſtood, ſo neither the latter; but by theſe, as by ſteps, he elevateth us ſome way to conceive of heaven, by the *city*, *tabernacle*, *temple*, *Jeruſalem and promiſes*, which were of a more taking beauty to them than any thing elſe; and it ſheweth that heaven is not above what worldly men can conceive, but even above the reach of theſe who have faith and experience in ſpiritual things.

Anſwerable to theſe, their poſitive happineſs is firſt ſet out by the type of the *tabernacle of God with men*, that is, God's preſence ſhall be with them, as his tabernacle was a ſign of that, and a privilege to Iſrael, which others had not: ſo now what was ſignified by it, is here fully made out in truth. This, *ſecondly*, is cleared, he *will dwell with them:* they ſhall not only have ſigns, but as he dwelt in the ark as the type, ſo ſhall he indeed, dwell with men, not as a ſtranger, now and then as before, but conſtantly. 3. This is further expreſſed, *They ſhall be his people, and God himſelf ſhall be with them*, (and not the tabernacle only) *and he ſhall be their God:* which is not as if now God did begin to be their God (which as to his own, was true in all ages.) But, 1. That now God is manifeſtly known to be their God. 2. That now they reap fully the enjoyments and advantages of their right to have him their God. 3. They get now the poſſeſſion of him who, in right and title, was their portion before, they know what it is to have God their God, when he becometh all in all to them, and they are filled with his fulneſs, and ſee him as he is. It ſaith, that the fruit and ſubſtance of that great covenant-promiſe, *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people*, is never well known, nor taken up, till they be in heaven, that being the place wherein the fulneſs of this promiſe ſtreameth out to believers. It is a word that ſetteth forth the height of happineſs to be in the enjoying of God, the promiſe whereof is the great ſubſtance of the covenant here, that is given to his people in theſe words, Lev. xxvi. 10, 11. and Ezek. xxxvi. Gen. xvii. 2 Cor. vi. 18.

There is more happineſs in having God to be our God than we can believe; yet this in right may be here, and the right improving and uſe-making of this, would in a great meaſure, be heaven upon earth.

Verſe 4. The happineſs of their eſtate (as it is free from all the contraries and oppoſites of bleſſedneſs) is ſet forth, 1. Generally, in *wiping away all tears*. 2. More particularly, in removing the cauſes of theſe, as *death*, *ſorrow*, *crying*, &c. 3. In the proof of it; *for all former things are gone*, therefore theſe are done away, and the face of the church and her condition is now new. Some of theſe expreſſions are, chapter vii. borrowed from the prophets, that point at an excellent condition of the church on earth, becauſe the true beauty of the church on earth is of the ſame nature with that in heaven, (as the former promiſes do clear) that beauty of heaven is but that begun glory compleated and perfected, which is not at perfection here till it come there. But the ſcope differeth in this, that there the glory of the goſpel-church is holden forth principally after Antichriſt's begun

ruin; but here the perfecting of the ſame church in heaven after the final and full overturning of all enemies, as is clear before.

The general freedom of this happy condition, is, *that God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes:* which is ſpoken not only comparatively with their former eſtate, as it is uſed by Iſa. lx. and poſſibly chap. vii. but here it is ſimply to be underſtood. There ſhall not be in them, or any of them, any ſorrow, or cauſe of ſorrow, or weeping; but though there be tears on their cheeks, all their journey over, (which is here ſuppoſed) yet when they come to the gates of heaven no tear ſhall enter with them, God himſelf, as it were with a napkin, by his tenderneſs to them, and the fulneſs of his love, ſhall put an end to their weeping: there ſhall never be any more a tear amongſt them all; and that it is God who wipeth, &c. addeth to the conſolation.

More particularly, their freedom is ſet down in four things, ordinarily accompanying all living. 1. *Death*, there *ſhall be no death there:* which aludeth unto, or rather is the fulfilling of that, Iſa. xxv. which, 1 Cor. xv. the apoſtle maketh clearly a qualification of heaven, (and to be fulfilled after the reſurrection there,) and there only ſhall be immortality and eternal life, neither firſt nor ſecond death enter there, but both are caſt into the lake, as chap. xx. or are without this city, to which this doth eſpecially relate. 2. There is no ſorrow nor grief there: it is properly ſuch a ſorrow as is for the loſs of friends, or ſuch a croſs, when ſome good thing is taken away: There is none ſuch there; no wife in heaven bewails her huſband, or mother her child. Rachel will not weep for her children there, nor is friend ſeparated from friend there, Jonathan is not heavy to ſunder with David there, nor any man mourning for the loſs of a crown or kingdom, or houſe or eſtate, or for any loſs whatſoever. 3. There is no crying there, there are no violent or haſty ſurpriſings, (which taketh in all croſſes that bring hurt upon any) there is no invading of kingdoms, ſtorming of towns, killing or ſlaughter, or roaring of violent enemies actively doing wrong, or of poor ſouls crying out under, and paſſively ſuffering, wrongs or oppreſſions: neither of theſe are in heaven. 4. In that city there is no pain nor ſuffering, whether from external cauſes of violence, or inward infirmities of body, or challenges of the mind; the inhabitants of that land will not ſay they are ſick, Iſa. xxxiii. In a word, the body is ſo freed from corruption, as there is no external cauſe to hurt it, neither any internal tendency to any diſeaſe, but abſolute freedom from all effects of ſin; no ſickneſs is there more than death; no gout nor gravel, all theſe are removed. And, for aggravation of this happineſs, we are to underſtand theſe expreſſions ſet down, 1. As taking in all theſe things conducing to happineſs. 2. Not only is there a removing of theſe, but the contrary privileges follow, viz. quietneſs, life, comfort, joy, &c. 3. That theſe are eminently there in heaven, and only there in this degree. 4. That theſe enjoy this happineſs and life eternally and unchangeably; for now, no more death or pain or any thing of that kind, is to trouble them.

The confirmation is added in a word. *For the former things are paſſed away*, that is, all the former diſpenſations toward the church, its croſſes and ſufferings, and the manner of its fighting or being militant, theſe now are paſſed and changed: which muſt certainly be underſtood of the church's final and eternal change, 1. Becauſe theſe things (called the former in oppoſition to the church's now glorified condition) are paſſed away as the old heavens are; then this change being univerſal in all things, relateth to the full change on the world. 2. Becauſe theſe former things of death, pain, &c. are never away till the end: for if they were ſuppoſed cotemporary with the eſtate of the church during theſe thouſand years, then certainly Gog and Magog are to follow that with death and crying, it muſt therefore be after all the church's trials, and ſo after Gog and Magog, who not long preceded the end of the world. So this renewing of all, maketh an excellent change to the godly: and no more can be underſtood what the happineſs of their lot is, than that which eye never ſaw, nor ear heard, nor yet could enter into man's heart to conſider, this being every way new to men.

The ſecond voice which cometh in, to confirm the ſame things, is verſe 5. *of him that ſat on the throne*, that is the Lamb, who was judge, chap. xx. ſtiled here by the name he taketh to himſelf, chap. i. to ſhew his Godhead, *I am Alpha and Omega*, and *I will be his God*, verſe 6. and 7. he is brought in ſpeaking, 1. To confirm what is ſaid: it is God who undertaketh it, and therefore it cannot

miſs; he may be believed. 2. To ſhew the greatneſs of the thing, and concernment of it, that God will himſelf be, as it were, the preacher of it. In this confirmation there are three ſeveral ſpeeches to the ſame end. The 1. is verſe 5. *Behold, I make all things new:* Wonder not at this glorious change; for, ſaith he, I that once made all things, now I make them new, new heavens, new earth and church, &c. as to their qualifications: which all things relate to the paſſing of the former things mentioned, verſe 1. and 4. and chap. xx. 11. and ſhew that the omnipotency and faithfulneſs of Jeſus Chriſt is engaged for bringing this about for his church's comfort, and ſtrengthning of their faith in this great point.

The ſecond word, for the ſame end, is, *write, for theſe things are true and faithful.* The command is repeated, to ſhew that there is a ſingular truth in this point, he might record it, and though it be implied, men ordinarily look on theſe things as paſſing words, yet, ſaith he, they are faithful and true.

The third word is, verſe 6. The repeating this ſo often, *he ſaid unto me*, is for wakening attention, and to mind us who it is that ſpeaketh, and that every word, as a divers ſentence, is to be weighed, it hath two parts, the firſt is abſolute, bearing out the certainty of the accompliſhment of that great change, ſpoken of as it were already done, *it is done*, ſaith he, that is, old things are paſſed, and all things are made new; whatever was before promiſed is certain as done. This looketh to the end, as was cleared by the ſame word of the ſeventh vial, chap. xvi. which ſheweth the cotemporineſs of theſe events, as was then cleared.

The ſecond part of it is conditional, holding forth the parties, in their qualifications, who may expect that glory, verſe 6. and 7. and theſe who have no right to this happineſs, verſe 8. which is an uſe of the former grounds, or is drawn (to ſtir up hearers to be in love with heaven) from the offer of it on his condition, and to ſcare men at hell in oppoſition to this, by threatning particular ſorts with it. And therefore this offer is not to be looked on as to be made after this begun making of all things new, as in order of time, but as holding forth the way how to come to this happineſs (preſently as to the offer, though the happineſs be coming) and by the offer of it hereby to engage folks into it. This offer, as it pointeth out heaven as the reſult, ſo it pointeth out the way, means and motives leading and preſſing to it at all times, as the cloſe of the ſeven epiſtles, chap. ii. and iii. doth. The offer beginneth with a deſcription of him that maketh the offer, and beſide that, hath two parts. The firſt part, verſe 6. the ſecond verſe 7.

He deſcribeth himſelf as often in the firſt, ſecond and third chapters, *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.* This is to ſhew, 1. Who it is that offereth, and that he may be truſted. 2. That he ſhould not be ſlighted nor refuſed duty, tieth to reſpect what he ſaith who now ſpeaketh from heaven.

3. That as he is Alpha in the beginning, ſo now he appeareth Omega in the perfecting what he promiſed, Every part of the offer hath a promiſe of eternal life upon a condition, or to perſons ſo and ſo qualified.

The thing promiſed, verſe 6. is, *I will give him of the fountain of the water of life.* This fountain is taken in ſcripture ſometimes for the graces of the Spirit that leads unto life and begins it. John iv. 10. and vii. 39. ſometimes for the enjoyment of God, who is our life, as Pſal. xxxvi. 9. *with thee is the fountain of life:* both come well in here, but the laſt as the ſcope and great part of the promiſe, which hath its perfection in heaven. This is *water of life*, and that for the excellency and perpetuity of its refreſhing: here is a perpetual fountain, whereas not one drop is in hell.

The condition runneth in the words, 1. *I will give him:* it is a free gift, ſo is life eternal, Romans vi. 23. 2. And it is given freely, that is, without any price, and compenſations, but it is obtained without money, and whatever qualification be in the perſon thus freely begraced, it is no cauſe of this gift. Yet, 3. Thus qualified, *It is to him that is athirſt*, that this gift is given, as Iſaiah lv. 1. Athirſt is, 1. One that needeth, 2. One that is ſenſible of his need, 3. One that would fain have, as ever a thirſty man would drink, as it were, pained for want of it. 4. It is one that will take and welcome the offer on any terms, and think himſelf much obliged to him that giveth it. Hence under thirſting, (Iſaiah lv. 1. and Matth. v. *Bleſſed are they that hunger and thirſt*) is ordinarily holden forth people's fitneſs to receive, and

willingneſs to conſent to Jeſus Chriſt, as chap. xxii. 17. *Whoſoever is athirſt*, that is, as after followeth, *whoever will*, let him *come*, &c. By which we may ſee, 1. The freeneſs and largeneſs of Chriſt's offer that cannot be made broader, and laid nearer folks than by faith it is done in this, if they will receive and be willing, they are welcome. 2. The fit and qualified objects that the promiſe is made to; poor, hungry, thirſty, that may want, and yet have nothing to buy, come here, the market is free. 3. The conſiſtency, yea, the neceſſary connection of grace freely given, and the qualifications of hunger and thirſt in the receiver: for, 1. This qualification diſpoſeth them to make uſe of grace. 2. To eſteem of, and prize grace, as ſickneſs doth of him who is the phyſician. This condition of faith, thirſt, and willingneſs, &c. importeth no more on the receiver's ſide, any thing inconſiſtent with grace, than that it is ſaid he giveth freely, and without money, on his ſide; this importeth but a free receiving, as that doth a free giving.

The ſecond promiſe is large, in two expreſſions, ſetting out this happineſs, he *ſhall inherit all things:* he ſhall want no good thing, and theſe *all* ſhall be his poſſeſſion, he ſhall have God, who, 1 Cor. xv. 28. ſhall *be all in all*, infinitely ſupplying and filling the room of all the riches, honour, contentments and comforts that men can imagine; it ſhall be a greater poſſeſſion, than if they enjoyed all things: for, 1. God equivalently maketh up all, that nothing is miſſed. 2. Eminently and excellently he maketh up all, that whatever comfortable effect would be expreſſed from inheriting all things, it is much more excellently and eminently from God. This muſt be an excellent inheritance that is ſet out by ſuch an expreſſion, yet doth the thing enjoyed in heaven exceed the expreſſion, as far as the maker doth his work, and that which is infinite exceedeth what is finite; for, expreſſions cannot be gotten, adequate and ſuitable to the thing.

The ſecond expreſſion ſheweth how this is made out, *I will be his God, and he ſhall be my ſon.* This comprehendeth all: yea, it is added as an addition to all things. It is more to be God's ſon, and to have him our God, than to enjoy all things beſide to be his ſon, and ſo his heirs, *and joint heirs with Chriſt*, Rom. viii. 17. What is that, or rather what is it not? Here now is a portion; who would covet, let them covet this as the beſt thing: one day the truth of this will appear, what great bleſſedneſs is here, *when once his wrath is but a little kindled*, Pſal. ii. *ult.* O! ſet your hearts on this; it is the ſhort cut to poſſeſs and inherit all things: who in all the world ever reached to enjoy all the earth? Yet that is little amongſt all things, but a believer inheriteth earth, heaven, God, Chriſt, glory, peace, his ſoul, even all things; for God is his, (and with him all things, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.) and will he not give to him all things? Rom. viii. 32. Yea, is he not himſelf all things, as is ſaid, ſo that in heaven and earth the ſoul can wiſh no more? Pſal. lxxiii. 25. See in ver. 3.

The condition is, *overcoming:* which implieth, 1. A fight with a world of enemies and corruption. 2. A ſerious fight and conſtant war, as for life. 3. A difficult fight. Yet, 4. A victory and overcoming of all theſe enemies before there can be an obtaining of all things. This ſaith, folks will not ſlip nor ſleep into theſe excellent promiſes, and though fighting be not the meritorious cauſe of theſe, yet it is the way to them, and an antecedent going before them neceſſarily, though not the *cauſa ſine qua non* to our juſtification, yet it is ſo to our glorification.

This *thirſting*, importeth engaging and covenanting, Iſa. lv. 3. *Overcoming*, a being anſwerable to our engagements. Obſerve it then, and wreſtle ſo as ye may obtain, ſeeing ſo much dependeth on it; and happy is he that overcometh. He and every one of them enjoyeth all things, and yet none of them enjoyeth another's portion to one another's prejudice. But as men now enjoy the whole ſun and its light, and wrongeth not others by it, ſo then all ſhall enjoy God fully, as to their capacities yet ſo as there is no want to others. That infinite ocean of the Godhead being able to fill all the cups that come to it, or are caſten in it, and being ſuch that all may alſo ſwim in it when they are full, and that Sun of righteouſneſs being ſo clear as to ſhine on all, and to make ſhining all the eyes that ſhall behold him.

The qualifications, to ſay ſo, of theſe excluded on the other part, are ſet down, ver. 8. And we conceive for theſe ends, 1. To preſs the receiving of the former offer, from the ill of miſſing it, which is the main ſcope. 2. To ſhew that every one overcometh not, and ſo cometh not there. 3. To ſhew who overcometh not, viz. theſe that ly

under the practice of ſinful luſts as here: by theſe ſorts underſtand all other ſinful wretches lying in ſin, as if they were expreſſed, the moſt abominable ſorts whereof are indeed named, yet not at all to exclude others. By it we may ſee alſo, that this muſt be heaven; for theſe that get not theſe good promiſes are caſt into the lake and ſecond death. O what great odds is there between the end of ſin and holineſs! Whatever men now think, it will one day, yea, in that day, appear in its native colours.

Theſe particular ſteps or ſorts of ſins, (viz. eighth) are mentioned, to ſhew, 1. That there is but one way to glory, but many ſins whereby men paſs to deſtruction. 2. That by the ſetting down of theſe more particularly, the happineſs of heaven, and the qualifications of theſe who enter it, may be the more conſpicuous, being put together.

The firſt ſort of ſinners that is excluded, is the fearful, or coward, oppoſite to the former fighter and overcomer. It is not theſe who are feared to come ſhort, Heb. iv. 1. nor theſe that fear to ſin, and deſire to prevent it, Heb. xi. 7. nor ſuch that fear that their faith be not good, or that they be preſuming, as the woman, Mark v. 33. But ſuch as, 1. Dare act nothing for Chriſt, are cowards, and not valiant for him, though not directly againſt him, ſuch as fearing them that can kill the body, Mat. x. ſway with every corrupt time, as the beaſt, Magog, &c. and cannot fight againſt them to any hazard, but forſake Chriſt. 2. Such as are feared to fight againſt luſts, and never appear againſt them in the field: the weak heart, Ezek. xvi. is evil, ſuch a fear as the evil ſervant had, Matth. xxv. 25. which maketh men lazy in holy duties, and trading for Chriſt, as if they were afraid of them; the ſluggard ſaith, there is a lion in the way, this is he who ſhifteth duty. 3. Such as dare venture to ſuffer nothing for Chriſt, as the worthies did, Heb. xi.

The ſecond ſort is unbelievers, not properly or only infidels, much leſs theſe who are of a weak or little faith, that is mixed with doubting, and want peace: but ſuch as never received the free offer of Chriſt's grace indeed, whatever their profeſſion was; that never did flee from the covenant of works to reſt on Chriſt for ſalvation. Theſe are, John iii. 36. condemned already: and this unbelief ſhall condemn as much as any breach of the law, in that day it will condemn that ye believe not according to that command, 1 John iii. 23. as to be a murderer, to be a witch or warlock.

Queſt. How differeth it from weak faith? *Anſw.* Weak faith hath a ſure ground, but a weak grip of it: therefore it is feared for it: but unbelief hath a weak ground, but thinketh its grip ſure, therefore it is not troubled. 2. Weak faith hath much fear of unbelief, Mark ix. 24. and would be rid of it: this unbelief is willingly, and ſo wreſtleth not againſt unbelief, but againſt doubting and fear, leſt its ſecurity be marred. 3. Weak faith is clear of its own need and Chriſt's fulneſs; but its weakneſs is in its peace, or its gripping of him, or biding by him: and as to the fruits of faith, it findeth theſe weak, to ſay ſo, but unbelief is clearer of its peace than of its need, &c. and whether we take unbelief as a failing on the right hand by preſumption, or on the left by deſpair, both are unbelief, and oppoſite to faith in Chriſt, and are excluded here.

The third ſort are abominable, who by ſins againſt nature have made themſelves vile: now theſe are reckoned with: ſuch were theſe in Sodom, and theſe, Rom. i. 26, &c.

The fourth ſort are murderers, which taketh in all who wrong their neighbours in thought, word or deed, eſpecially the perſecutors of his people.

The fifth ſort are whoremongers, whereby all who are given to any filthineſs, ſecret or open, of whatſoever ſort, are underſtood, if it were but in a look.

The ſixth ſort are ſorcerers, ſuch as more directly renounce God, and take them directly or indirectly to the making uſe of the devil in the place of God: whereby we may ſee, that there is ſuch a ſin, as well as there is murder and adultery.

The ſeventh ſort are idolaters, whether againſt the firſt command, as heathens; or the ſecond, as falſe worſhippers; or more ſubtilly advancing creatures, as do the covetous, they are in this roll.

The eighth ſort are all liars, in their words or carriage counterfeiting in hypocriſy towards God, as Pſal. lxxviii. 35. or deceiving or diſſembling towards man, Coloſſ. iii. 10. all go together to the lake ſpoken of, chap. xx. that is their lot, in oppoſition to the lot of the elect here deſcribed: under theſe ſorts all are comprehended who live and die in ſin:

As, 1. Thoſe ſins of omiſſion in falling or hiding back, as the fearful. 2. Againſt the

goſpel, as the unbelievers. 3. Againſt nature, as the abominable. 4. Againſt the law, as the others, and that whether againſt the firſt or ſecond table, in deed or word. Their lot is dreadful, *They are caſten into the lake, &c.* Then, 1. Is there not great odds between heaven and hell? Is it not good to be in heaven, and ill to be in hell? 2. Muſt not all of you be eternally in the one or in the other? 3. Is it not alſo certain, that folks muſt go to them ſeverally, according to theſe qualifications of overcoming or lying under ſin, and that theſe are not ſeparated, but heaven and holineſs, hell and ſin go together? Then, what are the moſt of you doing? Are not theſe the words of him that ſitteth on the throne? Why then make you not for heaven, and ſo for more holineſs as neceſſary to be there? Have ye reſolved to diſpenſe with the loſs of heaven? Can ye abide hell and the company of devils for ever? What, is there any choice here? Why halt ye between heaven and hell, as if there were any equality betwixt *all things* and *nothing*, no not a drop of water, betwixt God with all good, and the devil and all ſorrow, and that for ever? O the ſcreeches and yells that will be in hell, whereas there is no cry in heaven! Can ye go about doubting what to chuſe here? Why then is there ſo little faith, ſo little wreſtling and holineſs? Know ye not what dependeth on the event, and can ye abide to loſe it, yea, to hazard it, or to be ſecure while it is ſo? How can ye ſleep and eat your bread without ſorrow? What promiſe can ye comfort yourſelves in? None ſpeaketh good to you, what threatening can ye ſhift, while ye ſhift holineſs? Do not all ſpeak as pronouncing your eternal excommunication from God, while ye abide under the curſe as ye are? What example have ye of any that ever hardened themſelves, and proſpered, or lived and died under the dominion of ſin, and was happy? Is not hell full of refutations of this untruth? where are many, like the rich glutton, Luke xvi. that would ſuffer no application of hell to them in their life, and now they are ſure of it, and bid tell it to others, knowing that men ordinarily believe it not? O ſecure atheiſt, proud ſinner, that never thriſted for righteouſneſs, nor felt the ill of ſin; or thou lazy negligent wreſtler, that art afraid to fight, what will come of thee? Do ye not believe that a reckoning is coming? Do ye not ſee that holineſs and happineſs go together, and ſin and ſhame? Do not ye yourſelves think it reaſonable and juſt, that they ſhould go linked together, and that none but the holy ſhould go to heaven? What will it turn to then? Shall any other door be opened to heaven, or other promiſes be made to you, than for others? Remember what certification accompanieth this offer. It is indeed free (ſo we offer it in his name) *Ho, every one, come, &c.* But here is the certification, if ye come not, and fight not ſeriouſly ſo as to overcome, and if ye turn back or fight not for Chriſt, but like a coward deſert him, here is your doom, we pronounce it, to be caſt into the lake of fire: for, who, in this reſpect, is not with Chriſt, is againſt him, and all his enemies ſhall be ſlain before him.

LECTURE III.

Verſe 9. *And there came unto me one of the ſeven angels, which had the ſeven vials full of the ſeven laſt plagues, and talked with me, ſaying, Come hither, I will ſhew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.*

10 *And he carried me away in the ſpirit to a great and high mountain, and ſhewed me that great city, the holy Jeruſalem, deſcending out of heaven from God.*

11. *Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a ſtone moſt precious, even like a jaſper ſtone, clear as cryſtal;*

12. *And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Iſrael.*

13. *On the eaſt, three gates; on the north, three gates; on the ſouth, three gates; and on the weſt, three gates.*

14. *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apoſtles of the Lamb.*

15. *And he that talked with me, had a golden reed to meaſure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.*

16. *And the city lieth four-ſquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he meaſured the city with the reed, twelve thouſand furlongs; the length, and the breath, and the heigth of it are equal.*
17. *And he meaſured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the meaſure of a man, that is, of the angel.*
18. *And the building of the wall of it was of jaſper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glaſs.*
19. *And the foundations of the wall of the city were garniſhed with all manner of precious ſtones. The firſt foundation was jaſper; the ſecond, ſapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;*
20. *The fifth, ſardonyx; the ſixth, ſardius; the ſeventh, chryſolite; the eighth, beril; the ninth, a topas; the tenth, a chryſopraſus; the eleventh, a jacinct; the twelfth, an amethyſt.*
21. *And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every ſeveral gate was of one pearl; and the ſtreet of the city was pure gold, as it were tranſparant glaſs.*
22. *And I ſaw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple of it.*
23. *And the city had no need of the ſun, neither of the moon to ſhine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.*
24. *And the nations of them which are ſaved, ſhall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.*
25. *And the gates of it ſhall not be ſhut at all by day: for there ſhall be no night there.*
26. *And they ſhall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.*
27. *And there ſhall in no wiſe enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatſoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

WE have heard the more general deſcription of the ſaints eternal happineſs: followeth to verſe 6 of chapter xxii. a particular deſcription thereof to John by viſion; wherein, 1. Some preparatory circumſtances are mentioned. Then, 2. In itſelf it is deſcribed, to verſe 21. Then, 3. Some aggravations or commendations of that happineſs, whereby it is illuſtrated, are ſet down.

The firſt preparatory circumſtance is, that *one of the angels came to John:* whereby the inſtrument revealing is ſet down. It is like that ſame mentioned, chapter xvii. 1. Yet it followeth not from this, as was ſaid, that therefore it belongeth to the militant church: for, an *angel* generally is made uſe of, to ſhew this revelation to John, chap. i. and chap. xxii. 6. And ſo the revealing of this part of it, will but agree to the mediate manner of Chriſt's revealing to John the ſtate of the triumphant as of the militant church, but no more. And if it be the laſt of the angels of the vials, it will but ſhew that this glorified ſtate of the church doth ſucceed that, whereunto that laſt vial did make way. The *angel cometh:* it is like, by God's immediate ſpeaking, there hath been ſome diverſion in the former words, or otherwiſe.

The ſecond circumſtance is, verſe 9. viz. his call to John, to come ſee the bride, as he had made him ſee the whore, chap. xvii. *Come hither, I will ſhew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.* Here the bride (*ſponſa*) and wife (*uxor*) are put together (ſhe being now brought as queen together to the king, Pſal. xlv.) whereas chap. xix. ſhe was but bride: and though the word *Gune*, both there and here, be rendered *wife;* yet here being contradiſtinguiſhed from *bride* it neceſſarily is interpreted ſo, whereas there chap. xix. it is ſpoken of as a marriage to be but ſolemnized. John ſaw a glance, verſe 2. but here more particularly he is called to it, to ſhew that heaven and happineſs are not ſeen at a ſhort view, and that men would dwell on the ſight of them. That ſhe is the *Lamb's wife*, is not the leaſt part of her commendation, when all the elect are gathered, that is, the queen, Pſal. xlv. and the church, John iii. 29. Eph. v. 29. which really is ſo; for it is more improperly that viſible churches are called *his bride*, ſeeing that the marriage is founded on an inviſible relation and tie and union with Chriſt,

The third circumſtance is the manner how John ſaw, *he carried me in the Spirit*, whereof we heard, chap. ii. 17. It is not really, but in extaſy.

4. The place where he ſaw, is, *on an high mountain;* borrowed from this, that men ſee far more and further there than in vallies, but in viſion it is not ſo, it ſheweth only this, that there needeth an aſcending, and that in the Spirit, before heaven can well be diſcerned or conceived.

A fifth is, that generally he ſhewed him *the great city, the holy Jeruſalem, deſcending out of heaven from God.* This is ſome difference made between a city and a town; *Urbs*, a town, looketh eſpecially to the walls, buildings or habitations; *Civitas*, reſpecteth the indwellers and their privileges in a common way: we take in both here. The town for that particular deſcription, to verſe 22. agreeth will to this; the inhabitants alſo, for by beholding this town or city, John ſeeth the bride the Lamb's wife who are the inhabitants: and that both are comprehended (the one as the place, and the other as theſe that dwell in it) it is clear from verſe 27. where they are diſtinguiſhed: as alſo verſe 14. chap. xxii. where the elect are diſtinguiſhed from the city wherein they enter, and alſo from the happineſs they enjoy in it, when entered. Neither is that inconſiſtent, that one type ſhould have a twofold or compoſed meaning, eſpecially tending to one ſcope, as chap. xvii. The *ſeven heads* ſignify both hills and kings. This is a great city; for 1. It hath many inhabitants and a large circuit, all the firſt born are in it. 2. For dignity, it is the city, of the *great king*. Again, it is called the *holy Jeruſalem*, as different from what it was before; its glorioufneſs and greatneſs is much in holineſs. Its deſcending is ſpoken of before: its like that in viſion it was repreſented as deſcending; for, Paul was taken up to ſee it, 2 Cor. xii. it is letten down to John. It is clear from the following words, ver. 11. *having the glory of God:* (I take it for a general commendation before he enter on particulars) that is, it had moſt excellent glory, even glory whereof God is the author, he having prepared this glory for his bride, and provided this adorning for her: by which the reaſon appeareth, whereof it is ſaid to come down from him.

In the particular deſcription, we conceive it not ſo edifying to ſpeak of the nature and properties of theſe ſtones, or of the number of twelve, uſed for and ſpoken of the gates, foundations and fruits of the tree, chapter xxii. (neither can we reach any thing ſolid or certain from theſe myſteriouſly conſidered) we take the ſcope to aim together to ſet out the glory of the elect in heaven, which under figurative terms is ſet out from many things, becauſe no one thing doth reach the ſcope, and not as if one thing were underſtood by this ſtone, another by that; but altogether ſhow, that it is moſt glorious and rich, as if made up of the moſt coſtly rare ſtones, and that in the greateſt abundance.

This happineſs agreeing to this heavenly city, is ſet out ſeveral ways, with all theſe things, in an eminent meaſure and manner, whereby men account a city adorned: as, 1. for light, which is not that which enlighteneth her, or whereby poſſibly ſhe is enlightened, (for that is not the ſun, but God, &c. as afterward appeareth) but her ſhining actively, whereby ſhe holdeth forth light, (as Matth. v. 10. *Let your light ſhine, &c.*) her ſplendor and beauty, and the glance of her glory, often compared to light, and agreeing well with that word, *the glory of God*, going before; which, chap. iv. was compared to this ſame jaſper. This expreſſeth her general luſtre, as one newly entering a ſtately town. *Firſt*, The whole neatneſs and ſplendor of it, repreſenteth itſelf to him, before he come particularly to take notice of the parts of it. That word, *clear as cryſtal*, is added to ſhew its nature; It is glorious and pure, as ſhining cryſtal, yet precious and firm as the jaſper, which was a moſt excellent gem, and uſed in *Aaron's breaſt-plate*, Exod. xxxviii. This ſplendor in general reſulteth from all the ornaments thereof put together.

In the more particular commendation, we may conſider, 1. The principal parts commended, which are uſually moſt eminent in a ſtately city: as, 1. Its walls. 2. Its gates. 3. Its foundations. 4. Its ſtreets, how they are paved. Conſider, 2. The proportionable diſpoſing of its parts in an excellent and ſuitable mould and quantity. 3. Conſider the ſeveral commendations which theſe parts get. Here indeed eminently the walls are ſalvation, and the gates praiſe, Iſa. lx. 18.

Verſe 12, 13. The firſt part commended, is the *wall, great and high:* walls are for ſecurity. Difference is put betwixt *Murus* an houſe-wall, and *Maenia*, fortifications. This by its greatneſs and height doth ſet forth the laſt, viz. the ſtrength and ſecurity of this city; no army nor enemy can make incurſion on it, ſo that the inhabitants may not only be *(ſecuri)* ſecure as Laiſh was ſecure, but *(tuti)* ſafe, (which two words in that reſpect do differ) here entereth no enemy, but all are friends. It is a kingdom that cannot be ſhaken.

2. There is the gates or ports, which are in number twelve, and have the names of the tribes of Iſrael written on them: which is to

ſignify, that tho' there be no acceſs over the walls to enemies, yet there are ports ſufficient to let in all friends, ſuch as only true Iſraelites are. Therefore they are twelve, to ſhew they are ſufficient; and the writing of the names of the tribes, ſaith, they are appointed only for Iſraelites, and that for all Iſraelites, which are verſe 27. all that are written in the book of life, of whatſoever ſtock; but no Jebuſite nor Canaanite entereth this ſtrong hold. This Jeruſalem, or, *ſight of peace*, is only for the children of the promiſe, born to Abraham's faith, and partakers of his bleſſing: and for this end are *twelve angels at the gates*, as porters or guards, keeping watch, that none paſs to trouble theſe within. There is ſuch excellent order and ſafety in heaven, there is no garriſon town like it: which as other things may be alluded unto here.

There are twelve gates, (and three of them on each quarter:) which we conceive belong to the proportionable mould of it, as it ſuiteth with the end, to let in all alike eaſily on all quarters, (as the tabernacle marched in the midſt of the tribes on all quarters, ſo there is acceſs unto heaven from all airths alike) and we ſeek no further myſtery in it; but it is proportionable, that ſuch a large city ſhould have many gates, and that there ſhould be three to each wind, ſeeing it is four-ſquare. So it denoteth the regular exactneſs and architectory of this city, whoſe builder and maker is God, in a ſingular way.

Followeth, verſe 14. the foundations: more excellent than that of Solomon's temple of cedar-wood and ſtone. It *hath twelve foundations:* this ſignifieth the durableneſs and eternity of that city, that no time can make it decay, more than any enemy can ſtorm it; it is well founded, not having one foundation only but twelve for its ſecurity.

A word is added to the foundations, (as formerly to the gates) *The names of the Lamb's twelve apoſtles are written on them.* By twelve, is underſtood all: in a word, here their doctrine which they preached is meaned, as Eph. ii. 20. where the church is *built on the foundation of the prophets and apoſtles)* which word *endureth for ever*, 1 Pet. i. 25. And ſo God's faithfulneſs ſuſtaineth heaven, that is never moved, but endureth to all eternity, according to that word and goſpel which was preached through the world by all the apoſtles: yea, the prophets and miniſters of Chriſt; but the apoſtles, for honour's ſake, are mentioned for all. And this is not inconſiſtent with heaven, to have their names on the foundation, ſeeing they are not the foundations themſelves, but the faithfulneſs of God in the preached goſpel ſhall be more manifeſt then nor now; and his miniſters in that Jeruſalem ſhall have a ſpecial dignity, as founders or builders uſe to have their names graven on the walls for their honour.

He deſcendeth more particularly, verſe 15. to ſhew the proportionableneſs and exactneſs of this city, which every way is exceeding regular, as the engine of a moſt excellent contriver or plotter can invent, or artificer can form. 1. The purpoſe of meaſuring the city, wall and gates is intimated. 2. The meaſure deſcribed, *he that talked* with him. 3. The inſtrument wherewith he meaſured, *a golden reed:* all is borrowed in general from that type of Ezekiel, when he is meaſuring out a goſpel-church, and from God's care, chap. xi. of his little church then. But here this exceedeth theſe, it is *a golden reed;* for, all is excellent here: it is but a ſimple reed in Ezekiel, and this city when it is meaſured, exceedeth that far in quantity and quality, and ſo are not one way to be applied.

What is found by meaſuring? *The city*, verſe 16. *lieth four-ſquare*, juſt always alike, (ſo proportionable and ſtrong as Fort-royal uſe yet to be built) that is, moſt fit to receive in on all quarters. 2. It is found, that the city is twelve thouſand furlongs, either all ſquare, as it ſeemeth by putting breadth and length and heighth (that is, the height of its towers) in one certain meaſure, which can be none other but that meaſuring immediately preceding. Or it is ſo much in circuit: however, it is a great city, and hereby its capacity in bounds and multitude of inhabitants, is holden fort'. with its excellent frame.

Verſe 17. The wall is found to be one hundred forty and four cubits, that is, its height and breadth is even above old Babylon or Nineveh: the particular cubit is ſet down, for there were divers, one of the ſanctuary which was large; one common, which is that of a man, from the elbow down, the angel appearing as a man, and ſo went about this with ſuch a meaſure, or cubit, as men uſe to make up a reckoning known to them, (and by this we may expound the number of a man, chap. xiii.) it is, as if John ſaid, the angel mea-

ſured by the ſame meaſure, and according to the ſame rule uſed among men. By all which, that excellent ſkill in framing heaven, and that regularity and wiſdom, which was ſhewn by God, when he made it above any other piece of his work, is holden forth, that tho' there be exactneſs in the church here, much more there. In a word, no fault can be found with any part of it, all is well ordered and contrived, and can abide moſt exact trial. This is the ſcope, and further we deſcend not.

Followeth, *thirdly*, from ver. 18. The particular commendation of theſe parts, 1. The *wall*, i. e. the out-wall circuiting all, is *of jaſper*, moſt precious and beautiful. See chap. iv. and all the city, that is, the town or walls within, *they are all of pure gold* for ſtones; and not common gold, but *clear as glaſs* for ſhining, and firm and ſolid as gold, and precious alſo. Theſe are excellent walls and houſes that are not guilded, but of gold. This for outward and inward buildings.

2. The *foundations* are commended: they are not common ſtones, but *of precious ſtones of all ſorts in abundance*. They are particularly reckoned to be twelve, ver. 19, 20. We know not the nature of them, therefore cannot ſeek myſteries in them: only, by what is ſaid of them in ſcripture, and the adorning of Aaron's breaſt-plate, Exod. xxviii. we may gather that they were moſt precious: all believers here in beauty exceed Solomon, yea, Aaron in his fineſt robes.

3. The *gates* were each of *one pearl*, ver. 21. A rare thing, a good merchant may ſell all for one of theſe, Matth. xiii. And that each gate is but one pearl, is more than if many gates were made up of more.

4. The *ſtreets*, ver. 21. or cauſeways were not dirty'd, but are *as pure gold*, as *tranſparent glaſs* for clearneſs, ſuch as the world hath not, yet is it ſhort to ſet out the leaſt thing that ſaints have there to tread upon. This is an excellent city, when gold, and ſuch fine gold, is made uſe of to pave its ſtreets. There are no foul ſteps there, no foul prints ſticking to believers heels that dwell there, which is the ſcope of it. This is a golden city, golden walls, golden houſes, golden ſtreets, who love gold may be enriched here: yet there are ſome aggravations added, the more to ſet out the glorious happineſs thereof: ſix or ſeven are in this chapter, and as many in the beginning of the next, which are additionals to the happineſs of that city, or of thoſe who are in it, and heightning the happineſs.

The *firſt*, is, ver. 22. There *is no temple there*: which looketh not only to ceremonial worſhip which was under the law, but to prefer it to the moſt glorious eſtate of the militant church, which under the ſeventh trumpet, chap. xi. *ult.* conſiſted much in this, that the *temple was opened*, whereas it is not ſo in this: for here is no temple, that is, no mediate ſerving of God, or acceſs to him, or uſe of ordinances, all theſe are done away, which is clear by the oppoſition, *the Lord God Almighty* and *the Lamb, are the temple of it*, that is, the immediate enjoying of God and Jeſus Chriſt ſupplieth all; ſaints now made perfect being admitted to a full ſatisfying ſight of him, as he is, chap. xxii. ver. 4. which, 1 Cor. xiii. is the happineſs of heaven: for, God himſelf is oppoſed here, not only to the ceremonial worſhip, but to all mediate ways of ſeeing him, or approaching to him in ordinances any manner of way. All theſe, and whatſoever is not God himſelf, is laid by. Neither is there need of theſe in that palace above.

The *ſecond* aggreging privilege is, ver. 23. that there *is no need of the ſun or moon there*; no created light in it, *the glory of God*, &c. *and the Lamb is the light thereof*. There is no created thing, no not the ſun, but God himſelf, as the oppoſition ſheweth, that is the comfort of heaven. Theſe are not needed nor miſſed, but God is all. This ſetteth forth,

1. Whereas light is a glorious creature, and ſo is the ſun, yet that here there is no need of it: For, there is a more glorious light that would darken the ſun, as the ſun doth now a petty candle. 2. That that light cometh from the reſplendent glory of God in that higher houſe, which is far beyond what creatures can imagine, though there be ſo many ſtones that are precious there, yea, ſo many angels and ſaints whoſe countenances ſhall ſhine as that ſun which we now ſee, yet that is not its light, but the glory of God and the Lamb is the light thereof. If any aſk, How God, that is a pure Spirit, can be its light? We anſwer, It is not ſo to be underſtood, as if adequately he were taken up by glorified creatures, they being ſtill finite.

But, 1. That they have a true beholding of his infinite eſſence in their elevated capacities according to their meaſure: for, this light is merely intellectu-

al; whereof more, chap. xxii. 4. 2. That there is a ſhining glory there manifeſted, (as it were, a view of his back parts, as was to Moſes, Exod. xxxiv. that made him to ſhine) which exceedeth all the glory that can be imagined, that being purpoſely letten out to make him known, as in meaſure, beyond any glorious appearance on earth. 3. The ſhining brightneſs of the Godhead indwelling in our bleſſed Lord Jeſus, ſhall be in a ſupereminent degree diſcernible, a little glance whereof was in the transfiguration, Matth. xvii. This ſhall take up and ſatisfy all eyes in heaven, even the glory of that perſon who is God, it ſhall be beyond and beſide all, like the ſun in the noon-day beſide the ſtars, when they appear in day-light, which ſcarcely, or not at all, are then diſcernible: and tho' the like phraſe in a great part be uſed, Iſa. lx. 19, 20. yet it differeth much, not only in the ſcope, that being to ſet out the beauty of the militant church, which is ſpiritual, this is that which is eternal: but alſo, 1. There is night and day, here is no night. 2. There is a ſun, but it goeth not down; here is none, nor need of one. 3. There is no word of the Lamb; here there is: yet theſe expreſſions whereby the church's beauty is ſet out, are alluded to here, as is ſaid, to ſhew not only that heaven is above gold, pearls, &c. but above what the church can here attain unto.

The third aggravation is that, verſe 24. It ſhall be the happineſs of all that ſhall be happy, therefore cannot be but glorious, for *the nations of them that are ſaved, ſhall walk in that light*, 1. There are many that ſhall partake of it. 2. They who are ſaved ſhall be admitted, and they ſhall account it happineſs to ſhare of that light, and it muſt be an excellent city which is allowed for the walk and comfort of all that ever ſhall be ſaved; when they are ſaved, they are brought here, which proveth it ſtrongly to be heaven; yea, if they were kings that are ſaved, *they ſhall bring their glory to it*, that is, 1. Forſake all glory of crowns and kingdoms in compariſon of it, it ſhall ſo far exceed their glory. Or, 2. As if all kings ſet themſelves to make one place or city glorious, and therefore ſhould make all their glory to meet, and further this one deſign; ſo this ſhall be even exceeding all, having all in it, and wanting nothing that can be for its glory, as if all things glorious had tryſted in it.

4. Its *gates are not ſhut by day, for there is no night there:* that is, no interruption of that happineſs, no viciſſitude of day and night, no fear to make the gates to be ſhut, there is but one eternal day which ſhall never end, verſe 25. There is no fear from Antichriſt, nor Gog or Magog here.

A fifth aggravation is, verſe 26. that not only what is glorious to kings, but what in all the world is glorious ſhall be brought there, as if all glory and riches make their rendezvous here, it ſhall be ſo glorious, as if no glory at all were out of it. Beſide, it may well take in that all the ſaints (which only are the glory of nations) are all brought in to it. In a word, it ſhall exceed all, as it were, they will caſt their caps at it.

The ſixth is from its indwellers, who are expreſſed two ways, 1. Negatively. No unclean thing, or what defileth, &c. ſhall enter, verſe 27. that is, no wicked perſon. 2. No wicked thing, or no wicked deed. 3. No filthy creature that is loathſome. 4. No corruption in believers, they are now without ſpot: in a word, 1. No ſin. 2. No curſe. 3. No devil, tempter, or temptation, and no corruption, for all theſe defile, and this is more than that only no wicked perſon ſhould enter. Thus it is expreſsly diſtinguiſhed from the militant church, that is hereby ſupponed to have in it what defileth, viz. ſcandalous perſons and hypocrites, here expreſſed in theſe two, *who work abomination*, and *make a lie:* and it is ſaid of all theſe, that *in no ways they enter*, by a twofold negotiation in the original *on me*, to ſhew the abſolute excluſion of all theſe, and that in the leaſt degree. Then poſitively it is told who enters, none but *theſe who are written in the Lamb's book of life*, i. e. true elect, and not appearing ſo only; yea, regenerated, perfected elect, as was cleared in the ſcope of this chapter, (otherwiſe the elect have corruption that defileth, but here now it is done away) For, 1. That phraſe, writing in his book, through this propheſy is never ſo underſtood, viz. for theſe that appear ſo, but for ſuch who are ſo indeed. 2. Seeming elect, who yet are not ſo, do make *a lie* and *defile*, therefore are here ſecluded. 3. Theſe written are oppoſed, *ut ſupra*, to theſe not written, chapter xx. 15. and therefore it muſt be underſtood of the true elect, ſeeing the others are really reprobates. 4. The Lamb's book of life is never opened until the laſt great and final day, and this admiſſion ſupponeth the opening of it, as that which only giveth the rule to make this difference, ſupponing that till this book be opened, no ſuch

diſcerning ſhould be pretended unto, therefore it is not here-away. 5. He hath keeped that book to himſelf, and hath given it to none to rule their ſentence by. 6. Do not ſome hypocrites look liker elect, than ſome of them do? And ſhall this rule exclude the one, and take in the other? and ſeeing the mentioning of this book of life here relateth to its opening, chap. xx. whereby it is made known who was in it, and that is at the laſt ſentence, this muſt therefore be at the execution thereof, and poſterior to it.

Theſe reaſons do evince, that the book of life is to be taken properly for God's election, in oppoſition to what was ſaid, chap. xx. verſe laſt, and therefore theſe who enter now, muſt be really and only elect indeed, oppoſite to the former; and no other interpretation, croſſing that, can be admitted, either ſecluding profane men, and ſuch who are not elect doctrinally from heaven itſelf, or ſuch who appear not ſo, from the church, for, 1. Thus to be written here in the book of life, is to be really elected, in oppoſition to the ſtate of the reprobate who are not written; for, all men are diſtributed in theſe two, *written* or *not written*, and a third there is not; but to expound this either of the former ways, will not make it to ſpeak of the real elect, and theſe only, therefore it cannot be admitted here. 2. Whatever this here intendeth, it is ſomething that both *de jure* and *de facto* is peculiar to this ſtate of the church, that is, it is ſuch a thing as neither ever was, in deed or event, nor was ever called for before this: for, this is a thing peculiarly differencing this ſtate of the church from all that ever preceded in this reſpect, and for that end, as a peculiar property thereof, is ſubjoined here; but neither can it be ſaid, that the key of doctrine, *de jure*, becometh ſtraiter then nor now, or that *de facto* it will ever be ſtricter than it was in the firſt primitive and apoſtolic times. Nor can it be applied to any more ſtrict exerciſe of diſcipline in reference to church-membership: for then, 1. It would follow, that there were a different rule for gathering of churches then, which we have not now, and that ſo much ſtrictneſs were not required now, which ſome will not find conſonant to the purpoſe for which they alledge this now. And, 2. It would follow, that the apoſtolic church was not ſo exact in their practice, if *de facto* that ſucceeding church ſhall go beyond them; it muſt therefore belong to the church triumphant, as is ſaid.

LECTURE I.

CHAP. XXII.

Verſe 1. *And he ſhewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as cryſtal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb.*

2. *In the midſt of the ſtreet of it, and of either ſide of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*

3. *And there ſhall be no more curſe: but the throne of God and of the Lamb ſhall be in it; and his ſervants ſhall ſerve him.*

4. *And they ſhall ſee his face; and his name ſhall be in their foreheads.*

5. *And there ſhall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the ſun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they ſhall reign for ever and ever.*

THis firſt part of the chapter, to verſe 6. continueth ſome further aggravations of the happineſs which the glorified in heaven enjoy. The firſt is from the excellency of a river that runneth thro' that city; rivers are pleaſant and profitable to run thro' cities. This city hath an excellent river: whereof we may ſay, as Pſal. xlvi. 4. *The ſtreams thereof make glad the city of God.* It is commended, 1. That it is *a river*, not a brook, ſuch as may convey commodities to it, and be uſeful for cleanſing of it, which ſheweth in the ſcope, that this city is perfectly accommodated and cleanſed exceedingly, beyond

what any river can do to any city on earth. 2. It is a *pure river*, that is, free from all muddineſs and corruption, every thing is excellent here, the fineſt that can be imagined. 3. It is a river of *water of life*, not only as from a living fountain, but as of a lively efficacy and virtue to all who drink of it; life is in abundance here, where both the fountains and river are ſuch. 4. It is *clear as cryſtal*, ſo pure and pleaſant, no river here is like it. 5. It *proceedeth from the throne of God, and the Lamb:* that is its excellency, God is the fountain thereof immediately; it is not from the temple; as Ezek. xlvii. which cometh by ordinances but from the throne, a ſtreaming of conſolation from God and Jeſus Chriſt. The conſolations and effects of the Spirit in this life, are compared to waters and rivers of waters of life, John vii. 38. which maketh ſome apply this to the Holy Spirit, which proceedeth from the Father and the Son. The general is a truth, and ſuiteth with the ſcope here, that believers in heaven ſhall be well refreſhed and ſatisfied; and that with ſuch conſolations as proceed from Father, Son and Spirit, although we inſiſt not in the particular application; Chriſt the Lamb is ſtill joined with God, becauſe the enjoying of the God-man is ſtill looked on as a great part of our happineſs.

The *ſecond* thing mentioned, is, the tree of life, ver. 2. Which doth exceedingly adorn and enrich this city. It alludeth in general to Gen. ii. where the tree of life was in paradiſe, a ſacrament of immortality to Adam, if he had ſtood; but this is a tree of life, not only as confirming their unchangeable ſtate of happineſs who are in heaven, but of its own efficacy able to bring forth life eternal, and to continue it in theſe that eat of its fruit; and ſo it differeth from all food, even manna, that men eat of here; this is an excellent tree. It is further ſet out from its place, it is *in the midſt of the ſtreet* of the city, a ſpecial ornament of the market-place. Heavenly happineſs is meant by this *tree* that groweth in the midſt of the paradiſe of God, chap. ii. 7. and chap. xxii. 14. Which maketh that we need not be anxious about particular application of the ſeveral parts. 2. It is commended, that it groweth *on either ſide of the river;* there is but one tree, yet of that proportion and extent, that its branches extend to both ſides, and the fruit is in every place to be found, which is a ſingular thing, here only mentioned to ſhew, that tho' there be a river in the city, yet by it none are divided from the fruit of that tree, it furniſheth alike eaſily all, who have all alike acceſs to it. 3. *It bare twelve manner of fruits*, that is, variety of all ſorts of conſolation: tho' it be but one tree, yet it is an orchard for variety and ſatisfaction. 4. It *yieldeth fruit every month*, it is ſo fertile for abundance; it is ever harveſt here, always there is fruit on this tree. 5. Its *leaves* are medicinal, as the fruits are pleaſant: they are *for the healing of the nations:* there is neither need of gold nor water, nor fruit in heaven, more than medicine; but all are mentioned, to ſet forth that happineſs, where there is neither mortality nor death, the tree of life preventeth theſe, nor ſickneſs, there is ſo good medicine in theſe leaves, that thoſe who live under its ſhadow, are perfectly whole by the efficacy thereof. So all the ſcope is rather to ſhew the effect that is there, viz. perfect health and happineſs, than to pitch on any particular mean of applying or bringing out theſe. Tho' if Chriſt Jeſus be meaned here by this tree, as is like it is not impertinently applied to him, ſeeing he now, being in heaven, hath this efficacy on the nations before they come there, he who healeth the nations ſhall be enjoyed in heaven; ſo it commendeth heaven to us the more, becauſe Chriſt our phyſician is there.

There are three aggravations added, ver. 3. The firſt is, *there is no more curſe*, that is, there is no effect of ſin nor wrath, nor curſed thing, nor curſed perſon, but all are fully happy; and whatever followed ſin, is ſhut out there: but *the throne of God and the Lamb is there:* the curſe was eſpecially in ſeparating from God, now by God's conſtant dwelling in that city amongſt theſe bleſſed ſaints, all the curſe is taken away, for they are inconſiſtent together, that is, his glorious preſence, as on his throne in ſtately majeſty, oppoſite to his manner of appearing on earth, which is God's footſtool, whereas heaven is his throne. The third here, is, *and his ſervants ſhall ſerve him:* his *ſervants*, that is, their ſervants, i. e. to him and the Lamb, and *him*, are here put in the ſingular number, to ſhew the unity of the Father and the Son, tho' it relateth to both. The privilege here, is, that theſe his ſervants, ſaints glorified, ſhall have place amongſt theſe that ſtand by, Zeph. iii. It ſupponeth, 1. An acceſs to his company, ſuch as angels have, who are always waiting on him, and behold his face, Matth. xviii. This is a privilege that others, who are not ſervants, have

not. 2. It ſuppoſeth a relation to him, and that an honourable relation; to be God's ſervants, is more than to be kings ſervants; yea, kings, ſo David and Moſes ſtile themſelves, Pſal. xviii. and xc. i. 3. It ſuppoſeth an exactneſs and fitneſs in them to go about theſe duties of ſervants chearfully. Theſe who here devoted themſelves to him, and engaged themſelves to be his ſervants, tho' they performed little, yet there they ſhall ſerve him, and perform it as becometh. It is the ſaints prayer here, Matth. vi. that they may do God's will on earth, as in heaven: and what happineſs would they think it to be ſome length in that? Now, in heaven that is perfected, and without declining or defect they go about it; and certainly, if it was a happineſs to be Solomon's ſervant, and a great honour, much more to ſerve God and the Lamb. There is more happineſs in active doing of holy duties, than we are aware of.

We have heard of five aggravations of this heavenly happineſs, other two do follow, verſe 4. The firſt is, *they ſhall ſee his face.* It is uſual by this, to ſet out the happineſs of heaven, as Matt. v. 8. Heb. xii. 14. 1 Cor. xiii. 1 John iii. 2. *His face*, here is mentioned, to ſhew, that the enjoyment ſhall be moſt immediate and intimate; and ſo it is oppoſite to what is attainable here, ſeeing, at moſt, Moſes got but a ſight of his back parts. This is particularly marked, to ſhew wherein their happineſs in heaven conſiſteth, it is in the immediate enjoying of God, who then ſhall be all in all.

The ſecond is, *And his name ſhall be in their foreheads;* they ſhall look like him, (ſo we underſtand it) that they ſhall be transformed into the ſame image perfectly, 1 Cor. iii. ult. and 1 John iii. 2. They ſhall partake of his likeneſs, as he prayeth, John xvii. 26. And *our vile bodies ſhall be made like his glorious body*, Phil. iii. ult. proportionably as becometh members to their head, then ſhall believers bear his name in their foreheads, and it ſhall be known to whom they belong, by the excellent privileges beſtowed on them.

Their happineſs is further ſet out, verſe 5. In four things, 1. That there ſhall be no intermiſſion of that happy day; *no night is there*, no viciſſitude or change, but an unchangeable day, they are above the ups and downs which all the three principal propheſies are obnoxious unto. 2. *They need no candle*, no borrowed or artificial light, darkneſs is removed, and *that which was in part, is done away*, 1 Cor. xiii. 10. *and that which is perfect is come*, and knowledge is at an height and perfection: ſo that tho' there be candles, or ſun or moon here, and they are needful, yet not ſo there. 3. *The Lord giveth them light*, they have light, and immediately from God himſelf, without all intervening means, then ſhall there be no miſtake of God, but in that day we ſhall know that the Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father. 4. *They reign and that for ever and ever*, not for a thouſand years but eternally, in which reſpect it is certainly oppoſed to the former, chap. xx. And this of eternity is added of ſpecial uſe in their happineſs, if it were wanting, all their other happineſs would be defective. O happy kingdom and ſtate that cannot be altered! There is no wavering to ſay that it is good to be here, kingdoms on earth have their periods, but this hath none but endleſs eternity.

To be in heaven muſt be a great happineſs, there is no life to that, with all the properties of uncontroverted happineſs.

2. To be God's ſervants muſt be a great happineſs, it is reckoned one in heaven.

3. Be comforted, O believers, in the hope of heaven, and holily long to be there; there is no night nor corruption there, the heart is ſtayed there, his ſervants ſerve him without gadding or wearying; and be the more holily ſubmiſſive: for, that endeth all complaints, and fully putteth out the life of the body of death.

We may anſwer here two queſtions, by aſſertions from theſe words in ſhort, which will further clear them.

Queſt. 1. Do the glorified behold God himſelf? How can that be, ſeeing he is inviſible?

Anſw. They ſee not his eſſence by their bodily eyes; for he is a Spirit.

2. By their underſtanding they ſee not his eſſence adequately or perfectly as it is, for he is infinite, and they even then but finite, and therefore they comprehend him not.

Yet, 3. Beſide what evidences of his glory are ſeen by created light or ſplendor about him, (as there is much of that) or what ſhineth in the man Chriſt Jeſus, who is unconceivably glorious, there is a real immediate conceiving and taking up of God, tho' not fully comprehenſive of him, or adequately unto him; becauſe ſeeing there, is oppoſite to faith and our manner of ſeeing here: and theſe phraſes,

We ſhall ſee him as he is, ſee his face; know him as we are know of him, &c. confirm it.

Beſide, every thing elſe being but created, cannot ſatisfy the ſoul without the up-taking of God himſelf, who only can ſtay the mind, and theſe created excellencies as they point him out, the knowledge of whom is the happineſs of angels, who are alſo his creatures, yet neither ſee they him bodily, nor do they comprehend him fully.

Queſt. 2. Do then all ſee and enjoy him alike, and in an equality?

Anſw. In this ſight and happineſs, conſider, 1. The object ſeen and beholden. 2. The manner or capacity of ſeeing and beholding. 3. The effects of ſatisfaction following thereupon. 1. The object of this happineſs is God and his Son Jeſus: there is one ſubject to all. 2. The manner of up-taking is different, for before men can conceive of God, there muſt be an elevating or capacitating of them by heavenly qualifications for it, and a condeſcending on God's part to ſuch manifeſtations of himſelf to their capacities, even when they are enlarged: this in glory (as here in grace) may be different, ſome more enlarged to conceive more of God, ſome leſs, yet all have done the ſame object. The third, viz. the conſolation which followeth, may be called equal in ſome reſpect: for they are all ſatisfied and filled, and can deſire no more; yet in the former reſpect there is leſs or more according to their meaſure. God, 1. Proportioning them (to ſpeak ſo) in ſeveral ſizes, then filling all; even as ſuppoſe many veſſels of divers quantities were caſt into the ſea, that ocean can fill all, and its the ſame ocean whereof they are all full; yet ſome hold more, ſome leſs: or, ſuppoſe ſome looking to a lovely object, that are more or leſs able to diſcern, tho' none be defective in their ſight. All behold the ſame object, and diſcern it to their ſatisfaction, tho' ſome ſee it more diſtinctly, yet all of them ſatisfyingly; ſo it is here in beholding God's face.

LECTURE II.

Verſe 6. *And he ſaid unto me, Theſe ſayings are faithful and true. And the Lord God of the holy prophets ſent his angel to ſhew unto his ſervants the things which muſt ſhortly be done.*

7. *Behold, I come quickly: bleſſed is he that keepeth the ſayings of the prophecy of this book.*

8. *And I John ſaw theſe things, and heard them. And when I had heard and ſeen, I fell down to worſhip before the feet of the angel, which ſhewed me theſe things.*

9. *Then ſaith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-ſervant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the ſayings of this book: worſhip God.*

10. *And he ſaith unto me, Seal not the ſayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.*

11. *He that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous ſtill: and he that is holy, let him be holy ſtill.*

12. *And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work ſhall be.*

THE body of this book and propheſy is now paſt: followeth to the end, the concluſion, which ſerveth to the confirming and commending of the whole propheſy, eſpecially of the laſt viſion. It hath five parts, 1. The angel confirmeth and commendeth what is ſaid, verſe 6, 7. 2. There is a miſtake of John's recorded, verſe 8. 3. The angel as being interrupted by that ſuperſtitious humility of John returneth, after checking of him, to go on, verſes 9, 10, 11. Then, 4. Cometh in the maſter our bleſſed Lord, to ſpeak to the ſame purpoſe, ver. 12. till ver. 20. Where, 5. John cloſeth all with a wiſh for Chriſt's coming, and the church's happineſs, as epiſtles uſe to be cloſed.

The angel doth, firſt, confirm this propheſy, ver. 6. by two arguments, 1. *Theſe ſayings are faithful and true*, the matter is ſure; for the ſayings are ſuch, as upon them we may lay weight. *They are faithful:* ſuch a commendation the goſpel getteth; and it is frequent in this book. It is added and repeated, before the cloſe (eſpecially with reſpect to the former viſion) becauſe, 1. It is of concernment to give credit to it. 2. Becauſe what is ſpoken of heaven, often amongſt men, paſſeth as a tale that is told, and getteth little credit; but however, ſaith he, theſe ſayings are worthy of it.

The second argument is, that they are revealed *by the Lord God of the holy prophets*, (it is expressly said of Christ, chapter i. that he sent his angel; and here, verse 20. that he testifieth these things: which sheweth that he is God, *who hath sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done;* the force of it is thus, they must be faithful sayings; for that same God who before revealed things to his people by his prophets (of which things never one failed) he hath now sent to reveal them by his angel, therefore they must also be faithful, as the former words were, seeing he is still omniscient and faithful who revealeth them: they are called *holy prophets*, 1. Because God made use of holy men to be penmen of his word, 1 Pet. i. 21. 2. Because the things spoken had effect, and were not lies. God is called their God, especially, 1. Because of the peculiar service and commission he put on them beside others. 2. Because of his owning their message as well as themselves.

Thirdly, The things are said *to come to pass shortly*, that is, they are not long to be suspended, therefore every one is concerned in them, before long they will be finished, but even from that time they were to begin their series.

Verse 7. He commendeth this propheſy (being compared with verse 6.) in two. 1. That it *was sent*, and by an *angel to his servants* for their behove; an argument that should put them to search into it, seeing he sent it. A second, from the happiness of these who shall make right use of it, both in *reading and keeping it*, it being profitable for knowledge and practice, yea, (compared with ver. 3. chap. i.) it saith that people read and know as much as they practise, which saying doth exceedingly commend the studying of this book in sobriety, blessedness being so oft attributed to the right searchers thereof.

The word, *Behold, I come quickly*, is thrice in this chapter repeated, and prefixed here to be a spur to study and to keep the sayings of this book: for did men walk with the apprehensions of Christ's coming quickly, there would be more study to know his will, and more conscience to practise it. This would be in all our thoughts, we may see why the things propheſied of here, and said shortly to come to pass, that is, in the same sense that Christ cometh quickly, that so men may observe them the better, and be the more watchful in reference to them.

The second thing followeth, verse 8. which is John's second mistake, wherein he had fallen before, chap. xix. 10. *when he heareth and seeth these things, he falleth down to worship before the angel that revealed them*, whereby it is clear, that hitherto it was an angel that spake to John, in the name of the Lord: and it appeareth also that John knew him to be an angel; for so, verse 6. he had called himself, who was employed in this: It is like, that as chap. xix. the glorious fight and good news of the happy estate of the church militant, getting that commendation that they were the true sayings of God, chapter xiv. 9. overwhelmed him someway there, to think more of this revealer than he ought; it is like, the same being represented to him of the church triumphant (which to him is new, and which the glory of the militant church was not) he hath been overwhelmed, as it were, with joy, and again fallen in too much admiration of the revealer (I mean the instrumental revealer) of such glad tidings. The words were opened, chap. xix. 10. There he called himself one that had the *testimony of Jesus Christ:* here is added, *he is a fellow servant of these that keep the sayings of this book*, to shew, that not only John, but all the believers have one master with angels, and therefore on this ground, the least of them owe no worship to angels, but to the master, as the opposition cleareth.

Where again it is observable, 1. That it is a special note of a believer to keep the sayings of this book. 2. That the more John putteth honour, which is not due, upon angels, they debase themselves the more; not only John's fellow servant, but fellow servant to the lowest, which was not so plain before. And if on this account angels plead against worship from John, so do they against worship from any in that relation with him. 3. It appeareth here that men, even holy men, may relapse in the same sin, and that they cannot abide much appearing glory in creatures, but they are ready to give too much unto them. 4. Here is an example of a godly man, his falling again in the same sin after he was reproved by the angel, and no question repented of it, being of such a heavenly frame when he was reproved. This, it is like, was Abraham's case, in twice denying his wife, Gen. xii. and chap. xx. And Jehoshaphat's with Ahab and Jehoram. 5. It appeareth that the rea-

ſon why the angel calleth himſelf, chapter xix. 10. one who had the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt, is, becauſe, as verſe 6. he is now employed for revealing Jeſus Chriſt's mind, as holy prophets of old were in revealing his mind to his church.

From verſe 9. to 16. followeth the third part. Firſt, verſe 9. the angel putteth by and checketh John for this fault of his, as is ſaid. Then, verſe 10. he returneth to proſecute his purpoſe in ſeveral directions and reaſons including commendations of the duties directed unto.

The firſt direction is ſpecial to John, verſe 10. *Seal not the ſayings of the propheſy of this book.* Seal not here, is not underſtood as to its ſureneſs (for that is out of queſtion) but as to hiddenneſs or ſecretneſs, let not, ſaith he, this book ly cloſed, as Iſa. xxix. 11. and viii. 16. that it be not uſeful to the church; for more is imported than is expreſſed, as appeareth by the reaſons, the Lamb opened not the ſeals of this book that they ſhould again be cloſed: that is not the end it is given for, but on the contrary, let it be public for their behoof, and the reaſon is, for the time is at hand. The ſeals which are the firſt prophetical viſion (properly) they are daily fulfilling and the reſt come on. It is an alluſion unto Iſa. viii. 29 with Dan. xii. where mention is made of ſealing theſe propheſies, becauſe they were to be dark, and little uſeful to that generation, being for the time to come, for many days. See Dan. viii. and ſo on the contrary, no ſealing muſt hold forth their clearneſs, or Chriſt's mind that they ſhould be ſo, ſeeing there was uſe to be made of them.

This command of publiſhing this propheſy may be thought ſtrange, and it may be objected, men may wax worſe and worſe, and ſeeing as Peter ſaith of leſs obſcure ſcripture, 2 Pet. iii. *They pervert them to their own deſtruction*, much more, it ſeemeth, it may be ſaid of this which is ſo dark; and ſo would the objection conclude, better ſeal it than not ſeal it. This is prevented by an anſwer uſual in the prophets, keep it not up whatever come of it, like Ezek. ii. 7. *whether they will hear or forbear.* And this is followed with a twofold qualification, 1. If it be dark, or an offence to any, it will be but to the profane and vile or filthy, who abuſe the beſt things; it will make none profane but filthy perſons, who may from their corruption abuſe it, as they do the plain truths. But, 2. Theſe who are ſingle and ſincere, it will not hinder, but ſtrengthen them in the way of holineſs, and confirm them in the faith of Chriſt; *And ſo it will be to the one the ſavour of life unto life, and to the other the ſavour of death unto death*, 2 Cor. ii. 16. and that is no ſtrange thing, and cannot be attributed to the unſealing of this propheſy; for if it were ſealed, that would follow, as we ſee in Dan. xii. 9, 10, &c. This is the ſimple ſcope of this verſe, we may read it in the future time (as it is common to the Hebrews, to which ſtile John cometh near here) and ſo it telleth what will be the effect, ſome will offend at it, ſome will get good of it; or, in the imperative, *let them be filthy ſtill:* It is no diſpenſation, but an holy regardleſneſs that God hath of ſuch filthy perſons as will not be made clean, but maketh a ſnare of their table, let it be ſo, ſaith he, as Rom. xi. and Hoſ. iv. *Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone;* he will not part with them, that is his ſin, and let it be his plague: ſo here,

If any ſhould queſtion the meaning of that, *He that is juſt, let him be juſt ſtill;* or (it being the word in the original that ſignifieth juſtified) he that is juſtified let him be ſo ſtill. *Anſw.* The word may, and we think doth keep its proper ſignification here, as it is diſtinguiſhed from ſanctification and inherent holineſs. The ſimple meaning is, they who are in Chriſt ſhall not be ſhaken out of that eſtate, but ſhall ſtill ſo continue whatever come of others. Thus ſtill ſignifieth not an increaſe of degrees (which may alſo be in this as to our ſenſe, and that well agreeth to the ſcope) but a continuance of that eſtate, as the word *eti* is ſundry times rendered *ſupra*, verſe 3. And that it muſt be ſo, appeareth by this, that holineſs or ſanctification is expreſsly diſtinguiſhed from this of being juſt, as denoting a different thing: therefore Bellarmine hath no ground from this (which is the only place alledged from the New Teſtament) to ſay that *dikaioo* ſometimes ſignifieth to make juſt by inherent holineſs. This is a ſimple declaring of the effects that ſhould follow ſeverally on hearers, ſome perverſe ſpirits ſhall offend, but all the godly, both as to their juſtification and ſanctification ſhall be preſerved, therefore there needeth no ſcarring to bring forth this propheſy.

A ſecond qualification is, verſe xii. *And behold I come quickly*, &c. That is, being done, for that negative, ſeal not the ſayings, verſe 10. includeth the contrary affirmative, reveal them) for, tho' it

be abuſed for a time, *I am coming quickly*, and will call every one to an account of their carriage, and reward them accordingly, even in reference to their uſe-making of this propheſy. This is added to ſtrengthen then the former reaſon, one might think it ſad that men ſhould ſo abuſe pearls, and ſuch a precious word, it will not be long ſo, ſaith the Lord, but I myſelf will come to execute juſtice on all, which ſhall be ſuitable and proportionable to men's carriage, that is, vengeance on theſe that continue filthy, and glory and honour to ſuch as continue holy, Rom. ii. 8. And this word is an advertiſement to all to take heed how they live under means, for ſo they muſt anſwer and be judged according to their works. And the Lord cometh in abruptly, as it were, to continue the ſame matter (for the title which he afterward aſſumeth, ſheweth it to be himſelf) thereby declaring that it was his word, and by his authority which the meſſenger ſpoke mediately, as when he ſpeaketh immediately himſelf.

By occaſion of this judgment, there is a word of great concernment ſet down, till verſe 16. for we take this 13th verſe (which beareth plainly out Chriſt's name) to be his own words, coming in here to confirm what the angel had ſaid in his name before; and ſo, verſe 14. and 15. are to be read in a parentheſis, as the angel's words ſet down for advertiſement; and, verſe 16. Chriſt is again brought in proceeding in his ſpeaking: the like may be ſeen in theſe words, chapter xvi. 15. *Bleſſed is he that watcheth*, &c. Where the writer, upon the occaſion of judgment formerly mentioned, breaketh forth into that advertiſement. However, though theſe words here, verſe 14. be the angel's words (in that he ſaith [His] commandments) yet the ſcope and matter is the ſame, and it is certain, verſe 16. Jeſus Chriſt himſelf taketh it on him, and therefore telleth it is he now and no angel, but he who ſendeth angels that ſpeaketh.

This ſaying of his, *I come quickly*, verſe 12. is for confirming what he ſaid of the happineſs of theſe that kept his word: and this name of his, verſe 13. is repeated for confirming that of his coming quickly to reward every one, becauſe he is God: who as he gave a being to all for his own glory, ſo he will exact an account thereof.

LECTURE III.

Verſe 13. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the firſt and the laſt.*

14. *Bleſſed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.*

15. *For without are dogs and ſorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whoſoever loveth and maketh a lie.*

16. *I Jeſus have ſent mine angel, to teſtify unto you theſe things in the churches, I am the root and the offſpring of David, and the bright and morning ſtar.*

17. *And the Spirit and the bride ſay come. And let him that heareth ſay, come. And let him that is athirſt, come. And whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

18. *For I teſtify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man ſhall add unto theſe things, God ſhall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:*

19. *And if any man ſhall take away from the words of the book of this propheſy, God ſhall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

20. *He which teſtifieth theſe things, ſaith, ſurely I come quickly, Amen. Even ſo, Come Lord Jeſus.*

21. *The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt be with you all. Amen.*

BEfore the Spirit cloſe this book, much is ſpent of that part which is the concluſion, on theſe two, 1. In confirming the truth of what is delivered in the propheſy. 2. In the commending of the excellency of it. After verſe 10. he hath given direction by the angel not to ſeal theſe ſayings, and having removed an objection that ſtood in the way, verſe 11. He confirmeth and commendeth theſe ſayings, 1. By Chriſt's approaching, coming to reckon with folks how they made uſe of this ſcripture

and warning, verſe 12. 2. From the ſovereignty of him who aſſerted it, it was not an angel but the eternal God, verſe 13. He commendeth it from the happineſs of theſe that rightly maketh uſe of theſe words, verſe 14. which verſe is anſwerable to verſe 3. of chap. i. Then, 4. He commendeth this ſcripture from the contrary miſery that ſhall come on all who ſhall, by their own fault, be excluded from this happineſs, verſe 15. Theſe are done by ſeveral witneſſes, ſometimes by John, ſometimes by Jeſus Chriſt, ſometimes by the Spirit, and ſometimes by the angel.

He goeth on to confirm the truth of what hath been delivered, and the firſt confirmation is, ver. 13. (which as it relateth to all the propheſy, ſo doth it eſpecially to the former of Chriſt's coming quickly) *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the firſt and the laſt:* I, that ſpeak and have ſent this book to my church, am God, and will perform what I have ſpoken. The words hold out Chriſt's eternity, not only as being before and after all things, but as giving all things a being, and ordering all things to their ends, and to his own glory as the great end of all, he is the beginning of the creation of God, Rev. iii. 14.

This commendation is proſecuted, verſe 14. and 15. from the happineſs of them that ſo make right uſe of all the word of God, and eſpecially of the words contained in this book. The happineſs and the perſons to whom it belongeth, are firſt ſet down, verſe 14. *Bleſſed are they that do his commandments.* Bleſſedneſs is the moſt deſirable thing that is looked for: and thus, bleſſed are they that keep his word and obey it. And tho' this general be true, yet conſidering, verſe 3. of chap. i. verſe 7. of this chapter, and the ſcope here to be one with theſe (to commend this propheſy,) we take the commandments, ſpoken of here, eſpecially to look to the ſayings of this propheſy. And ſo it is, bleſſed are they that keep the ſayings of this book, the Lord foreſeeing that this book was to meet with more oppoſition than other books of holy ſcripture, and there being a general reluctancy in all to make uſe of it, therefore tho' but ſix or ſeven times bleſſedneſs be ſpoken of in it, yet it is thrice applied to them that keep the ſayings of this propheſy, particularly theſe which relate to the keeping of clean garments from the corruptions of Antichriſt, and of the time, and to the putting of us in a poſture of waiting for his coming.

This bleſſedneſs is branched out ſeveral ways more particularly, 1. That they may have right to the tree of life, that is, to the happineſs the ſaints have in glory, and eſpecially to Jeſus Chriſt the objective and fountain-happineſs of the ſaints, as verſe 2. of this chapter, and chapter ii. The meaning is, they ſhall have right to Jeſus Chriſt, and glory in heaven with him: not that doing of the commandments is the meritorious cauſe of this or that which giveth believers right to it. But for clearing it, conſider Chriſt two ways holden out in the word, 1. As he is the ground and purchaſer of ſalvation to believers in him, and ſo believing is that which giveth right to him, and all that is in him, according to the offer which is the ground of our faith. 2. Conſider him as the object in whom believers happineſs conſiſteth, *and in the enjoying of whom there is life*, as Col. iii. 4. Chriſt being thus looked on as the object of their happineſs, keeping of the commandments is the way wherein we come to enjoy him: and this agreeth well with that word, Heb. xii. 14. *Follow peace with all men, and holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord.* And hereby the neceſſity of holineſs, and obedience to his commandments is holden forth, without which, Col. i. 12. we are not meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the ſaints in light. For tho' holineſs and obedience be not the way unto, or *cauſa ſine qua non*, of our juſtification, or to Chriſt conſidered as the meritorious cauſe of it, who is thus to be cloſed with by faith alone; yet are they to our glorification, and to the immediate enjoying of him in heaven.

The ſecond branch of their great happineſs, is, *They ſhall enter in through the gates into the city*, that is, into the new Jeruſalem, and the glory that the ſaints have to look for in heaven, chap. xxi. and beginning of chap. xxii. their holineſs endeth in happineſs and glory; there is no coming to heaven but by this door, no climbing over the walls, for the angels are porters. The meaning is, the ſtudier of holineſs ſhall have fair acceſs into heaven, like a man that hath a paſs and getteth liberty to enter into the city, when the ſentinel keepeth others back, and they are not admitted, 2 Pet. i. 11. *So an entrance ſhall be miniſtred unto you abundantly, into the everlaſting kingdom of our Lord:* whereby it is clear, that this city is heaven, and the way to it is holi-

neſs; and to hope to come to heaven and to live in profaneneſs, is as if folks would think to climb over the walls, and not enter by the ports into it: we may well ſay, that though holineſs be not the cauſe of our entry, yet it is our paſs, by which it is known who are to be admitted, or have right to enter, and who not.

The third way how this happineſs is ſet out, is by holding out the miſery of all that are profane, verſe 15. *for without are dogs and ſorcerers*, &c. This is given as a reaſon why they are happy that ſhall have acceſs into the city, becauſe without are ſuch and ſuch vile perſons; and as a reaſon which they are bleſſed that are holy, becauſe profane ones are ſhut out: under which we comprehend all that are diſobedient, and ſuch as caſt the word and commandments of God. And it letteth us ſee how God eſteemeth of all that give not themſelves up to the obedience of the truth. Of theſe ſorts of ſinners we ſpoke, chap. xxi. 8. Only dogs are added here, that is, 1. Such as are profane in converſation, and will not take reproofs, ſuch as amend not, Matth. vii. 6. *Give not that which is holy to dogs.* 2. Theſe that are oppoſite to truth, in doctrine, and vent and ſpread what is unſound, as Phil. iii. 2. *Beware of dogs* &c. ſpeaking of theſe teachers that did mix the righteouſneſs of the law with the righteouſneſs of Chriſt in juſtification. Theſe alſo are without, that is, are in the ſecond death, chap. xxi. 8.

From verſe 16. and forward followeth the Lord Jeſus his own cloſe to the ſame purpoſe, to confirm and commend the truth of the words of his propheſy. In the 16th verſe it is commended from the fountain it cometh from, *I Jeſus have ſent mine angel to teſtify theſe things in the churches.* Theſe are not John's inventions, nor the ſayings of an angel out of his own head, but they are from me, I own them all, I Jeſus (taking his proper name to himſelf) have ſent mine angel in more than ordinary way, to reveal theſe things to my ſervant John, and by him to the churches, to the end of the world. And that this may have the more weight, he taketh to himſelf ſuch ſtiles as he took to himſelf before, chap. ii. and 3. *I am the root and offſpring of David, the bright and morning ſtar*, to bring ſouls in love with him: he ſetteth out himſelf as the very Meſſiah come of David, as chap. v. 5. *The Lion of the tribe of Judah, and the root of David*, and *the offſpring of David* as man, becauſe as man he came of David, and ſo is the promiſed Meſſiah, as Iſa. xi. 1. *There ſhall come a rod out of the ſtem of Jeſſe, and a branch ſhall grow out of his roots*, &c. or, take the words differently, *I am the root of David*, that is, David's God, and David is as a branch, and I gave him a being: and *I am the offſpring of David*, that is, as a man I am a branch come of David. And thus he anſwereth the queſtion the Phariſees could not underſtand, Matth. xxii. 43. *If David call him Lord, how is he then his ſon?* he is David's Lord as God, and David's ſon as man, ſo is he his root and offſpring. 2. He calleth himſelf *the bright and morning ſtar*: he is called a ſtar by Balaam, Num. xxiv. 17. *There ſhall a ſtar come out of Jacob*, and this relateth to that, but to ſhew that he is not a common ſtar, but a ſingular one: he is called *the bright and morning-ſtar*, or day-ſtar that bringeth the light of the day with it, holding himſelf out as the fountain of all light and conſolation, as John i. 9. *He is that true light, that lighteth every one that cometh into the world.* This is he that ſendeth this meſſage to the churches, and that now we read of, *He that brought life and immortality to light*, &c. Theſe titles are fooliſhly applied, to ſay no more, to the virgin Mary, as many others are by *Bernardine de Buſco, De denominationibus Mariae.*

The ſecond commendation, is, in a twofold *Come*, ver. 17. *The Spirit and the bride ſay, Come. And let him that heareth ſay, Come.* This is ſuch a word, ſo excellent and true a word, and ſo comfortable a ſaying, that all that have the Spirit in them when they hear it, will ſay, *Come*, and wiſh a performance of it; and the bride the Lamb's wife, all the glorified in heaven, and all the regenerate on earth concur in it; and not only the church univerſal for that time, but all that ſhall hear this word, and have the faith of it in their heart, ſhall ſay, *Come.* We conceive the ſcope is, 1. To commend this word from the deſirableneſs of it to all believers, eſpecially that word, verſe 12. *Behold, I come quickly.* 2. To let the church know that he is to ſend no more new ſcripture or meſſages of this ſort, and that they have no more to expect but the coming of the Lord on the back of the fulfilling of this propheſy. And ſo Malachi, in this laſt chapter, cloſes the canon of the Old Teſtament with a promiſe of Chriſt's firſt coming, and putteth the people of God to the law of Moſes, and the prophets then; ſo Chriſt here cloſeth the canon of the New

Teſtament with a promiſe of his ſecond coming, to which he knitteth the longing deſires of his church.

The ſecond *Come*, that commendeth the excellency of this book, is, *Let him that is athriſt, Come. And whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely*, is there yet any body that is not clear in their intereſt? Let them come and take this word before Chriſt come; for, he will not get another word: as if he ſaid, I have made many fair and free offers, and now I cloſe my laſt offer with a good word, *whoſoever will* take Chriſt, and life through him freely, on the terms of free grace, *let him come*, and take him *without money, and without price*, Iſa. lv. i. This is our Lord's farewell, that he may preſs the offer of the goſpel, and leave that impreſſion, as it were, upon record amongſt the laſt words of the ſcripture; and his ſcope is to commend this book, and the offers he hath made in it, as moſt free, and on the terms of grace, wherein Chriſt aimeth much to draw ſouls to accept it, and teacheth us, that all that would expect comfort of his coming, and pray for it with a well grounded confidence, they would firſt come to him, and cloſe with him, and make uſe of his offer. This maketh a comfortable meeting with him, and who cannot ſay the firſt *Come* to Chriſt, that he may come, let themſelves come to him, and hear and and anſwer his call to them, that ſo they may turn over their requeſt to him.

The third way how he commendeth this word, is, by putting a teſtimony to the perfection of it, verſe 18. Telling that nothing can be added to it, and nothing can be diminiſhed from it as ſuperfluous, and both theſe are ſet down by way of commination, and it is given as a reaſon why folks ſhould expect no more ſcripture after this, 1. Let any man beware of adding to theſe things. Adding may be conſidered formerly, as denoting enjoying of any thing for ſcripture, or to be accounted as ſuch, which is not contained in this book, or declared by God immediately to be ſuch as this is. Or, 2. Adding upon the matter, by putting or employing a meaning on that which is written, that God never intended, or which the words will not bear. Therefore deceivers and wreſters of the word, are called impoſtors, as impoſing; the curſe that's threatened on them that add any of their ways, is, *God ſhall add to him the plagues that are written in this book*, that is, he ſhall bring upon him all the curſes threatned to come on the openly profane and ſecret hypocrites, or Antichriſt's followers.

And that it may be known, that it is no leſs fault to diminiſh than to add, he telleth, verſe 19. *If any ſhall take away from the words of this prophecy*, that is, either by taking away ſomething that is canonic, and derogating from the authority of the ſcripture, or by hiding or detracting from the meaning of it, (for, both theſe ways the word is diminiſhed, when the weight of God's authority in the truth is diminiſhed, or when folks, receive not the truth, and walk not in the obedience of it.) The threatening that is added to this, is, *God ſhall take away his part out of the book of life, &c.* that is, that man ſhall never come into glory; it ſhall be declared, he was never written in the book of life, and he ſhall be ſhut out of heaven; for, never a promiſe of happineſs, in all the world, belongeth to that man. And ſo as Moſes when he gave the law, Deut. iv. 2. and xii. 32. commanded neither to add nor diminiſh. And Prov. xxx. 6. *Add thou not unto his words, leſt he reprove thee.* So alſo our Lord Jeſus ſealeth the New Teſtament, but with a more ſevere threatening: and that word, Deut. iv. 2. *That ye may keep the commandments of the Lord*, ſheweth that the keeping he meaneth of, conſiſteth not in the latter, but in the practice and converſation, by making the word our rule in our walk. In which words, as all diminiſhing from ſcripture, ſo all addition under whatſoever pretext, is condemned: by which the bulk of Popiſh traditions is juſtly rejected.

If it be objected that this threatening is only in reference to this book, but hindereth not but that ſomething by tradition may be added to others, or to the ſcripture in general. *Anſw.* 1. Yet this book is looked on here as the cloſe of all ſcripture, and therefore there can be no other reaſon given for adding this certification, but to reſtrain men from looking for more, and that they may now accept the canon cloſed. 2. This is ſimply againſt man's adding to God's word, and putteth marches betwixt God's word and man's of whatſoever nature; for, the ſcriptures are God's word, but traditions are man's; and either they are for their matter grounded on the word, and ſo are contained in it, or not grounded on it, or contained in it. If they be of the firſt ſort, they are no more God's word, but as other conſequents drawn from it. If of the ſecond ſort, then they are manifeſt additions,

and ſo in this oppoſed to the word. 3. Adding muſt be ſo underſtood, as diminiſhing or taking away muſt be; but taking away is ſo to be underſtood, as to make that no ſcripture which God hath appointed to be ſo, whatever the matter of it be; and therefore to add, muſt be to account any thing ſcripture, or as ſcripture, which God hath not ſo appointed to be. Hence as it were by this condemnible to ſuppreſs any book that were canonic, becauſe the matter of it were in another book; even ſo, on the contrary, muſt it be here reproved, to add any book unto, or to equal it with ſcripture in authority, which is not contained in the canon. 4. Do not the ſame reaſons that condemn adding to this book in particular, condemn adding to the word in general, or to any other book thereof? ſo that as we cannot add ſome propheſies to this book out of traditions, and call them, or account them, a part of the Revelation, or of equal authority with it; ſo neither may we from tradition join any thing to any other book, or to the word in general; for, the reaſon is one, God will reſerve this peace of ſovereignty to himſelf to decide what ſhall be accounted his Revelation, and will have no other medling with it, ſo alſo with his word in general, 2. He will keep men from encroaching on what he hath reſerved to himſelf: and indeed it ſeemeth by this commination, that he eſteemeth it higheſt arrogancy and leſs majeſty to alter in any thing his word, which is the moſt ſacred and ſovereign thing which he hath left with his church, and wherein his name and ſupremacy doth eſpecially conſiſt.

The cloſe of all, is, Chriſt's ſpeaking a word as his drawing to an end, verſe 20. *He that teſtifieth theſe things, ſaith ſurely, I come quickly.* It is he that ſpeaketh, verſe 16, 18. that teſtifieth theſe things, and that which he ſaith is a promiſe, or propheſy of Chriſt's coming, and of the certainty and ſuddenty of his coming to judgment. 2. And the laſt words of the verſe are an hearty and warm welcome, that John in the name of all believers, or the bride giveth to this truth, promiſe, or propheſy of the coming of the Lord, Amen: not only let it be ſo, but I wiſh, and long, and pray that it may be ſo, *even ſo*, or, ſo be it, *Come, Lord Jeſus*, as thou haſt promiſed.

There is here then a promiſe made, which John turneth up to God in a moſt fervent ſupplication, not only for himſelf, but for the whole church of Chriſt alſo, upon the hearing and conſideration of this, that Chriſt is to come again and receive believers to himſelf, that where he is, there they may be alſo: ſuch ejaculations of the ſoul will often interrupt the thoughts and diſcourſes of theſe who are in the faith of being found of him in peace at his appearance, the lively apprehenſion of what they do expect at the day, when they ſhall ſee him as he is, produceth ſuch a ſweet complacency in it, and ſtirring of heart to be poſſeſſed of it, that there muſt needs follow ſuch ardent deſires after it as will almoſt prevent all deliberation: for, excellent objects have ſuch an amiable aſpect upon the ſoul, and attractive power over the heart, that it moſt willingly yieldeth up itſelf, and as if it were all compoſed of deſires, it breathed forth nothing but earneſt wiſhes after a nearneſs and inſeparable conjunction with that object. Now, what can be propoſed to the immortal ſoul like this, to hear Chriſt ſay, *behold I come quickly*? Truly the apprehenſion is at a ſtand, in unfolding that bleſſedneſs which is included in this one ſentence, it goeth beyond the reach of a created underſtanding to ſearch it out unto perfection; for eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what is here imported. And therefore no wonder to ſee it draw ſuch a holy heart forcibly out after it, breathing out all the way ſuch a deſire, *Even ſo, Come Lord Jeſus, Come quickly*, as if his heart intended by this wiſh to anticipate that day: but becauſe he knew the bride was not yet made ready, and that there was a long tract of time to intervene betwixt the giving of this promiſe and that day wherein the marriage of the Lamb ſhall be ſolemnized, when he ſhall bring her unto the king, all glorious within, in cloathing of wrought gold, and raiment of needle work, with the virgins her companions that follow her, that they may enter the king's palace, to be with him there for ever; becauſe he knew, that before this there were many ſad emergents and ſearching diſpenſations to be met with, ſuch winds to blow as ſhould overblow every one who was not blaſted with the grace of God, ſuch falſe doctrines to be ſpread as would carry about every one whoſe heart was not eſtabliſhed by grace, ſuch deceivers privily bringing in damnable hereſies, that if it were poſſible the very elect ſhould be deceived, ſo many duties to be done, and ſo much affliction to be ſuffered, as were impoſſible to be performed and born without

the aſſiſtance of ſpecial grace, therefore as the concluſion of the whole, verſe laſt, he deſireth *that the grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt may be with them all*, as that which by its ſenſible preſence or ſupporting influence, would carry them through whatſoever they might meet with; for there is no difficulty ſo great which will not evaniſh and diſappear before his grace; and a gracious man is able to do and ſuffer all things thro' Chriſt who ſtrengtheneth him. This grace is indeed the one thing neceſſary to make a man carry creditably for the goſpel, and comfortably to himſelf in all caſes that may be incident: He who is ſtrengthened by the might of his grace in the inner man, will be ſtedfaſt and immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. And therefore it is wonder, that one who was ſeen in the concerning events which ſhould fall out till the ſecond coming of Chriſt, did wrap up all his deſires for the ſaints with an Amen, in this one wiſh, *The grace of our Lord Jeſus be with you all.* The very pulſe of a holy ſoul beateth ſtill this way, his temper may be known by the ordinary unconſtrained and habitual deſires of his heart: let others wiſh to themſelves and their friends what they pleaſe, that which a holy man wiſheth to himſelf, and theſe whom he loveth beſt is this, that the grace of Jeſus Chriſt may be with them; he would have his own deſires, with the deſires and endeavours of every man elſe, terminate upon this. If ye aſk him what he feareth moſt? It is this, leſt he come ſhort of the grace of God; or what his hopes are moſt upon? It is for that grace which is to be brought unto him at the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt: this is the very character of a Chriſtian in good caſe, that he is one who is waiting for the appearance of Jeſus Chriſt, and that grace which is to be brought with him; the expectation of this is the reſt of his ſoul, he feedeth upon it conſtantly when he is alone, the thoughts of it keep him company, and he maketh this his companion in whatſoever company he be: in a word, he is content to be empty of all things beſide, that out of his fulneſs he may receive grace for grace; this to him is the one thing neceſſary, and therefore he maketh it his choice. Happy, yea, thrice happy is every one who doth ſo: for he hath choſen that good part that ſhall never be taken from him.

The worthy and pious Author of this treatiſe; (whoſe communication was habitually good for the uſe of edifying, and ſuch as did miniſter grace to the hearers, being about to leave this world, to which he was dead when alive, while all that were about him did ſee him panting for God, for the living God, as the hart doth after the water-brooks) a little before he fell aſleep, deſired one of them who ſtood by, to write for a cloſe to this commentary, theſe following words (worthy to be graven with an iron pen and laid in the rock for ever.) *And now, O my ſoul, when all ſays come, and concurs in a ſweet harmony, ſeeing thou haſt heard, and doſt hear the call of the goſpel, ſay with the Bride and with the Spirit, Even ſo, come Lord Jeſus, come quickly.*

F I N I S.

A

Brief View of the Series of the whole BOOK of the

REVELATION.

THIS whole book is formed by way of an epiſtle.

Chap. 1. Beſide ſome general circumſtances, the matter of the book generally is divided, chapter 1. in theſe two, 1. The things that then were, or the preſent ſtate of theſe churches eſpecially. 2. The things that were to come on the church in general, to the end of the world.

Chap. 2, and 3. Contain the firſt part, the preſent condition of theſe ſeven churches, ſet out in ſeveral epiſtles, ſhewing their caſe, and reproving or commending accordingly, as was requiſite; and withal, adding directions, warnings, threatenings, and conſolations, ſuitable to their reſpective conditions, which though expreſly directed to theſe, yet are alike uſeful to all in ſuch caſes to the end.

Chap. 4, and 5. Contain the preface introductory to the main and prophetical part of this book: where God the Creator is ſet on his throne, and his glory, as abſolute ſupreme Lord of all, is ſet down, having all events determined in his council as in a book that is ſealed, in the which no creature can pry to reveal them, except Jeſus Chriſt, who by the executing of his office of Mediatorſhip, is found worthy to be admitted on God's eternal ſecrets concerning the church, who therefore in that fifth chapter receiveth theſe as in a book ſealed with ſeven ſeals, which he openeth diſtinctly (keeping the ſame compariſon) in the chapters following, which contain three principal, and other three explicatory propheſies of ſeals, trumpets and vials, deducing the events from that time to the end, by ſeveral ſteps, and the explicatory propheſies, clearing what was more ſhortly or obſcurely ſet down in the other, and cotemporating with them, or ſome part of them.

Chap. 6. We have the firſt principal propheſy of the ſeals, which ſetteth forth the ſtate of the church under its firſt period, viz. of heatheniſh perſecution. In it the church is firſt diſcovered as flouriſhing in reſpect of the goſpel's thriving, Seal 1. Then as bloody in reſpect of perſecution, Seal 2. After that as decaying and loſing much of its beauty, not only by the perſecution of enemies, but by the conteſts and failings that were in and amongſt her friends, Seal 3. After which, perſecution came to a vehement height, as if death had been looſed againſt the church in the laſt part of the ten perſecutions, Seal 4. Whereupon the ſouls cry to God, as being at an uttermoſt ſtrait, Seal 5. Upon which followeth God's judgment upon theſe perſecutors, Seal 6. At which the firſt period of the church's condition, and the firſt principal propheſy of ſeals do end.

Chap. 7. The church having now gotten outward proſperity and peace, and not having made good uſe of it, there are, chap. 7. other ſorts of winds ready to blow, and fearful hereſies to ſet on her, eſpecially that defection of Antichriſt: all which ſhe is to be advertiſed of by the trumpets; but becauſe that exerciſe would be more ſifting, and carry more of the viſible church away than open perſecution did; therefore before the trumpets ſound, the Lord giveth a little view of the future ſtate of the church, in reference to the two following principal propheſies. The firſt part is to verſe 9. ſhewing God's care in guarding his elect againſt that ſtorm before it came: this belongeth to the trumpets. The ſecond ſheweth the good outgate that the church ſhould have after that ſtorm, from verſe 9. to the end: and this giveth a hint of the vials.

Chap. 8. The Lord Chriſt having thus provided againſt theſe evils by this conſolation, chapter 7. and having firſt interpoſed by his interceſſion in the beginning of this, *chap.* 8. Then he giveth order

to the angels to ſound their trumpets. Theſe do contain the principal propheſy, and belong to the ſecond period of the church, viz. from the church's begun peace, after heatheniſh perſecution, till Antichriſt come up by his ſteps to his height. This is contained in the viii. ix. x. and xi. chapters. The firſt angel foretelleth the riſing of a violent hereſy, viz. Arianiſm, whereby the beauty of the church was exceedingly defaced. The ſecond foretelleth the great pride and contention that was to follow among churchmen, which ſhould be no little ſtirring to many, and make way for the working of the myſtery of iniquity. The third forewarneth of the corrupting of the principal doctrines and fountain-truths of grace and the goſpel. The fourth holdeth forth the more general decay of piety, purity and ſimplicity in the church, in the age before Antichriſt's revealing, though not yet at its height: and when warning is given of three greater woes than any of theſe, the eighth chapter is cloſed.

In chap. ix. Two of the laſt great woes are ſet down: the firſt, or fifth, The trumpet deſcribeth Antichriſt's kingdom, and by the deſcription thereof, and names given to him, the evil that cometh thereby to the church is expreſſed. The ſecond great wo, or ſixth trumpet, ſetteth out God's ſevere judging of a great part of the Chriſtian world for that defection, by letting looſe the Turks upon it, which with great armies deſtroyed many, and overcame a great part of the empire: yet theſe that were ſpared did not repent, nor forſake their idolatry and ſuperſtitions for all that, but Popery grew in its corruption, even as the Turks grew in their dominion.

In chap. x. and xi. Becauſe theſe were ſad evils, whereby the church was brought low, and were to be of longer continuance than any of the former leſſer woes, therefore before the ſeventh angel ſound, the Lord ſetteth down a twofold conſolation, chap. x. and till verſe 15. of the xi. where the ſeventh ſoundeth, meeting with two objections: firſt, Men might think, ſhall enemies then get their will, and the church be thus ſtill obſcured, when the ſeventh trumpet cometh what will come of her? The Lord, by an oath, chap. x. aſſureth his people that it ſhall not be ſo; but that the church ſhall be revived, and that ſeventh trumpet ſhall bring judgment on her enemies, and quite turn the chaſe. And becauſe it might be yet further doubted if there were a church during that time till the ſeventh did ſound, it is ſhown, chap. xi. that there ſhould be a church, and ſome miniſters ſtill adhering to the former principles of the goſpel, whom all enemies, no not the beaſt Antichriſt, ſhould be able to overcome, till they ſhould be at the cloſe of their teſtimony, and God have others to take it off their hand. Then the ſeventh angel ſoundeth when their teſtimony is finiſhed, and a very great and moſt glorious change is wrought, which is generally hinted at here, but more fully expreſſed by the vials, which are the third principle or typical propheſy of this book, and contain the laſt period of the militant church's condition, viz. Antichriſt's decay, and her engagement after ſhe hath been at her loweſt, and he at his height: a little view of it is given here before the ſeven vials be explained, becauſe he is to interpoſe the explication of what was paſt, in the three chapters following.

But before he ſet down the vials upon the blowing of the ſeventh trumpet (as he had ſet down the trumpets on the back of the ſeven ſeals) the firſt explicatory propheſy is interjected, chap. xii. 13. and 14. and that in a different ſtile. This ſerveth to clear the two principle propheſies paſt, and maketh way exceedingly for underſtanding what was coming; and in this, the ſame troubles and ſtate of the church, formerly propheſied of, are here again touched in their ſeveral ſteps of her difficulties with their reſpective outgates.

Chap. xii. 1. The church's wreſtling with heathen perſecution; that was deſcribed by the ſeals, is ſet out by the ſimilitude of *a travailing woman*, purſued by a *red dragon;* her outgate is under the expreſſion of delivery, when her birth is exalted, verſe 5. of chap. xii. which war is more fully proſecuted, with its outgate, to verſe 13. by this the devil is dethroned from the public authority he had in the world while emperors were heathen, and authority is now on the church's ſide. The ſecond ſtep is the church's troubles that followed on the back of that outgate: it is hinted, verſe 6. that ſhe fled or began to flee, (to ſhew the connection of this decay with the former liberty) but is proſecuted from verſe 12. where the devil's device to drown her, by ſpueing out of his mouth a flood of filthy errors after her is marked, when as by vio-

lence or authority he could not maſter her: the outgate from this is, verſe 16. the Lord provideth a way to drain their errors, that they ſhould not drown her; the earth, that is, the then declining viſible church, that continued ſtill viſible, (called earth, becauſe of her declining from that heavenly ſimplicity ſhe appeared in, verſe 4. under heathen perſecution, becoming now earthly-like in pomp, and ſo diſtinguiſhed from theſe that keeped their former purity) did ſtill keep the doctrine of the Godhead of the Father, Son, and Spirit, pure; ſo that the pure church now fleeing, as it were, hath theſe cruel blaſts kept off her, and ſo diverted from her, as the earth drinketh in the rain ſuffereth not the floods increaſe.

This is cotemporary with the firſt four trumpets, or leſſer woes, chap. 8. When this doth not the devil's buſineſs, verſe 17. he goeth to his laſt refuge of ſtirring up Antichriſt, and bringing of him to his height, which is the firſt great wo, chap. 9. And becauſe this is the great deſign, to hold him forth, and thereby to make way for clearing what was ſpoken, chap. 11. and what followeth to the end.

Therefore, chap. xiii. He more fully inſiſteth in deſcribing this enemy, 1. In his nature by a double type of two ſeveral beaſts: the firſt, ſhewing what really he ſhould be, and what the church ſhould ſuffer by him; the ſecond ſhewing how he ſhould attain to that height, and by what means he ſhould proſecute his deſigns upon the world, and againſt the ſaints.

Chap. xiv. And then when he hath deſcribed his nature, riſe, reign, practices, continuance and manner of proceeding, &c. he cometh to ſhew the outgate, chap. 14. which cotemporateth with the laſt part of chap. 11. and is again inſiſted on by the vials.

Having put by this explication, and given a key of all in this propheſy, he returneth to proſecute where he left, chap. 11. and more fully to ſhew the events of the ſeventh trumpet in the ſeven vials, which is the third principle and typical propheſy, proſecuting the ſtory (to ſay ſo) from Antichriſt's height and begun ruin to the end, which is the third period of the church.

Therefore chap. xv. The preparations to it is ſet down (as the preparations to each of the former principle propheſies, whereas, chap. iv. and 5. to the ſeals, and chap. vii. to the trumpets) and is, upon the matter, the ſame with what is, chap. xi. ver. 16. &c. to ſhew that it is the continuation of the ſame matter. This, I ſay, is the third period of the church.

Then, chap. xvi. Followeth the propheſy itſelf. The four firſt vials are leſſer, and more inſenſibly, as it were, carry on Antichriſt's ruin (as the four firſt trumpets did more inſenſibly increaſe his riſe:) The fifth vial overturneth Rome his ſeat, as the fifth trumpet ſeated him there, and revealed him. The ſixth overturneth Turks, Popes, and the reſt of that kingdom, bringeth in the Jews, and ſetteth the goſpel at its full brightneſs. The ſeventh vial, ſometime after that, bringeth the end upon all enemies, Gog and Magog, and fully overturneth the devil's kingdom in the world: as the three laſt trumpets are greateſt, ſo are the three laſt vials of longeſt continuance. And becauſe theſe events are notable, he proceedeth to clear eſpecially the laſt three vials in two explicatory propheſies or viſions, wherein he abſtaineth the expreſſion of types and ſevens, which he had uſed in the principle propheſies, and in an explicatory way, goeth on, as in chap. xii. &c. The firſt is chapter xvii. 18, 19. the other thence to the end.

He had deſcribed Antichriſt himſelf, chap. xiii. Here, chap. xvii. he deſcribeth his ſeat, his kingdom and himſelf together, that he might ſhew what is the object of the vials, eſpecially of the fifth: which is in a word Rome, then the chief city of the earth.

The more expreſs explication whereof is, chap. xviii. Shewing what the ſeat is, that is deſtroyed by the fifth vial; and what lamentation ſhall be over it, when Rome, called Babylon, ſhall be brought to ſuch deſolation.

And having deſcribed this, he proceedeth, chap. xix. To clear the events of the ſixth vial, and battle of Armageddon, which is notable from two ſingular events, the one in the converſion of the Jews in the firſt part, the other in the deſtruction of the beaſt and his helpers (probably the Turks) in the laſt part thereof, whereby the beaſt having fled from Rome, is now wholly overturned, ſo that the name of Pope ceaſeth by this, as Rome his ſeat did by the former.

Antichriſt being deſtroyed, he cometh to ſhew the events of the ſeventh vial in the laſt viſion.

Chap. xx. 21, 22. And to give the more clear and comprehenſive view of the church's victory over the devil, he ſheweth, chap. xx. firſt how the devil was again reſtrained after he had been looſe, chap. xii. 13. (and ſo aſcendeth as high as the firſt vial) during which time the church, formerly perſecuted, had a moſt flouriſhing condition (in reſpect of what formerly it was) and that for a long time, ſet out by a thouſand years. 2. He ſheweth that after that, even when the beaſt is away by the ſixth vial, yet a new enemy ariſeth, called Gog and Magog, which ſhall mar the church's peace: and becauſe this event belongeth to the ſeventh vial, it was neceſſary to premit Satan's binding by the preceding vials to it, that it might be the better diſcerned what was intended by this his new looſe. 2. The church's victory over this enemy is expreſſed, which we conceive is the proper event of the ſeventh vial: whereupon followeth the univerſal reſurrection, conſummation of all things, diſſolution of heaven and earth, the laſt judgment, and final ſentence upon reprobates and elect: that which concerneth reprobates is ſet down, verſe laſt, what was their portion after this judgment, and ſentence eternally, they were caſt into the lake.

Then chap. xxi. He proceedeth more fully to deſcribe the happy eſtate of the elect, in the beauty they ſhould be glorified with, the place wherein, the privilege which they ſhould enjoy, and the perſons admitted to it only, which is to verſe 6. chap. xxii.

And having put by the prophetical part, he cloſeth, as he began, with two generals, commending this propheſy, and advertiſing Chriſt's ſecond coming, on the back of all this, warning that his word be not diminiſhed from, nor any thing added thereunto; withal inviting all to come, and promiſing himſelf to come, as his laſt farewel: whereupon the church welcometh it with a new *So be it*, knowing there is no more to be expected but his coming, which ſhe heartily longeth for. After all, John cloſeth the epiſtle with a ſalutation, as he had begun it with an inſcription.

There are two men much accounted of for learning, (Grotius, and Hammond) whoſe expoſitions and applications I have never touched: not becauſe I thought them not abſurd, but, becauſe, 1. Their whole ſtrain is divers readings to ſay no more, from the true ſcope of this book, and that not in the one viſion or propheſy, but an univerſal ſtrain more oppoſitely to orthodox writers than any Papiſt that ever wrote of it; the following whereof could not but prove nauſeating to any reader. And 2. Becauſe who will read them, and ſoberly compare the writings of others with the text, may yet need more direct writings to evidence the diſſonancy of theſe commentations, I do profeſs myſelf unable to ſatisfy them, I ſhall therefore but ſay theſe few words.

1. That their application is diſſonant from the ſcope of this book, which is cleared to be, 1. To ſhew things to come, chap. 1. *ult.* 2. Things belonging to the church and Chriſt's ſervants peculiarly, as the inſcription, repetition of bleſſedneſs to the readers and obſervers, with the ſeveral circumſtances, will clear. 3. To ſhew eſpecially the trials of the church from inward enemies, as the hiding of the elect from the hurt thereof, the deſcription of the enemies ſpiritual hurt and defection that is foretold to come on the church, eſpecially that great defection of the great Antichriſt, whereof the ſcripture ſpeaketh ſo much, confirmeth it. 4. The ſcope is to ſhew the church's condition under theſe, to the end of the world: for, 1. It is ſtill uſeful to his ſervants as a propheſy, uſeful to the end, and they are bleſſed that ſhall make uſe of it as ſuch at the end, as well as now. 2. It cloſeth with the laſt judgment and the reprobates caſting in hell, chap. xx. and the elect's glorification, chap. xxi. 22. with many promiſes of his laſt coming; and the propheſy preceding the day of judgment, is in a ſeries knit with it, which will not admit of many hundred years rent; and that it ſpeaketh of the day of judgment, the deſcription of it, and the ſentence upon all the reprobate, who are not written in the Lamb's book, will clear it.

Now, theſe men in their writings wholly enervate all theſe, 1. They ſay it ſpeaketh of things but for a ſhort time (from that weed, chap. i. verſe 1. *ſhortly come to paſs*, &c.) which is the ground of all their opinion, yet it inferreth it no more than when he ſaith, *I come quickly.*

2. They make it of things, for the moſt part, paſt, and of civil things in the Roman empire, or what concerneth the Jews, without great reſpect to the church.

3. Little or no mention is made of ſpiritual enemies and hereticks, ſave that they apply

to Simon Magus what is ſpoken of the three years and an half: there is not one word of Antichriſt in it all, nor of the Pope or church of Rome, as if that were not of concernment to the Chriſtian church, whether we ſhould condemn him or approve him. This is the more ſtrange, that altho' they draw the thouſand years from Conſtantine's time, they reckon the church all the while to have peace, and moveth only an objection from Julian, as if no other enemy had ever been to interrupt that peace.

2. We ſay it is inconſiſtent, in reſpect of the matter they apply it to: for to what purpoſe is it to apply that of the two witneſſes, chap. xi. to the two biſhops of Jews and Gentiles at Jeruſalem, when there is no hiſtory for ſuch a thing at Jeruſalem? Or though it were, yet what is that to ſuch a concerning event ſo often ſpoken of there? And what is that of Simon Magus in compariſon of the world's wondering, chap. xi. 12. and 13, &c. How will the heatheniſh idolatrous high-prieſts be ſaid to have horns like the Lamb, which muſt be Chriſt in that place? chap. xiii. 11. How impertinent is it that is ſaid of the ſeven kings, whereof one was to come in John's time? Beſide, that all theſe were paſt before John wrote the propheſy, as hitherto have been received from hiſtory.

3. We ſay it is inconſiſtent with all that ever have written, ancient and modern; even Papiſts, who though, no queſtion, they would gladly receive ſuch an interpretation to liberate their Pope, yet durſt they never hazard on it till theſe his new patrons ſtept out.

4. It is alſo repugnant to themſelves: for altho' much be built on this, that the effects are ſuddenly to be brought to paſs, becauſe of that word, chap. i. verſe 1. *Shortly to come to paſs;* yet do they both expound Gog and Magog, chap. xx. of the Turks, which to them riſeth after the 1300 years; and ſay that their deſtruction, as yet to come, is propheſied of there; yea, chapter xxi. and 22. are applied to the ſtate of the church on earth after the Turks ruin. 2. They, eſpecially the laſt, ſeem to offend at particular application to men, yea, to nations and times, alledging that theſe events are of more univerſal concernment; yet, what is their application but a moſt ſtrait, particular and narrow one to ſuch armies and commanders of the Romans to Simon Magus (who was of little note in the world, in reſpect of ſome after hereſiarchs that troubled the church) to a particular biſhop, or two biſhops of Jeruſalem, as if only they were the witneſſes? Theſe being obvious, and many ſuch we conceive it not needful to draw every thing into particular examination.

F I N I S.

SERMON I.

REVEL. xxii. 20.

He which teſtifieth theſe things, ſaith, Surely, I come quickly. Amen. Even ſo, come Lord Jeſus.

THIS is but a ſhort verſe, but comprehenſive of two moſt excellent truths, and moſt concerning expreſſions to the people of God. The firſt of them is our bleſſed Lord Jeſus' word, and his laſt word that ſtands on record to his church, *Surely, I come quickly.* The other is, the hearty and warm welcome that John, in name of believers, or the bride, as verſe 17. gives to this truth, *Amen, Even ſo, Come Lord Jeſus.* And theſe two words cloſe Chriſt's formal ſpeaking to his church by Revelation, and are the laſt words of a ſaint ſpeaking in ſcripture to Jeſus Chriſt; and therefore it will not be unſuitable to ſpeak a word of them in the cloſe of the opening of this book.

The firſt of theſe words is three times in this chapter, as verſe 17, and 12. and here, beſides other parts. And being ſo often recorded now when he is drawing near a cloſe, it is to let us ſee of what concernment it is, and how it ſhould be imprinted on our hearts, ſeeing he that utters it ſpeaketh and repeateth no words in vain.

That it is ſaid, *He that teſtifieth theſe things*, telleth it is his word that ſpeaketh, verſe 16. *I Jeſus have ſent mine angel to teſtify theſe things unto you:* and verſe 18. *I teſtify unto every man that heareth the words of this prophecy.* It's the ſame that is *the root and the off-ſpring of David, the bright and morning ſtar, Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the firſt and the laſt:* and it is prefixed as a commendation, to make us think the more of this word.

There is then in the firſt part theſe three things, 1. A truth laid down, a promiſe or propheſy that Jeſus Chriſt cometh. 2. The certainty of it aſſerted, *Surely I come.* 3. The ſuddenneſs of his coming, *I come quickly.* Firſt *I come*, that is, he is on his way: he ſays not, I will come, but I come. Although his coming to judgment be not yet, nevertheleſs he is on his way, and his coming is as certain as if he were come, and ſo he ſhould be conceived by us as at hand. 2. *Surely, I come*, This aſſeveration is to put it out of queſtion, eſpecially being ſpoken out of his mouth: its no meſſenger or midſman that ſpeaketh, but Jeſus Chriſt: and it was ſpoken with a *behold* before, verſe 7, and 12. for the ſame end: and here a *ſurely* is added, as we ſaid, to put it out of queſtion, to ſtop the mouths of gainſayers, and to ſtrengthen and comfort the hearts of his people that are longing for, and fainting under the delay of his coming. And, 3. Becauſe he knoweth there is need of preſent conſolation to his own, and that others were ready to ſuſpend his coming, and put the ill day far away, he ſaith, *I come quickly.*

Object. It may be ſaid, how can this be that his coming is quickly, is there not many hundreds of years ſince this was ſpoken, and yet he is not come? The apoſtle, 2 Pet. iii. foreſaw this objection and giveth three anſwers to it, which we ſhall repeat. 1. *A thouſand years to him is but as one day.* 2. Tho' he ſtay, yet he is not idle, *The Lord is not ſlack concerning his promiſe, but is long-ſuffering to us-ward, not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance.* He is perfecting his body, gathering in his ſaints, making all things ready, therefore he is patient to us ward; he delayeth a while, that he may loſe none of his elect; ſo that if any delay be, it is out of no negligence or lazineſs, but to bring all his bleſſed deſigns about. 3. Tho' he ſtay a while, yet his coming is ſo certain, that he would have us looking on it as now, *The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night.* His coming will be ſo quick, that the moſt part will be ſurprized with it; and as to the Godly, it will be timeous, all things being ready.

Theſe words then ſpeak of Chriſt's ſecond coming to judgment, for it is that which is longed for by the ſaints, as that which putteth an end to all their ſtraits, and bringeth a reward to them with it; to this he will come, and very quickly.

The words bear out theſe doctrines. 1. That our Lord Jeſus ſhall ſurely and quickly come to judgment. 2. The ſcope and manner of expreſſion holdeth out this, that the faith of Chriſt's quick approach to judgment, is of great concernment, and very uſeful to believers, therefore it is ſo very often ſpoken of and repeated. 3. That notwithſtanding hereof, the faith of Chriſt's coming is often weak in believers, and had need to be confirmed, therefore is this truth ſo inculcate. Many are like theſe, 2 Pet. iii. 4. *Saying, where is the promiſe of his coming?* 4. Though many queſtion his coming, yet there is nothing more certain, it is confirmed by him that *teſtifieth theſe things.* The ſcope and uſe of all theſe will fall in under the ſame thing, therefore I ſhall ſpeak of all under this general, *That it is a certain and fundamental truth, that our Lord Jeſus ſhall quickly come to judgment;* that we who now live, ſhall ſhortly ſee our Lord Jeſus appear viſibly in the clouds.

I ſhall firſt clear and confirm this truth. 2. Speak to the uſes of it. And, 3. Cloſe with a word of application.

Firſt, I ſhall clear and confirm it from theſe ſcriptures that point at the certainty and manner of his coming. 1. It is told us he ſhall come viſibly, chap. i. 7. *Every eye ſhall ſee him, even they that pierced him.* Matth. xxiv. 30. *They ſhall ſee the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven.* The godly ſhall ſee him, being caught up into the clouds to meet him; and the wicked ſhall ſee him, and not get a hiding place or ſhelter. 2. It is holden out as exceeding glorious and powerful, Mat. xxiv. 30, 31. *The Son of Man ſhall come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.* Matth. xxv. 31. *He ſhall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, and ſhall ſit upon the throne of his glory.* Matth. xvi. 27. *He ſhall come in the glory of his Father.* And this is ſo certain, that it was known from the beginning, Jude verſe 14. Enoch propheſied, *Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thouſands of his ſaints*, or millions of his ſaints: ſo that it is no new, but an old truth. 3. His coming is ſpoken of as moſt dreadful and doleful, chap. i. 7. *All the kindreds of the earth ſhall wail becauſe of him.* They ſhall cry to the hills, fall upon us, and to the mountains, cover us, for great is the day of his wrath, and who ſhall be able to ſtand? as it is, chap. vi. at the end. It is holden out as a moſt comfortable coming to the godly, they ſhall lift up their heads with joy, becauſe the day of their redemption draweth near. They ſhall gather together to him, to the carcaſe they ſhall flock from the *eaſt*, *weſt*, *north* and *ſouth*, to meet the bridegroom. All which ſhew the certainty of this truth, of our Lord's coming to judgment.

Secondly, I ſhall clear it from theſe ſcriptures that hold out Chriſt's end in his coming to judgment. 1. That all his enemies may be made his footſtool, and he may ſtand laſt on the earth, Jude verſe 15. *To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly, of all their ungodly deeds*, and to vindicate his glory *of all the hard ſpeeches, which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken.* 2 Theſſ. i. 7. *To take vengeance on all that know him not, and that have not obeyed the goſpel.* 2. He will come to perform his promiſes to the godly, John xiv. 3. 18. *I go to prepare a place for you, and will come again, and receive you unto myſelf, that where I am there ye may be alſo.* And *I will not leave you comfortleſs; I will come to you.* And John xvi. 22. *I will ſee you again, and your hearts ſhall rejoice.* He has tryſted his coming again with the cloſing of all their miſery, therefore Acts iii. 19. it is called, *the day of refreſhing;* and verſe 21. *The times of the reſtitution of all things.* And Rom. viii. 23. *The redemption of the body.* 3. He comes to clear many things that lay before dark, to clear the godly of many reproaches and imputations lying on them, to make them liars that has loaded them with calumnies, to diſcover hypocrites, Matth. x. 26. *There is nothing covered, that ſhall not be revealed; nor hid, that ſhall not be known.* And *every one ſhall be judged according to their works*, Rev. xx. 12. And *he that confeſſeth him before men, he will confeſs him before his Father; and whoſo denieth him now, will be denied of him then.* Things are in ſuſpence here, and often judgment paſſeth not according to righteouſneſs, therefore the Lord will have wrong ſentences reduced, and matters diſcuſſed, and all

ſpots wiped off his people. And all theſe ends being certain, his coming to judgment muſt alſo be certain.

Thirdly, I ſhall clear and confirm it from theſe ſcriptures that ſpeak of the effects of his coming. 1, The doleful effects of it on reprobates and hypocrites, fear ſhall ſurprize them, they ſhall all wail becauſe of his coming, and would ſhun it, if they could. The ſcripture is full to this purpoſe, *Darkneſs and anguiſh ſhall be upon the earth, perplexity, mens hearts failing them for fear, paleneſs on all faces, ſhaking on all loins, &c.* A ſecond effect is, the conſummation of all things, whereof ſee the end of chapter xx. *The heavens and earth fled away.* 2 Pet. iii. 10. *The heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, and the earth and the works therein ſhall be burnt up.* A third effect is, judgment and the ſetting of thrones, and the calling and convocation of all before him, and ſentencing all. The ſetting of judgment is a proof of the coming of the judge. A fourth effect is, the execution of the ſentence, his calling of the Godly to enter into their Maſter's joy, and his diſmiſſing of the reprobate, that never accepted his offer, nor made peace with him, into everlaſting fire of hell, as Matth. xxv. and of which we ſpoke, chapter xx. at the end.

Fourthly, We may add this word more, the general conſent of all conſciences to this truth, and the fears that will ſurprize wicked perſons ſometimes, under the apprehenſion of this judgment, which they cannot get ſmothered. Rom. ii. 15. It is ſaid, the Gentiles conſcience on the commiſſion of ſin accuſe them, *their conſcience accuſing and excuſing one another*, which is ſpoken with a reſpect to judgment. The conſcience will ſay to the man, this and that you muſt count for. And in this reſpect our Lord Jeſus has *not left himſelf without a witneſs*, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, Acts xiv. 17.

We come to the uſe of this, and it is of concerning uſe, and therefore not in vain repeated and inſiſted on by our Lord.

Uſe 1ſt. To clear and confirm this moſt fundamental point of Chriſtianity, without the faith of which folks are not worthy to be called Chriſtians. It is an article of what we call the *Creed*, *From thence will he come to judge the quick and the dead.* And the common aſſent that is given to theſe articles, and that among the reſt, ſheweth the general aſſent of all Chriſtians unto it.

Uſe 2d. Not only to receive this as a truth, but ſeeing it is a concerning truth, as our Lord ſaith, Luke ix. 44. *Let theſe things ſink in your hearts:* ſo we ſay, let this truth ſink in your hearts. There is no truth you ſhould be more in meditation of, nor have more in your mouth than this, of our Lord's coming quickly to judgment, he is on his way. And we conceive, this is one of the main uſes Chriſt aims at, in repeating and gravely aſſerting it, that it may be ſeriouſly thought upon, and firmly believed, And therefore, 1. Think on the manner and ends of his coming to judgment, that nothing eſcapes folks here, but they will be called to account for it. 2. That his coming will be dreadful to many, that theſe heavens will paſs away with a noiſe, as a piece of cloth that is riven ſcreeds, ſo to ſpeak. And, 3. Think often on the ſuddenneſs of his coming, that as James v. 9. ſpeaketh, *The judge ſtandeth at the door*, and is at hand. 4. That it is moſt certain, which confirmeth all. And theſe things ye would apply in meditation to your own condition, by thinking on his coming to you, and calling you to a reckoning, and to let this go through your thoughts frequently.

The reaſon why we commend to you, to let this truth ſink and give it credit, is, becauſe of the uſefulneſs of it, which might be a doctrine, but we take it in the uſe. The uſefulneſs will appear from theſe conſiderations. It is exceeding uſeful, 1. For the ſubduing of that common atheiſm that is generally in the hearts of men, 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4. where it is told, *There ſhall be mockers in the laſt times*, and atheiſts, that ſhall ſay, *Where is the promiſe of his coming?* The thinking upon Chriſt's coming to judgment keeps the heart in awe, and the conſcience tender, and will bid you take care what you ſpeak or do, if going over your light, of miſpending time. 2. It is exceeding uſeful to work patience under croſs diſpenſations, with which we muſt meet, for Chriſt ſaith, *He comes quickly* to put a cloſe to them. 3. It ſerveth to ſtir up to watchfulneſs, Rev. xv. 13. *Behold, I come as a thief, Bleſſed is he that watcheth.* And watchfulneſs is often preſſed on this ground, 1 Pet. iv. 7. *The end of all things is at hand; be ſober, and watch unto prayer.* 4. It exceedingly ſtrengtheneth

hope, and encourageth to wait on God. In a word, there is no duty but Chriſt's coming is made uſe of as a motive to inforce it, 2 Pet. iii. 11. *Seeing we look for theſe things, what manner of perſons ought we to be in all holy converſation and godlineſs?* 2. There is no ſin but it is an awe-band to keep the heart from it. 3. There is no ſort of croſs but it mitigateth, and ſtrengtheneth, and giveth conſolation under it; therefore there is reaſon of being more than ordinary in the exerciſing of faith, and meditating on this truth.

Uſe 3d. To reprove the generality of men, profane atheiſts and mockers, graceleſs hypocrites, and unwatchful believers.

Firſt, If Chriſt be coming quickly to judgment, what ſaith it to the generality that have not the faith of this, are not minding an appearance before him? Think not but there have been and are ſuch a ſort as the apoſtle Peter, chapter. iii. 3, 4. ſpeaks of, *In the laſt days ſhall be mockers, ſaying, Where is the promiſe of his coming?* And the ſcripture hath not foretold this for nought, are there not many in our days, whoſe practice, if we compare it with the word of God, will be found among theſe mockers, and ſuch as believe not this truth? And that it is ſo, we ſhall give three ſcripture evidences of it. 1ſt, The little fear and awe of God that is generally among men, the little reſpect men have to judgment, the little tenderneſs in their walk, the great ſecurity and uncleanneſs in their peace, the little ſtriving againſt known ſin, &c. *The wickedneſs of the wicked ſaith within my heart, there is no fear of God before their eyes:* ſo the practice of the moſt part ſaith, they have not the faith of a judgment. When they are in a ſtrait by ſea, or in ſickneſs, or ſome ſudden thing befalleth them, then thoughts of judgment will riſe, but they quickly evaniſh; ſo that the moſt part either ſay, he will not come, or, he will not come quickly, and therefore take a liberty. 2. The little preparation that is made for his coming. If ye believed he were coming, and for ſuch ends as ye have heard, ye would be making ready for it. If ye had a letter from a great man, that he were coming to your houſe, ye would prepare for him; yet though ye have Chriſt's letter for it, that he is coming, ye do not prepare for him: this ſaith, ye believe a man, but not Chriſt. And I would poſe you, if the cry were made this night, *The Lord cometh*, what a poſture would you be found in? Many of you would be found napping, many in their ſin, many ſettled on their lees, and would be ſurprized; which ſaith, ye believe not his coming, or elſe that it will not be quickly. 2. The much addictedneſs that is to the things of the world, wherein folks are neſted. Folks take little notice of that, 1 Cor. vii. 29. *This I ſay, brethren, the time is ſhort. It remains, that they that have wives, be as though they had none; they that uſe this world, as not abuſing it.* This language would be more in our hearts, and mortification would be more advanced, if Chriſt's coming, and coming quickly, were believed; but this addictedneſs to the world, like that man, Luke xii. this building and buying, and eager purſuit after theſe things, ſaith, that folks have not a mind to leave them. From this ye would conſider. 1. That the faith of this is rarer than we take it. 2. That Chriſt will not only come, but alſo quickly, and therefore ye ſhould be in readineſs whenever the cry is, *To go out and meet him.*

And 2dly, As the generality of profeſſors, ſo alſo believers would be here reproved, who are ſo unſuitable in their practiſe and diſpoſition to his coming, are making ſo little for it. It is not, unſuitable to our Lord's coming, to be unclear in our condition, whether our peace be made or not, and whether we ſhall be met of him in peace? 2. Is it not unſuitable that we ſhould be fixing our ſelves here, as if this were our reſt, not longing for, or praying for his coming? 3. Is it not unſuitable to have our acquaintance to make with him, at that day? Yea, if it be not made now, it ſhall not be made then. 4. It is unſuitable to his coming, to be unacquainted with our condition, and the frame of our heart. Is it not unſuitable to Chriſtians that have the faith of his coming, and their hope in it as their happineſs, to whom he has given the promiſe of it, to be without the joy of it, the mortification that floweth from it, and to be without the power and uſe of it many ways? And certainly, the more love is in it, and the more it is inculcate, the more will your guilt be that is not minding it.

Uſe 4th, Seeing our bleſſed Lord Jeſus hath ſaid, he cometh, and cometh quickly, prepare to meet him, and that earneſtly and timeouſly. I ſay earneſtly, from the dreadful experience Luke, xiii. of many who come too late, and find the

door ſhut. What I mean by preparing to meet Chriſt, I ſhall take up in theſe few directions, which being practiſed, may ſerve to put you in a poſture for it.

The *firſt*, is this, endeavour to have your peace made with God through Chriſt, Philip. iii. 9. that ye may *be found in him*, that is the firſt and great thing, which will do your turn when Chriſt comes; and it is that which Peter calleth, *to be found of him in peace*. To be hid with a hill or mountain, will not do it: your practiſes and endeavours will be to no purpoſe, if this bargain be not made. This is it that is in the offer before, *Whoſoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely*. And Iſa. lv. 1. *Ho, every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters*. We exhort you not to let this offer paſs, but to yield to it, and receive it.

2*dly*, Not only labour to have your peace made, but to be ſure it is made, 2 Pet. i. 10. *Give all diligence to make your calling and election ſure*. Know that your faith and hope be well grounded, that your confidence is ſuch as will not make you aſhamed. So many as are not endeavouring theſe two, are not in a poſture for Chriſt's coming. It is peace with God and clearneſs in it, that will give peace and boldneſs when the Bridegroom's voice is heard. Such know he is not a ſtranger, but a friend. This makes the difference betwixt ſome, that in that day will lift up their heads with joy, and others that will wail becauſe of him when they find that their confidence is rooted out, and their hope blown up; for they had only an opinion of their intereſt, and no good grounds for it. Therefore try how it is with you, and ſeek to have all things in readineſs, the evidences of ſanctification, holineſs to the Lord in all your converſation, and a good conſcience out of a tender reſpect to God's commandments, to bear witneſs for you.

3*dly*, Seek to have a watchful frame, which comprehendeth all the duties of holineſs; to have your loins girded, and your lamps burning, not to be living ſecurely, but to be vigilant and ſober having your affections at home in heaven, and being mortified to the world. Folks will never be ſpiritual, nor in a poſture for Chriſt's coming, till their loins be girded, and they be mortified to earthly deſigns, and till their lamps be burning Not only you muſt have grace, but grace acting, for it was a fault in the wiſe virgins that they were ſleeping when the cry was made, *The Bridegroom cometh*. Ye would have faith acting, hope lively, your love warm, humility in exerciſe, patience having its perfect work. And under theſe three I take in all theſe duties that are called for from a Chriſtian, in reference to Chriſt's coming, 1. To be in Chriſt. And 2. To be clear ye are in him. And 3. To be in a watchful frame. This frame and poſture will bring boldneſs and joy with it to them that have it, at his appearing.

I ſhall ſpeak to the application of this in two words. And 1. Let me ſadly regret and expoſtulate an unſuitableneſs to this poſture and frame, and an unanſwerableneſs to ſuch a word as this in us. Was there ever a time when there were fewer thoughts of Chriſt's coming? Do ye mind his coming that live in your ignorance and profanity, that are given to tipling, lying, ſwearing? whoſe words are at random; who bow not a knee to God in ſecret, nor in your families; who have taken on a lamp of a profeſſion, but have no oil, neither are careful for it; who never knew what an ill nature was, nor the kindly exerciſe of grace in the heart. Know it for a certainty, there will be great odds when Chriſt cometh, betwixt you that have only lamps without oil, and theſe that have oil with their lamps, betwixt fooliſh and wiſe virgins, betwixt theſe that are prepared to meet him, and others that cared not for it. How can ye think on Chriſt's coming with comfort, who have all your work to do, your peace to make, your heart unſober and gadding, your ſin unpardoned, and whoſe temper is carnal and ſecure? The truth would be terrible, if conſidered, that Chriſt comes quickly, and it will be terrible one day, if ye continue in that condition.

2*dly*, Let me alſo expoſtulate with believers that are fallen aſleep, and have their lamps gone out, whoſe grace is without exerciſe, whoſe zeal for God is grown cold, who are in a ſleepy poſture to meet your Lord, lukewarm and unwatchful. He may in his condeſcending grace let you trim your lamps, but it will be a ſore challenge to you, that ye have given ſuch way to ſecurity, and that as to the thriving of grace, there is little odds betwixt hypocrites and you, This is not like the faith of Chriſt's coming, there is no truth more certain than it is, he cometh quickly. It is ſixteen hundred years ſince it was ſpoken, and there are

many ſaints in glory ſince that time, and if ſo, he is now at the door. The Chriſtians that lived in the primitive times may ſhame us, it was their ordinary word, *The Lord is riſen, and the Lord is coming*, and it made them watch. And though we be nearer his coming by ſo many hundred years, yet how unwatchful are we? Would it have been believed, that theſe who ſhould profeſs the faith of his coming, could notwithſtanding live ſecurely? What if there were not ſuch a word of his coming in all the Bible could ye be more ſecure? Tho' ye were not to appear before him, could ye have fewer thoughts of his coming? And when this word is left on record, and ſo often repeated, and cometh in here as his laſt word, ſhall it have no weight with you? Let it not be ſo, take advertiſement, ere long ye ſhall find the truth of it.

And therefore think upon a few things for your up-ſtirring, to prepare and make ready for Chriſt's coming, 1. Conſider what ye will think of all theſe luſts and pleaſures ye are now taken up with at Chriſt's coming. Ye that will not want your afternoon's cracking, others that will not want your jeer and your mock, others that will not quit your humours, nor the ſatisfaction ye imagine in your tipling, ſome that are profane and ignorant, neglecters of prayer and family-worſhip, others that reſt on a form, and care for no more, What will ye think of yourſelves on that day? Will ye not bluſh and think ſhame of it, when a reckoning ye muſt give, and will not get it ſhifted?

2. Ye that have more cleanly grounds of diverſion, your lawful callings, your merchandiſe or farm, or married wife, your family to provide for, &c. What will ye think of your enjoyments in that day, when there ſhall be neither houſe nor land, no difference betwixt the rich and the poor, the honourable and deſpiſed, when Chriſt's coming ſhall utterly deface this clay idol, and the fire ſhall deſtroy it?

3. Conſider what ye will anſwer for all theſe opportunities that ye had to make your peace, and ſlighted them. Ye had the goſpel offering peace, invitations to make your peace, the ſaving knowledge of Chriſt in plainneſs, liberty to wait on the ordinances without interruption, no perſecution, nor hazard of baniſhment, or forfaultry for coming to the church in your time, and yet ye did not make uſe of theſe opportunities, ye cared not for grace, or did not thrive in it: and ye who did make uſe of them, ye might have made far better uſe of them than ye have done. How will ye anſwer for this at Chriſt's coming? Would God that from the knowledge of the terror of the Lord, we could perſuade you to think more ſeriouſly on it. *Ye muſt all appear before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt*, his coming will put you eternally in an unchangeable condition.

4. Conſider what will come of all your ſhifts and excuſes that ye have now to ſatisfy yourſelves and others with in that day. It will not be, what have ye to ſay of me? He will make you to read Atheiſm and contempt of him in your life and converſation, that did not acknowledge him, much idolatry, pride and ſelfiſhneſs, many omiſſions and commiſſions that were forgotten, when the book ſhall be caſt open, and nothing was ſecret, but it ſhall be revealed. It will not be then, I heard many preachings, I was not a profane mocker, but ſaid my prayers evening and morning, ſee Luke xiii. where ſuch objections were anſwered with a *Depart from me, I know you not.* If ye ſay, ye had a hope of mercy, he will ſay, ye deſpiſed mercy, and will find you without among the dogs or liars, or ſuch as loved lying. The time is coming when all your accounts will be looked over again, and many that have juſtified themſelves, will be unexpectedly condemned and all their proofs whereby they pleaded an intereſt in Chriſt, will be rejected. Ye that ſit and hear theſe things now will one day ſee them performed, and the door caſten in the teeth of many that had the lamps of profeſſion, but ſought for no more. Make ready for it, for there is not a truer word than this, *Behold, I come quickly.* Lord, make us anſwerable to it, and ſuitable to his coming.

SERMON II.

REVEL. xxii. 20.

——Amen. Even ſo, Come LORD JESUS.

THIS is a ſuitable cloſe for one that has been admitted to ſo near fellowſhip with Jeſus Chriſt, as John had been, and a ſuitable frame to take leave of him, and break of for a time that immediate and extraordinary communion. It is a kind word on Chriſt's ſide that he ſaith, *I come quickly:* and it is a hearty welcome on the believer's ſide, giving him a kind invitation, *Amen. Even ſo, come Lord Jeſus,* A word that ſpeaks out a lively frame, and though it be ſhort, yet it ſhews forth much faith and love, faith believing he will come, and love deſiring the fulfilling of the promiſe, and that he would come as he hath ſaid.

That which we are now to ſpeak of, is the latter part of the verſe, which whether John's words or the bride's, or particular believers, it is all one. If they be John's words, it is ſpoken in the name of believers. If the bride's words, it takes in John and all believers. If particular believers words, it is as they are a part of the bride, who will give a hearty amen to this truth, and what he promiſeth, they turn it over into a prayer, and will not be long in doing of it, but will take the opportunity, and as they are deſirous to have it, they will wreſtle and long for it.

We ſhall leave general obſervations, and come to the words as they are knit to the former. There are two words prefixed to ſhew their earneſtneſs in their ſuit. 1. *Amen*, Which is not only a conſent to what is promiſed, and a believing of the truth of it, but a wiſh and ardent deſire that it may be as it is promiſed, as Jer. chap. xxviii. 6. ſpeaks, *Amen, the LORD do ſo, and perform thy words.* So this abrupt amen, is not only their ſetting to their ſeal to the truth of the thing, but a wiſhing and longing for it, even as the ſong of praiſe, Rev. xix. 4. *Amen, Allelujah*, that is, there is good reaſon for it, O that all creatures might praiſe him. So amen here is, Lord we not only believe thy coming, but, Lord, haſten it, let there be no delay of it.

The ſecond word prefixed is, *Even ſo*, which is ſometimes rendered, *So be it*, and ſets out believers ardent deſire to be at the thing, they would have it, and ſay, *Let it be ſo.*

3*dly*, Their ſuit is more directly expreſſed, *Come Lord Jeſus*, a ſhort prayer, but with much faith and love, having in it a ground of hope that he will come, and an encouragement to pray that he may come, for he is Lord and Jeſus, who came to redeem his people, and will come again according to his promiſe, as Heb. ix. 28. *He was once offered to bear the ſins of many; and unto them that look for him, he ſhall appear the ſecond time, without ſin, unto ſalvation.*

The words hold out a lively frame in believers, a frame they ſhould be in: and would God we were all in ſuch a frame to hear and ſpeak of him. This being the ſum and ſcope of all religion; to bring us to a comfortable meeting with Chriſt, they give us theſe three doctrines, 1. That Chriſt's ſecond coming is a moſt deſirable thing to believers, nothing they welcome ſooner, no tidings ſo glad to them. 2. When believers are in a good frame, there is nothing they more long and pray for. 3. This petition hath more than ordinary ſerioufneſs in it, and wreſtling in believers to be at it: for tho' the petition be ſhort, the two words prefixed ſhew their ſerioufneſs that preſent it. All cometh to one purpoſe, and therefore we ſhall not ſpeak of them ſeparately but jointly.

Firſt, That Chriſt's coming is moſt deſirable to believers, is clear from the Old Teſtament. it was Job's great comfort, chap. xix. 25. *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that with theſe eyes I ſhall ſee him, and not another for me; though worms ſhould deſtroy this body, yet in my fleſh I ſhall ſee God, I ſhall behold him, &c.* This is the great conſolation, he hath againſt all his preſent croſſes and temptations; and it is generally given out as the ground of the ſaints conſolation, 1 Theſſ. iv. at the end, when he has been ſpeaking of Chriſt's coming to judgment, and of the diſſolution of all things, *comfort ye one another with theſe words*, ſaith he, that Chriſt ſhall come, and we ſhall ſee it.

Secondly, That believers, in a good frame, (whatever they may do when in a fit of paſſion and unbelief) and when their grace is in exerciſe,

there is nothing they more long and pray for, nothing they are more desirous of. And to take in the

Third, No petition wherein they are more serious, nor more frequent. It is clear from verse 17. before; it is the voice of the Spirit, and of the bride, and the voice of the hearer. *The Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, come.* It is on this ground that, 2 Tim. iv. 8. believers are described from this, that they love his appearance, and long for it. And that same apostle, Rom. viii. 23. saith, *Even we ourselves which have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, viz. the redemption of our bodies;* like a sick man for health, or one in a prison for liberty, or like a loving wife for her husband. And the same considerations will clear believers desire, the ground of their hearty welcome, and the cause of their longing for Christ's coming, there being nothing more motives than this.

1. There is nothing more contributeth to his honour, being that which freeth his honour of the imputations put on it here, and putteth his enemies under-foot; the way of his reigning here ceasing, and he as a full conqueror entering into the possession of all that he has bought, and giving the satisfaction his soul desired for all his soul travails, and never till then. And there being in believers a love to his honour, and to that which may satisfy him, must not that day be wished and longed for by them, when he shall be declared Lord and Christ? That being the solemnizing of the marriage, which till that day is suspended.

2. If we consider the state of the church, it will be made perfect then, the bride then will be presented spotless, all the first-born will make their rendezvous, and the queen will be brought into the king in raiment of needle-work, all the virgins following her; therefore, Rom. viii. 23. it is called *the day of* believers *redemption*, because their redemption is not perfected till then.

3. If we consider all the wicked, and the enemies of Christ, believers in that day they get the full victory and triumph over them all, Rev. xx. 14. *Death and hell is then cast into the lake:* every thing that offendeth is cast out, and Christ's victory, and his saints victory and triumph is not complete till that day come.

4. If we consider our own particular condition, it is desirable for ourselves, it is the day of our particular marriage to Christ, and this maketh it to be the more longed for, because every particular believer have their interest in it, there is then a divorcement betwixt them and the body of death, they are married to Christ, and shall be made like him, we shall then see our Redeemer, and no other for us.

5. All the promises are then made out, 1. The promises that relate to justification, for believers justification shall then be declared openly and judicially, they shall be freed from the guilt of sin, and all the effects of it. 2. The promises of sanctification shall then be perfected, the body that was raised in corruption, shall be raised in incorruption; it was sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it was sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it was sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body; that body that bare the image of the earthly Adam; shall bear the image of the heavenly, &c. 1 Cor. xv. 42, 49. *This corruption shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality.* And Phil. iii. 21. *He shall change our vile bodies, and make them like unto his own glorious body;* our bodies are not so much vile for their natural form, as for original corruption that sticketh unto us. 3. The promises of consolation are then perfected, *Where he is there shall his servants be.* He shall then say, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom;* Come, faithful servants, enter into the joy of your Lord and Master. 4. The promises of freedom from crosses are then perfected. In this life believers are subject to persecution, and have no full freedom from sin, and while sin is in them, the cross attendeth them; but then there shall be no more curse, no more crying, nor complaining, the second coming of Christ brings absolute freedom from sin, and all the effects of it.

Lastly, The promises of glorification, the conforming of us to his image, the placing of us on the throne, the souls and bodies of all the elect united together, and entered in possession of glory, to have rooms among them that stand by, to eat and drink with him in his kingdom; all these, and whatever we can think on that tendeth to believers comfort, and much more is perfected there.

2. As the promises, so all the prophesies of the glory of God, of his victory over enemies, of his calling in his ancient people, &c. shall then be accomplished: that day puts an end to all prophesies, all that is in part is then done away, when that which is perfect is come.

3. The perfecting of believers, I mean all of them together, and in ſoul and body, is fully done in that day, when there ſhall be no darkneſs upon their underſtandings, but they ſhall ſee the incomprehenſible God ſo far as they are capable, and is as meet for them to comprehend him, to the increaſe of their wondering and admiration, and for a foundation to their praiſe without any miſtake, all infirmities being then done away.

4. That time putteth an end to all intervening ordinances, there ſhall be no more preaching nor prayer, no more hearing of preaching, nor reading of ſcripture, nor coming to the church, the Lord is the temple, and the light of that higher houſe, and there is an immediate enjoying of him, which ſwalloweth up the need of all intervening means. And,

5. In a word, there is no more time, and under time we comprehend all that is ſuitable to time, and is under time, death changeth diſtance with God, croſſes and perſecutions, all that is imperfect being the appendicles of time, there is nothing then but what is unchangeable, and in the higheſt degree perfect; and all theſe accompanying Chriſt's coming, and bringing believers conſolation to the height, is it any wonder his coming be deſirable and longed for by them?

Taking this then for a granted truth, that there is nothing more lovely to a believer, nor more deſirous, nor more longed and prayed for by him when he is in a good frame, we come to make our uſe of it.

And firſt, It is a mark to try a lively frame by; for if it be true that believers are not right when they are not in frame, and if it is an evidence of the Bride being in a lively frame, that ſhe ſays, *Even ſo, Come Lord Jeſus*, then believers are in a right frame, when they can, on good grounds, put up this prayer, when they deſire and long for, and wreſtle in prayer for his coming. For clearing of this Uſe, we ſhall ſpeak a word or two, or three things, to prevent miſtakes. 1. To clear what I underſtand by a good or lively frame. 2. What are the characters of a right or ſolid deſire after Chriſt's coming. 3. A word for anſwering ſome objections of believers.

For the firſt, A right frame for Chriſt's coming, and wherein believers deſire his coming, is, in ſhort, this.

1. When believers are clear in their intereſt. 2. When they are acting and exerciſing their faith, love and hope, when it is thus with them, it is impoſſible but they will be longing to have their love ſatisfied in enjoying and delighting in the object of their faith and hope: and a ſerious deſire for Chriſt's coming, is a companion of this frame, and it is impoſſible others can deſire his coming, for they have him to look for as an enemy. And believers cannot deſire his coming, if they be out of the exerciſe of grace, for then they are under ground of challenge.

For the ſecond, the characters of a right deſire after Chriſt's coming. 1. It is accompanied with a good frame, take never that for a right deſire of Chriſt's coming, that proceedeth not from peace with God on good grounds, and from the exerciſe of faith and love in the heart. It's but profane atheiſm that dare ſay, *let the Lord come*, and looketh not into the heart, to ſee if it be in a fit poſture for his coming. 2. A right and ſolid deſire of Chriſt's coming, takes in all that accompanieth his coming, as that Chriſt would perfect his ſaints, that Antichriſt may come down, and the Jews may be called in. As it deſireth that Chriſt may come for its own good, ſo it deſireth that all theſe things may be performed in their new order. So that it is a rational and ſubmiſſive deſire waiting for theſe things that concern his honour. 3. Where a right deſire is there will be a deſire of haſtening all theſe things before his coming, that the Bride may be made ready, the old covenant renewed betwixt him and his people, and Antichriſt brought down, and it dare not precipitate nor half his coming. 4. Where a right deſire is, there will be a ſerious preparing for his coming, that it may be found of him in peace, and in its ſtation endeavouring to make others ready with itſelf, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. *I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord the righteous judge ſhall give unto me; and not to me only, but to all that love his appearing*, and wait for him in the manner that I have done. *I deſire to be with Chriſt, which is beſt of all;* yet he qualifieth it, *Nevertheleſs, to abide in the fleſh, is more needful for you.* Say not that ye love and long for Chriſt's coming, your conſcience beareth you witneſs, that were he coming, you'd fear it. 5. Right longing has a ſober and diſtinct meditation of his coming, that warmeth the heart with love to it,

and ſetteth one to pray for it. *Let thy kingdom come*, which is perfected at Chriſt's ſecond coming. This longing is attended with praying for Chriſt's coming, from the advantage that cometh by it, and from the deſire it has to enjoy him, that it may be free of ſin, and bear his image, 2 Cor. iv. Not ſo much to be uncloathed, as clothed upon, not to be freed of croſſes, or to get a carnal revenge of enemies, but for the believed good that is to be gotten by it, to enjoy him, and ſee Chriſt honoured before all the world; hence right deſires put up this ſuit, *Come Lord Jeſus.*

For the third, To ſpeak a word to ſome objections of believers who may think this hard; and indeed it may be hard to them that never knew what it was to be preſſing out ſuch a word as this, *Come Lord Jeſus*, but have been rather afraid to think or hear of his coming, and there are two or three ſorts of theſe.

1. Such as are in an unſuitable frame: this will prove them not to be in a poſture meet for Chriſt's coming, and that they are fallen from their watchfulneſs, their faith is not acting, and their love is not lively; yet it will not prove that they are not believers, nor that they love not Chriſt's coming: even as a wife may love her huſband's coming home, but becauſe there are ſome things wrong in the houſe that ſhould be righted, ſhe deſireth not his coming as yet, till ſhe get them righted; but an univerſal careleſneſs is not good.

2. There are others that would fain have him coming, but they fear their peace is not made, they would fain be clear they are friends with him, and be in a better frame ere he come. Here there is not a ſcarring at Chriſt coming, but a deſire to be in a better poſture for his coming: there is a fear for ſomething in themſelves, and yet a deſire that he may come, and theſe may well ſtand together; even as the wife that would fain have her huſband at home, and is praying for it, yet ſhe findeth ſomething not right, which ſhe would fain have righted, and then ſhe would welcome him gladly: and this fear flows from ſome reſpect and kindly reverence to him, knowing that every poſture is not ſuitable for him.

A third ſort are theſe that have love to Chriſt and his coming, but think nothing of it, it is ſo little, and this makes them afraid of his coming; they are convinced that Chriſt's company is ſo deſirable, that they would chuſe it before any thing, but their love is not as it ſhould be. And we think this ſhould excite in all an endeavour to have their love more freſh and fervent. So if the uſe be taken right, it will not be diſcouraging, altho' it ſhould warn againſt ſecurity, neither does it ſtrengthen the preſumptuous that have neither faith in Chriſt, nor love to him.

Uſe ſecond, Of diſcovery and reproof, if it be an evidence of a good frame to long for Chriſt's coming, it muſt be an evidence of a bad frame, when Chriſt's coming is not valued, when there is no longing for it, and the heart leaſt deſirous to hear of it; but if folks could have an eternity betwixt Chriſt and them, they would chuſe it. Is it the frame or language of the Spirit, and the Bride, that ſaith, *Come Lord Jeſus*, and our hearts ſaith *Go?* This certainly is an evidence of a bad frame in believers, and in others of want of love, where love to, and longing for Chriſt's coming is altogether neglected. Is there not ground to reprove us that live in this time, for want of this frame of longing for Chriſt's coming? I would hear ſpeak a word to theſe three, 1. To ſome evidences of this ill frame. 2. To ſome cauſes of it. 3. To the unſuitableneſs of it in all, eſpecially in believers.

Firſt, The evidences that we are not longing for Chriſt's coming. And, 1. I would poſe you, if an habitual diſtemper, that your ſpirits are moſt ſubject to, be not a rife evil, that is, never to mind Chriſt's coming, never to pray or long for it. What prayers have been put up for it? Has there ever been any groans betwixt God and you, for haſtening his coming? Lay it to your conſcience, and if this evidence be not clear, you may be judge.

2. Try if the thoughts of his coming be not terrible, or at leaſt werſh and uncomfortable to you, and whether the fear of death and judgment doth not mar other conſolations, and the ſoul would never go out to meet him, but is haled out, it yieldeth not to him freely, that is another evidence that ye are not in a good frame for Chriſt's coming.

A third evidence is, folks little preparing for his coming, and haſtening to meet him, as the word is, 2 Pet. iii. 12. *Looking for and haſtening unto the coming of the Lord*, that when he cometh, there may be no more ado but to cloſe with him, to be tranſporting the beſt half to him, converſing with him, and while he cometh not to us, to be much with him; but how little of this is among

us? Is there any thing more rife than mens living without all reſpect to his coming, not ſetting their affections on things above, nor ſeeking to have their peace made, and their intereſt clear, or to walk ſo as no quarrels may be betwixt Chriſt and them? Would any think that a woman were deſirous of her huſband's home-coming, that were not making ready for him, nor labouring to have things in right order when he comes?

A fourth evidence is, little praying, or endeavouring by prayer, and other means, to advance theſe things that go before his coming, the enlargement of his kingdom, the bringing down of Antichriſt, the adorning of the bride: where this is neglected it telleth folks coldrifeneſs. If there were a love to Chriſt's coming, his kingdom would go near you, and ye would be more public-ſpirited, and not ſo ſelfiſh; a ſelfiſh mind will never deſire his coming.

A fifth evidence is, exceeding addictedneſs to the things of the world; theſe that have not in their heart quit the world, deſire not his coming. And I think there was never a time when the world had more of folks hearts, the great ſecurity and much temporizing that is amongſt us, telleth how much we are wedded to it, and reſolute on it, and it ſaith, we have no deſire of his coming. The Theſſalonians were upon one extreme, careleſs, and would not work, 2 Theſſ. iii. 10. And we are upon another extreme, of addictedneſs to the world.

Secondly, The cauſes of this evil, or the reaſons why Chriſt's coming is ſo little longed for, are theſe.

1. Little faith of the great advantages that accompany his coming, it is not believed that his appearing will be ſo glorious and advantagious, and ſo full of happineſs, that at the diſſolution of all theſe things there will be a full victory over all enemies, no ſin nor ſorrow any more to believers, there is a faintneſs in the faith of believers, that marreth the longing for his coming. 2. As there is little clearneſs in the general, ſo far leſs is there a particular application of the faith of Chriſt's appearing for their glory and happineſs. And while ſouls are under doubts whether they will get good of Chriſt at his appearing, they cannot long for it: but were folks clear in their intereſt, and that all the promiſes will be performed to them at his coming, they would be much more longing for it. Folks little deſire of Chriſt's coming, telleth their confidence is rather ſecurity than true peace: for, is it poſſible, if Chriſt's coming were believed, and your intereſt in it, but your ſoul would cry out, *When ſhall the day dawn, when he ſhall rent theſe heavens and come down?* There would be a longing to be through time, and a holy impatience at the miſgiving of any thing ye thought might lengthen his ſtay. 3. Folks ſettling here, as if their reſt were here, they hereby declare, that they place not their happineſs in Chriſt's ſecond coming, but are ſaying, *Who will ſhew us any good*, and *it is good for us to be here?* They have ſome deſign about creature-comforts, and would have that perfected ere Chriſt come, and therefore long not for his coming, not conſidering that this is the moſt noble deſign, and that the preparing for Chriſt's coming layeth ground for a better portion to them and their children than all their attainments in a world. The faith of Chriſt's coming, and mens placing their happineſs in it, would awaken their deſires after it; if folks ſtock were in this veſſel, it would be longed for. 4. Little experience of his coming now, in the ſenſible intimations and manifeſtations of his Spirit and preſence; were folks clear in their intereſt, and frequent in communion with him, they would be ſaying with old Simeon, *Now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation.*

When there are freſh proofs of Chriſt's ſweetneſs, and views of his excellency gotten, there will be longing deſires of immediate enjoying of him: and little of this, makes little crying out for the living God, or for appearing before God; ye taſte not that the Lord is gracious, elſe ye would long for it. If ye would taſte and ſee how good he is, if ye had a little experience of the raviſhment of his ſweetneſs, ye would ſay, when a taſte of him is ſo delectable, ſweeter than honey and the honey-comb, as hid manna, what muſt the full harveſt and compleating of the bargain be, when the arles is ſo ſweet? And this would make you long for his coming, as Titus ii. 13. From theſe cauſes may be gathered the means to keep the heart in a good frame for his coming.

The third thing, is, that this is moſt unſuitable to all, and eſpecially to believers, that there ſhould be ſo little longing and deſire for Chriſt's coming.

ſo little praying for it. I may leave it on you to judge, is it ſuitable to the great advantages we profeſs to expect by his coming, or the faith of them? Is it ſuitable to the many promiſes we have, and our profeſſion of the right we have to them, not to deſire the fulfilling of them? No ſooner doth Chriſt promiſe, but as ſoon John, or the bride here, has an echo for the fulfilling of it. Is it ſuitable to profeſs love to Chriſt, and yet not deſire union with him, and the full coming of his kingdom? And is it not unſuitable to what he has done to make way for his ſecond coming? He came in the form of a ſervant, and did and ſuffered what he did, and ſuffered to make way for his coming, to take believers to glory. Much weakneſs of faith, want of love, uncertainty of hope, diſreſpect and want of regard to Chriſt may be read out of this frame. The promiſe is not improven, and we know not what it is to be comforted in it.

Uſe third. To ſtir us up to this as a duty called for from us, and as a frame that is requiſite to be ſerious in deſiring, longing and praying for Chriſt's coming, and improving what goes along with it. That which we would preſs, is,

1. That your love may be towards it, that ye may never riſe nor ly down at night, but your deſires may be venting this way.

2. That ye would be putting up more prayers for it. We conceive this may be a cauſe of his delay, and of the delay of many things that are to go before it, little diligence in praying for it, and theſe things in order to it.

3. We would recommend to you, to be more ſerious in longing and praying for it, as that wherein our Lord's honour conſiſteth, and the thriving of his kingdom, and whereby we evidence a kindly ſympathy with our Lord; and do not content ourſelves to paſs it over with a dry wiſh. And for your upſtirring to it, conſider, that it is here holden forth as a frame of heart that is ſpiritual, *The Spirit and the Bride ſay, Come:* yea, in ſome ſort, it is holden forth as the believer's duty. And I would lay it upon you, as ye would evidence yourſelves native branches of this vine, and members of the body, whereof he is the head, and a part of his bride, ſay, *Come Lord Jeſus.*

Uſe fourth. It is ground of notable conſolation to believers. Is it not great ground of conſolation, that our Lord hath ſaid and confirmed it, *That he is coming, and that he is coming quickly?* Many dark words are in this book, but it is clear, he ſaith, *He cometh quickly, to judge the world, to raiſe your bodies, to make up the union betwixt him and them, to ſolemnize the marriage, to bring you to the wedding, that love his appearing;* and all that ye have heard ſpoken of it, ſhall be made good.

Laſtly, Know ye that ſlight Chriſt's coming, that are not preparing and longing for it, ye mar yourſelves of much comfort, your loſs is great here, for ye want the comfort that cometh by the promiſe of his coming; and your loſs ſhall be unſpeakable hereafter, when ye ſhall be ſhut from his preſence eternally, Luke xxi. 26, 28. Theſe two are put together, and Chriſt's coming in the middle, *Mens hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after theſe things that are coming.* But ſpeaking to the diſciples, and in them to all believers, he ſaith, *When theſe things come to paſs, then look, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth near*, your happineſs ſhall then be compleated. Seeing then it is the language of the Lord, *Behold, I come quickly;* and the language of the Spirit, and the Bride, of John, and all believers, *Even ſo, come Lord Jeſus.* All of you endeavour ſuch a frame, as ye may join in that petition on good grounds.

And *2dly*, Let your hearts cloſe, and give an hearty echo to that word, *I come quickly*, out of love and longing for his coming, and ſay, *Amen. Even ſo, come Lord Jeſus.* And even ſo, let him come quickly. *Amen.*

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F I N I S.

AN

ALPHABETICAL TABLE

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THE END OF THE TABLE.

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Thomas Will, baker
John Duncan, wright
Parlane M'Farlane, ſawer
John Hutton, baker
William Begg, grocer
Alexander Frazer, carpet-weaver
John Donaldſon, weaver
John Carſwell, baker
James Stark, maſon
John Paterſon, change-keeper
David Hamilton, maſon
James Ruſſel, ſmith
John Græme, hair-dreſſer
David Kinniment, wright
John Knox, do.
Thomas Carmichael, do.
Thomas Haſtie
James Rattrie, baker
John Robertſon, ſmith
John Fleming, weaver
Iver M'Kay
John Rankin, weaver
Thomas Innes, do.
George Wallace, wright
Alexander Dobbie, weaver
Robert Glen, do.
John Arthur, do.
Robert Taylor, do.
John Yuill, do.
James Gray, do.
Robert Gray, do.
James M'Adam, do.
John Smillie, do.
James Brown, ſawer
Thomas Algie, ſergeant
Archibald Wilſon, weaver
Andrew Blair, wright
John M'Lever, do.
James Young, ſawer
James Yuill
Thomas Young, carrier
Peter M'Alpine, weaver
Dougald M'Alpine, do.
William Anderſon, ſmith
Robert Jamieſon
John Allan, wright
Robert Finlay, carrier
William Brown, weaver
James Campbell, quarrier
John Kerr, workman
William M'Hutchon, wright
William Wallace, workman
Robert Jamieſon, baker
James Hunter, wright
Patrick Ritchie, do.
George Hay, do.
James Mack, do.
Walter Eaſton, do.
Alexander Dykes, ſmith
Joſeph Harriſon, incle-weaver
William Taylor, weaver
Alexander M'Lean, do.
Robert Bar, maſon
John Sutherland, gardener
Thomas Miller
William Reid, plaſterer
John Higgins, hair-dreſſer
James M'Lauchlan, founder
John Witherſpoon, grocer
Peter Ferguſon, wright
William Gray, weaver
John Paterſon, fringe maker
David Dove, ſlater
John Thomſon, plaſterer
Francis Whyte, weaver
Thomas Steven, drawer
Gavin Park, carter
James Leck, plaſterer
John Johnſton, miller, Town's-mill

BARONY PARISH.

John Reid, wright
James Cunningham, carpenter
Thomas Robertſon, maſon
Walter Buchanan, farmer

James Logan, Miller
William Thomſon, weaver
William M'Korkal, carter
James Miller, farmer
James Donaldſon, ſawer
John Hunter, bleacher
William Witherſpoon, farmer
Alexander Lightbody, ſervant
George Johnſton, farmer
Walter Johnſton, do.
John Alexander, wright
John Buchanan, farmer
Walter Buchanan, do.
Thomas Reid, do.
William Walker, do.
Samuel Brown, ſawer
Thomas Paterſon, ſmith
Robert Whyte, wright
John M'Lea, do.
William Donaldſon, ſervant
Alexander Drummond, ſawer
Thos. Henderſon, wood-merchant
Andrew Juery, boatman
James Smith
Robert Harvie, ſmith
James Rankin, wright
John Reid, do.
John Dalgliesh, bleacher
David Maſon, coal-hewer
John Maſon, do.
James Minzie, farmer
James Thomſon, workman
Thomas Bell
John Watſon
John Livingſton, farmer
Robert Jaffrie, coal-hewer
Robert Finlay, weaver
John Lindſay, farmer
Alexander Gilleſpie, ſervant
John Wilſon, farmer
William Dunlop, weaver
William Waddel, wright
Robert Wallace, do.
James Stewart, lint-miller
John Robb
Margaret Bell
William Hunter, hill-man
Robert Stevenſon, do.
James Porter, weaver
John Dinſmuir, do.
John Paterſon, ſmith
David Stevenſon, coal-hewer
John Scobie, do.
James Hunter, do.
Simon Frazer, do.
George Simpſon, do.
James Reid, do.
Alexander Lethem, do.
James Baird, do.
Alexander Baird, do.
James Marſhall, do.
Angus M'Pherſon, miner
John Kirkwood, coal-hewer
John Brown, do.
Duncan M'Nab, ſhanker
John Roy, coal-hewer
Jennet Frazer
William Mochrie, farmer
James Richardſon, weaver
James Kinniburgh, taylor
Archibald Richardſon, coal-hewer
James Crighton, do.
Alexander Marſhal, ſhoemaker
Hugh Kinniburgh, weaver
James Shaw, do.
John Barr, coal-hewer
James Oliphant, do.
James Scott, hillman
William M'Millan, weaver
John Ferguſon, do.
Robert Davie, do.
William Watſon, labourer
William Breckinridge, weaver
Robert Thom, do.
Alexander Corbet, do.
John Kinniburgh, do.
George Watt
David Litſter, coal-hewer
Walter Whyte, do.
Walter Wardrop
Joſeph Cunningham, weaver
Thomas Barr, do.
John Niſbet
John Paul, ſawer
James Hind, coal-hewer
James Richardſon, ſen.
John Richardſon, jun.
William Glen, weaver
Donald Frazer, do.
Andrew Burnſide, coal-hewer
John Adamſon, do.
Walter Hill, weaver
Fleming Dunbar, coal-hewer
Alexander Baird, do.
George Baird, do.
John Beveridge, do.
Henry Moore, hillman
Andrew Smith, do.
William M'Farlane, carter
William Pettegrew
Margaret Mitchell, Carnytine
Jennet Donald
John M'Farlane
Peter Ferrie, farmer
James Dounie, portioner
Robert Donald, ſmith
John Lowrie, farmer
William Rennie, taylor
John Henderſon, weaver
James Morton, do.
James Baird, do.
William Tennent, portioner
Thomas Beveridge, collier
Robert Miller, do.
John Brown, workman
John Leitch, gin-boy
Thomas Roſs, ſmith
John Livingſton, collier
John Snedden, do.
Robert Gibſon, do.
Charles Brown, plowman
John Young, weaver
William Paterſon
John M'Farlane, weaver
James Chalmers, ſhoemaker
John Gray, do.
James Rennie, carter
James Bain, collier
Iſabel Murray
Robert Wilſon
Crawford Jamieſon, collier
James M'Allister, weaver
William Lithgow, do.
James Wilſon, collier
John Hadday, do.
George Crighton, do.
James Barrie, weaver
Hugh Dunbar, collier
John Dounie, do.
John Walker, do.
James Kirkland, wright
George Smith, do.
William Baxter, do.
William Boggle, do.
John Moſie, do.
John Cragie, weaver
James Gilmour, taylor
Alexander Dunbar, collier
Daniel M'Millan, weaver
Charles Rankin, do.
George Watchman, collier
John Walker, do.
Robert Moffat, do.
James Mair, weaver
John Shearer, ſmith, Camlachie
William Lethem, collier
David Perſon, weaver
John Caddel, do.
James Moffat, miner
John Lightbody, do.
Alexander M'Lauchlan, weaver
David Marſhal, do.
Andrew Marſhal, do.
James Dalgliesh, do.
Robert Shanks, do.
Joſeph Rennie, do.
Archibald Angus, ſmith
William Muir, ſtocking-maker
David Tennent, printer, Anderſton
Robert Marſhal, do.
John Robb

CALTON.

James Dounie,
George Crawford,
Robert Anderſon,
David Wright,
Thomas M'Millan,
William Neal,
Charles Philips,
William M'Nair,
James Sommers,
James Spears,
John Alliſon,
Daniel Hamilton,
Robert M'Vey,
John Watſon,
John Govan,
Gilbert Garth,
Thomas Whitelaw, } Weavers
James Maitland,
John Thomſon,
David Burnſide,
William Brodie,
William Gemmel,
Peter Rennie,
Robert Glaſgow,
John Stewart,
James Rea,
Thomas Perry,
Robert Buchanan,
William Johnſton,
Robert Donald,
Alexander Provan,
William Malcom,
John Alexander,
Angus M'Donald,
Peter M'Nab,
John Maiklem,
Farquh. Sommervell,
David M'Nair,
William Cragie,
Peter M'Farlane,
Archibald Miller,
John Rankin,
William Cook,
James Gray,
William Stevenſon,
James Brown,
John Hamilton,
Robert Jaffrie,
Alexander Waddel,
James Houſton,
Thomas Walker,
John Knox,
James Clark,
John White,
Alexander Rankin,
Alexander Younger,
George Rankin,
John Cunningham,
James M'Nair,
William Waugh,
James Harvie,
William Kerr,
James Johnſton,
Alexander Duncan,
William Fleming,
Sam. M'Adam, jun. } Weavers
John Strachan,
Dougald Rowan,
John Gardner,
Matthew Foreſt,
James M'Alaſter,
James Fleming,
Laurick Turnbull,
James Lawſon,
John Lawſon,
Robert Ruſſel,
Robert Hutton,
John Ferguſon,
Alexander Maſon,
James Angus,
James Wilkie,
Alexander Walker,
John Rea,
William Walker,
Robert Wilſon,
David Allan,
John Forſyth,
Robert Taylor,
David Smillie,
John Rodger
James Gray,
James M'Coul,
Charles Clydesdale,
Alexander M'Donald,
James Brown,
James Stewart,
William Glen,
John Thomſon,
Alexander Wood, wright
Henderſon Newlands
Agnes Todd
Robert Mitchel
William Scougal
Alexander M'Leran, ſmith
Alexander M'Kinzie, gardener
Walter Drummond, printer
Adam Brown, taylor

Robert Buchanan, wright
James Litſter, do.
David Elder, do.
John Buchanan, do.
James Wotherſpoon, do.
John Donald
John Crawford, collier
Chriſtian Graham
Mary M'Korkle
Jennet Zuill
James Hamilton, confectioner
William Wardrop, cotton-ſpinner
Alexander Thomſon, ſmith
Alexander Muirhead, ſhoemaker
Patrick Doull, do.
James Gibſon, ſmith
David M'Dougal, nailer
John Robertſon, hammerman
Thos. Cullan, workman, Camlachie
John Gray, weaver, Barrowfield Br.

GORBALS.

Robert Turnbull, weaver
Robert Giffan, do.
Robert Hutcheſon, do.
James Turnbull, do.
James Paterſon, do.
Robert Pettegrew, do.
Donald Gordon, do.
Robert Paterſon, ſmith
James Lowrie, do.
James Riddel, do.
John Brown, do.
John M'Donald, do.
John Barr, do.
John Yuill, do.
John Durham, do.
James M'Farlane, do.
Richard Clyde, do.
Mitchel Ferguſon, wheel-wright
Alexander Moriſon, plaſterer
John Marſhal, ſawer
Andrew Niven
Thomas Meikle
John Granger, maſon
John Pollock, do.
John Wallace, ſhoemaker

GOVAN PARISH.

Archibald Hunter, Robert Barr, William Walker, William Clews, William Adam, Laurence Philip, Robert Crawford, William Bell, John Rallay, Thomas Park, James Paterſon, Alexander Ritchie, William Houſton, John Struthers, Thomas Robertſon, James Deans, Thomas Hoſie, Alexander Finlay, Adam Colquhoun, Robert Lyle, Archibald Rowan, David Smith, } Weavers

Robert Kent, wright
John M'Gibbon, do.
John Stewart, do.
Thomas Smith, do.
Adam Ruſſel, ſmith
John Donald, farmer
Jennet M'Kie
John M'Gregor, weaver, Partick
Charles Caſſels, do. do.
John Marſhal, miller, do.
Archibald Wilſon, do. do.
Matthew Bain, hinge-maker
Adam Guthrie, dryſter
Joh. Auchinclos, ſaddle-tree-maker
Robert Perry, maſon
William Stewart, collier, hill-head
John Ferrier, do. do.
Matthew Liddle, do. do.
David Liddle, do. do.
William Liddle, do. do.
James Paterſon, do. do,
Alex. Strunack, do. do.
Francis Paterſon, hillman
James Jackſon, farmer, Balgrie
James Park, do.
John Duncan, mill-field
John Crawford, bleacher, Kirkley
Jane Crawford, do. do.
Jo. M'Kean, farm. Laigh Balſhagrie
John Muir, do. do.
Ja. Monteath, do. do.
Rob. Parot, bleacher, N. Woodſide
George Kirk, weaver, Woodſide
Jas. Woodrow, weaver, Renfrew

NEW KILPATRICK.

Jo. Wilſon, paper-maker, Dalſholm
Thomas Purdon, do. do.
James Martin, do. do.
Archibald Barton, do. do.
Peter Duncan, copper-plate printer
Andrew Rankin, print-cutter
Archibald Craig
Robert Deans
Robert Gilmour, engraver
Daniel M'Allum
Donald M'Allum, labourer
James M'Lintock, printer
Jo. Colquhoun, Weſterton Garſcube
Walter Burnſide, do.
Will. Aitken, workman, do.
Alexander Campbell, taylor
David Miller, wright, Avenuehead
Malcom M'Allum, labourer, do.
Archibald Sword, wright
George Bryce, farmer, Blardinnie
John Lang, weaver, Lochen
Ja. M'Murray, workman, Burſden
Robert Weir, Craig Dow
Thomas Provan, wright
John Sinclair, farmer, Ferguſton
Jo. Buchanan, W. M. Kilmardinie
Robert Weir, miller, Millgavie
James Meiklejohn, weaver, do.
John Douglas, do.
John Blair, do.
John Buchanan, do.
Jo. Whitelock, bleacher, Lochbrea
Agnes Reid, do. do.
James Young, flax-dreſſer, do.
Robert Peter, dyer do.
Ann Carnduff, do.

James Gardner, printer, Lochbrea
Matt. Meiklejohn, do. do.
John Lyle, do. do.
James Meiklejohn, do. do.
David M'Mutrie, do. do.
Alexander Brown, do. do.
Margaret Watſon, bleacher, do.
James Peter, miller, do.
Malcom Blair, weaver, do.
Walter M'Lauchlan, taylor, do.
William Buchanan, Balgafrie
Walter M'Lay, farmer, Chapelton
John Douglas, Barr Loch
John Bryce, portioner, Mugdock
Jo. Dickſon, coal-m. Knight's Wood
Archibald Campbell, collier
William Watt, do.
Robert Colquhoun, do.
James Wilſon, do.
Robert Smith, do.
William Anderſon, do.
William Smith, do.
Matthew Bennie, engine-man
Richard Newlands, do.
John Whitelaw, waggoner
Robert Wilſon, banks-man
Thomas Craig, ſmith
James Pearſon, wright
George Miller, do.
Peter M'Kinlay
Katharine Eadie
Archibald M'Donald
James Dun
John Scott
Thomas Sommervell
William Beveridge
William Smith
John Walker
James Roſs
George Beveridge
David White
William Ewing
David Logan
James Thomas
James Aitken, horſe-keeper
Jo. Fletcher, weaver, N. Kilpatrick
John Warnock, Jordan-hill
Dun. Graham, Lawmuir lime-work
Robert Walker, collier, Annaſland
John Colquhoun, do. do.
John M'Donald, do. do.
James Durie, do. do.
James Colquhoun, do. do.
John Shearer, do. do.
Char. Colquhoun, do. do.
Will. Donaldſon, do. do.
Robert Wilſon, do. do.
John Eadie, do. do.
John Farie, hillman, do.
Ja. Colquhoun, overſman, do.
Thomas Muir, workman
Alexander Gardner, do.
Alex. Davidſon, collier, Newtown
John Stevenſon, do. do.
Hen. M'Gregor, ſmith, Strathblane
Helen Maſon, do.
Walt. Campbell, Newton Campſie
William Wood, bleacher
William Gardiner, printer
John Baird, do.
Samuel Stevenſon, do.
John Gardner, do.
Andrew White, dyer

Ja. Moriſon, f. Mains of Banclough
Will. Moriſon, do. do.
Alexander Calderwood, printer
Alexander Buchanan, wright
John Buchanan, ſhoemaker
James Donald, Greenhead
John Lockart, weaver
James Zuill, cutter, Glorat
Dougald M'Pherſon, do.
James Sym, dyer
Archibald Duncan, printer
George Wright, do.
Moſes Nelſon ſerv. at Baclugh mill
Ja. Stork of Adamſlee, Kirkintilloch
Walter Lindſay, do.
John Gray, wright, do.
John Allan, do. Moſs Water
Will. Hay, farmer in Inchch Sherva
Ja. Young, weaver, Cumbernauld
Will. Allan, wright, Aughenſterie
David Auchinvoll, do.
Alexander Dickſon, farmer, Garbet
John Lang, do. Carbren
Jo. Fleming, wright, Cumbernauld
David Rennie, weaver, do.
David Bock, ſervant, do.
John Dickſon, ſmith, do.
And. Wilſon, maſ. Craigs of Linzie
William Bath, Conderet
Matthew Watſon, do.
John Henderſon, wright, Denny
Jo. Ewing, portioner, Cumbernauld
John Shaw, do.
John M'Nicoll, carrier

SLAMMANAN.

John Waddel of Raſhiehill
David Crammar, taylor
James Shaw of Caſtle-hill
Robert Ingles, farmer, Balluhatſon
James Strathern, weaver
William Graham, do. Bathgate
John King, maſon in Shotts

CALDER.

Ja. Marſhal, weaver, Coſhnach ſteps
Jo. Barcley, jun. do. do.
Thomas Ingles, do. do.
Rob. M'Farlane, do. do.
Andrew Cowan, do. do.
George Barr, do. do.
Hugh Johnſton, do. do.
Walt. Johnſton, do. do.
John Anderſon, do. Auchnern
William Liddel, do. do.
William Allan, do. do.
Ja. Campbell, farmer, do.
Rob. Marſhal, farmer, Weſter-hill
Will. Walkinſhaw, mill. Rabryſton
Dav. Colquhoun, maſon and wright in Chryſton
William Angus, farmer in Inch
Jo. Thom, weav. Garfarie hill-head

NEW MONKLAND.

James Gilleſpie
James Aitken
Humph. Walker, printer Annathill
Andrew Gray, do. do.
William Duncan, do. do.
Alexander Parker, do. do.

James Smith, Annathill
Iſabel Thomſon
Martha Hutcheſon
John Paul, Holan-fall
David Gilleſpie, Broomlies
Alexander Bell of Croftſide
John Dickſon, cooper in Geins
John Paterſon, weaver, do.
John Main, farmer in Glentore
William Paul of Craig-ſide
James Rodger of Greens
William Paul, collier, Broomlies

OLD MONKLAND.

Thos. Paterſon, farmer, Hutcheſon
James Stevenſon, weaver, Carmyle
William Brock, do. do.
Alex. Pettegrew, do. do.
Mary Todd, do. do.
John Wallace, do. do.
Robert Donald, ſmith do.
John Walker, ſhoemaker do.
Margaret Walker do.
Geo. M'Farlane, printer do.
James Hamilton, do. do.
John Buntin, do. do.
Laurence Smith, print-cutter
Archibald Wallace, workman
James M'Allum
John Miller, weaver, Muirhead
James Muir, do. do.
Robert Ruſſel, do. do.
Gavin Miller, do. Croſhill
David Rodger, maſon
Ja. M'Clelland, miller, Haggmill
Elizabeth Weir, Eaſter Shaw-head
Ann Gardner, Eaſter Coat-hill
Alexander Fleming, collier in Coats
Thomas Hynd, do. do.
Thomas Mador, do. do.
John Hamilton, do. do.
Malcom Innes, do. do.
Thomas Frew, do. do.
James Aitken, do.
William Hunter, do.
James Munro, do.
Robert Ruſſel, do.
James Fleming, do.
David M'Mutrie, do.
Thomas Walker, do.
Will. Sawers, inn-keeper, Airdrie
Hugh Thom, workman, do.
William Muirhead, do.
Robert Bell, wright, do.
Will. Houſton, Fullerton coal-work
Matthew Strang, do. do.
Andrew Folds, do. do.
Robert Aitken
James Naiſmith, Bogle's hole
James Reid, do.
John Strang, farmer, Main-hill
William Gray, jun. Fiſher-row
Jo. M'Donald, ſchoolm. Tolecroſs
William Young, hillman, Barachnie
Alexander Fleming, collier, do.
Robert Reid, do. do.
John Shedden, farmer, do.
John Breckinridge, weaver, do.
John Baird, do. do.
Rob. Pender, portion. Netherhouſe
John M'Culloch, do. Sheepford
John Pettegrew,
Robert Pettegrew, ſawer
Alex. Baird, farmer, Woodhead
Will. Colquhoun, farmer, O. M. k.
Robert Watt, wright, do.
James Murray, ſawer, do.
Robert Barrie, do. do.
Gavin Wilkie, ſervant, Roſshall
James Muir, do. do.
Elizabeth Clelland in Rins
Geo. Angus, woodcutter, Hamilton
William Wright, farmer, Langlone
Robert Dalziel, ſawer, do.
James Fairlie, ſmith, do.
William Taylor, carpenter, do.
James Baird in Coats
James Hodge do.
John Ruſſel, wright, Woodnook
William Ogilvie, collier, do.
Andrew Riddle, weaver, Coathill
John Pettegrew, jun. wright
James Fairlie, dyer, Haggmill
John Allan, weaver
Ninian Struthers, do.
Mary Clydesdale
Will. Cullen, farmer, Weſter-houſe
Thos. Donald, ſmith, Barton's hill
Ja. Muffat, workman, Woodhead
George Young, ſmith in Coats
Alexander Harvie, ſen.
Alexander Harvie, jun.
John Johnſton in Greens
Hugh Pate, land ſurveyor
James Smith, Coat Bridgend
John Walker, Clover, E. Shawhead
Hugh Duncan, gardener, Roſshall
Alexander Calder, workman, do.

RUTHERGLEN.

George Paterſon, weaver
James Dun, collier
James Lawſon, carter
Thomas Jackſon, workman

CAMBUSLANG.

Alexander Muir, weaver
John Clark, do. in Coats
Thomas Clark, do. do.
Thomas Dobbie, do. Vicarland
William Fyfe, do. Kirkhill
James Campbell, do. do.
Alexander Young, wright
Archibald Pearſon of Chapel-main
Ja. Miller, weaver in Howie's hill
Rob. Miller, do. do.
Ja. Galbraith, do. do.
Alex. Liddle, do. do.
Rob. Hamilton, do. Deansfield
Will. Peacock, do. do.
John Dyer, do. do.
John Weir, farmer, Overton
John Craig in Flemington
Robert Murdoch, farmer, Hallſide
Robert Summers, weaver, do.
John Gourlie, farmer, do.
Tho. Lindſay, weaver, Cambuſlang
Will. Galbraith, do. do.
Andrew Fife, do. Deans
Robert Bowes, do. do.
James Ruſſel, do. do.
William Finlay, farmer in Newton
John Croſs, do. do.
Tho. Robertſon, gardener Newton
Rob. Breechen, miller, Clydes-mill
John Stobo, do. do.
Robert Jackſon, weaver
Ja. Maſon, farmer, Chapel-mains
Andrew Arbuckle, collier in Coats
Robert Muir, do. do.
John Young, do. do.
Robert Gibb, do. do.
Charles Glen, do. do.
Peter Clark, jun. do. do.
George Muir, do. do.
Robert Kelſo, wright, do.
Ja. Wallace, weaver, Sauchie Bog
James M'Lean, ſchoolmaſter
Robert Campbell
Alexander Anderſon, ſmith
Thomas Bowman, farmer, Bog-end
Robert Edmonſton, jun.
John Chalmers, weaver
Peter Young, weaver, Sauchie Bog
Tho. Jackſon of Bardykes, Blantyre
John Moore of Carnes-well
Alex. Fleming, labourer, Coats
James Niſbet, farmer, Well-ſhot

EAST-WOOD PARISH.

POLLOCKSHAWS.

Robert Dalglieſh, } Weavers
Francis Buchanan, }
Neal M'Nicoll, }
John Findlay, }
Alexander Ralſton, }
James Liddle, }
Richard Livingſton, }
Thomas Irvine, }
William Peacock, }
John Donald, }
James Richman, }
Robert Logan, }
Robert Clark, }
William Stevenſon, }
James Lang, }
John Burnſide, }
Hugh Fleming, }
William Watſon, }
Matthew Stewart, }
John Urie, }
John Stewart, }
Robert M'Nee, }
Thomas Adamſon, }
Colin Campbell, }
Peter Colquhoun, }
Thomas M'Farlane, graver
James M'Lelland, do.
Alexander Malcom, maltſter
Robert Dickſon, ſtockingmaker
John Robertſon, maſon and wright
George Brown, do.
Peter Lamb, do.
James King
James Hoſie
William Hill, labourer
George King, do.
James Robertſon, farmer
James Hoſie, cutter
Archibald Paterſon, Henry's Croft
William Govan, Allos-bridge
John Lochead, farmer, Ardchead
Robert Stewart in Sclates
Margaret Gilmour, do.

PAISLEY PARISH.

Walter Lindſay, ſmith
William Sanderſon, maſon
John Brown, do.
Thomas Gowans, do.
Archibald Yuill, do.
James Philip, wright
Alexander Adam, weaver
John Orr, do.
David Robertſon, do.
John Mauchen, do.
Daniel M'Gown, clockmaker
Robert M'Keſſock, weaver
George Jackſon, farmer, Prieſt-hill
John Hart, farmer, Nitfall
Andrew Walker, hillman
Thomas Cochran, weaver
William Barr, printer, Thornbank
Walt. M'Gregor, pr. cutt. Croſsmill
James Eaſdon, printer
John Brown, do.
James Maitland, do.
James Jervie, do.
Robert Weir, do.
James Lauchlan, do.
Buchanan Ruſſel, engraver
John Moffat, do.
Gavin Peacock, calender-man
William Wood, labourer
Andrew Muir, Woodhouſe
William Barr, weaver
James Brown, farmer, Blackbyrrs
John Thomſon, do.
John Barcley, weaver, Dovehill
Alexander Zuill, do.
Adam Ferguſon, do.
John M'Culloch, do.
Will. Dobbie, weaver, Sandyholes
James Gowans, do.
William Anderſon, ſervant, Hurlet
Hugh Walker, do. do.
Robert Thornton, hillman, do.
Richard Livingſton, collier, do.
Robert Hart, do. do.
James Brown, labourer, do.
Mary Strathern, do.
Robert Stewart in Combsthorn
James Michael, do.
James Peacock, printer
Tho. Gilmour, weaver, Righouſe
Ja. Pollock, labourer, Arthurlayhill
Thomas Brown, carter in Patter
James Stewart, collier, Neatherton
Geo. Cumming, do. do.
Jo. Auchincloſs, weav. Logan-race
James Eaſdon, do. do.
James Ritchie, do. Carach-hill
John Watſon, ſervant, do.
Jo. Armour, weav. Williamsburgh
Henry Oſborn, do. do.
Thos. Wilſon, do. do.
Will. Kirkwood, bleacher, Greens
Jennet M'Gee, do.
James Wilſon, bleacher, Albert
Arch. Davidſon, quarrier, Newtown
James Hamilton, weaver, do.
Alexander Wilſon, do. Divet-hall
Ja. Cochran, N. of Stewart's race

NEILSTON PARISH.

Henry Hardy, engraver, Fernize
Will. Buchanan, workman, do.
Thomas Buchanan, cutter, do.
William Maxwell, } Printers
Thomas Salmon,
William Ruſſel,
John Rankin,
John Dalglieſh,
Andrew Stevenſon,
William Kerr,
Peter M'Nicoll,
Archibald M'Lean,
John Miller,
Robert Waddell,
Andrew Hall,
Robert Anderſon, wright
Michael M'Culloch, do.
Peter Chambers, bleacher
Dougald Graham, do.
Will. Robertſon, officer of exciſe
George Turnbull, do. do.
Robert Legat, weaver, Grahamſton
William Black, do.
James M'Koun, do.
Robert Cochran
John Gibſon
Thomas Rodger, weaver, Newton of Ralſton
William Stewart, do. there
James Pollock, do. there
Alexander Campbell, taylor there
David Gillies, weaver, Bogleſton
Rob. Stevenſon, do. do.
John Maxwell, do. Barhead
Rob. Cumming, do. Dove-cot-hall
James Ferguſon, do. do.
John Nelſon, do. do.
James Dunlop, wright, Doucatmill
James Angus, dyer
John M'Gibbon, workman
John Maitland, do.
John Ewing, do.

Mr. STIRLING's FIELD, CORDELL.

Joſeph Buchanan, } Printers
Charles Arrol,
George Merchant,
Adam Burns,
Alexander Barr,
Joſeph Martin,
David M'Indoe,
John M'Nicoll,
Thomas Maltman,
Arch. Carmichael,
Adam Burns,
Robert Walker,
Iſaac Turner,
John Crawford,
Thomas M'Kean,
John Lindſay,
Allan Davie,
David Chapman,
John M'Farlane, jun.
James Johnſton,
David Merchant,
John M'Culloch,
Robert Bruce,
John M'Kean,
John M'Intyre,
Willliam M'Kechnie, cutter
William Towart, do.
George Bell, do.
John Barr, copper-man
John M'Indoe, do.
John M'Alaſter, boiler
John Strathern, dyer
John M'Kirday, do.
Margaret Lindſay
Elizabeth M'Gibbon
Jane M'Auſlan
Elizabeth Hamilton
William Dechman
George Siton, maſon, Renton
John Riſk, printer, do.
Peter Colquhoun, do.
Rob. M'Hutchon, do.
Andrew Paul, do.
John Farquhar, copper-man
Duncan Currie, do.
Andrew M'Farlane, bleacher
John Cookburn, colour-maker
Elizabeth Buntin
Duncan M'Bain, ſmith
William Allan, maſon, Mill-burn
Hugh Morton, wright, do.
William Ferguſon, taylor, do.
Henry Sutherland, maſon, do.
Jane Ewing
John Bain
Duncan Miller
John Alexander, carter

BONHILL.

John M'Kechnie, } Printers
James Allan,
James Johnſton,
John M'Gregor,
James Auchinvoll,
John M'Indoe,
William Chambers,
Alexander Forreſt,
Walter Cragie,
James M'Alaſter, wright
James M'Adam, do.
Abraham Duff, do.
William M'Kinlay, do.
James Colquhoun
William Meikle
Robert Aitken, mill-wright
George Paterſon, bleacher
Robert Ure, do.
John Jones, do.
John M'Gregor, do.
Philip Thomſon, maſon
Robert Richardſon, do.
Robert Wood, do.

Mr. BUCHANAN's FIELD.

William Brown
John Dykes, cutter
Angus Sinclair, do.
James Ewing, do.
Allan Rodger, do.
John Stevenſon, printer
John Aſhcroft, do.
Will. Hothrington, do.
John Brown, do.
John Donald, workman
William Bain, mill-wright
John Blackie
George Philips
Jo. Cookburn, Kilmaronock, Blairl.
James Yuill, maſon in Eaber
Walter M'Farlane, Blairnavaird, near Drummond
James Blair, wright, Gateſide, do.
Will. Arthur, printer, Leven-bank
John M'Nicoll, do. do.
John Smith, do. do.
Jo. Robertſon, do. do.
Alex. Dykes, do. do.
Alex. M'Intoſh, do. do.
Donald Frazer, engraver
Donald Frazer, cutter
Walter M'Leran, dyer
John Ferguſon, preſs-driver
James Parlane, carter
Robert Rowan, wright
Neal Berry, do.
Donald Walker, do.
James Houſton, do.
John Shaw, do.
John Robertſon, workman
Thomas Wilſon, maſon
Robert Strathie, do.
James M'Gechan, do.
John M'Garvie, gardener
Alexander Moriſon, printer
John Barr, do.
John Falconer, do.
James M'Auſlan, cutter

Mr. TODD's FIELD.

Helen Robertſon
Iſabel Miller
Katharine Campbell
Grizzel Gardiner
William M'Kean, workman
Malcom Fleming, cutter
James Bryſon, do.
James Moriſon, } Printers
John Ewing,
Daniel Cameron,
James Buchanan,
William Goold,
Lewis Gardiner,
Thomas Miller,
James M'Aulay,
John Glen,
John M'Kinlay,
Walter Moriſon,
David Bryce,
Daniel Service,
John Stevenſon,
Daniel M'Allum,
Peter Allan,
Peter M'Farlane,
James M'Lintock,
John Lindſay,
Iſabel M'Kinzie
Walter Bain, mill-wright
James M'Indoe, dyer
Jennet M'Intyre
Chriſtian Buchanan
Joanna M'Allifter
Alexander Brown, engraver
Margaret Paul
William Stewart, cloth-lapper
Thomas Kilpatrick
Archibald Kennedy, dyer
Iſabel Megget
Duncan M'Leran
John M'Kumen
Jennet M'Nair
James M'Birney, bleacher
Gordon Wilſon, do.
Elizabeth Harvie
David M'Onnachie, clerk
John Cameron, colour-maker
Robert Birney, dyer, Dalquhurn
William Zuill, copperman, do.

DUMBARTON.

Robert M'Ilrey, ſhoemaker
Edward M'Adam, do.
Ann Montgomerie
Margaret Cunningham
Jennet M'Lintock
Katharine Smith
Iſabel Watſon
Elizabeth Grant
Chriſtian M'Coll
Mary Mitchell
Jane M'Allum
Jane Lindſay
Margaret Govan
Jennet M'Kay
Jane M'Allum
Jane M'Kinlay
James Howat
Andrew Brown, caſtle-ſoldier
James Forreſt, maſon
David Glen, farmer, Roundredding
Will. Lindſay, Greenhead, Cambuſnethan
James Forreſt, maſon, Ediſton
John Shanks, do. Dalſerf
John Loudon, do. Glaſsford-head
Robert Allan, weaver, Modderwell

OLD KILPATRICK.

James Forſyth, farmer
Mrs. Miller, Dunglaſs
John Lochead, baker
Joſeph Gilmour, miller, Dalnotter
Claud Lang, ſmith
Alex. M'Murray, collier, Witch-hills
William Ingles, maſon, do.
Alex. M'Kell, printer, Milton-field
Allan Paul, do.
Will. Kirkwood, bleacher, do.
William Connel, overſeer, do.
Jennet Ewing
Collin Wilſon
John M'Gregor at Little-mill
Rob. Arkely, ſhoemaker, Greenock

Given in by JOHN BLAIR, Gartachauſian.

William M'Kerecher, Penny-hall
John Buchanan, Crafttammy
Alex. M'Alaſter, do.
John Burns, Bridge-end
Robert M'Gregor, Catter-mill
Peter Leckie, Dalm-houſe
John M'Kerecher, Penny-hall
Alexander M'Adam, Baligg
Robert Burns, Finnie
John Howat, Paddock-hole
William Miller, Gartleck
William M'Gowan, Finnick

Given in by JAMES WILSON, GLASGOW.

Jo. Lindſay, Gatehouſe, Riccarton
Tho. Gilmour, Brimyards, ——
Hugh Anderſon, Mayſide, ——
John Gemmel, Knowhead, ——
James Allan, Brayſide, ——
James Dunlop, farmer, ——
James Neal, ——
John Breckinridge, maſon, ——
Ja. Wilſon, farm. Maxholm, ——
Will. Farquhar, do. Gateſide, ——
John Sawer, do. Brayſide, ——
Ja. Wright, farm. Short Lees, ——
James Lambie, ——
John Gooldie, wright, ——
Robert Templeton, weaver, ——
Andrew Allan, ——
John Anderſon, ſmith, Blackfaulds
Ja. Brown, maltman, do. Finwick
Jo. Taylor, weaver in Roſs, ——
John Young, ——
John Shields, ſhoemaker, ——
James Walker, ——
John Calderwood, ——
John Anderſon, ——
Robert Tannahill, ——
James Stevenſon, ——
William Cuthbertſon, ——
James Huſband, ſmith ——
David Leckie, portioner, ——
Robert Walker, weaver, ——
James Gemmel, ſhoemaker, ——
John Brown, Arnes, ——
James Wallace, Horſe Houe, ——
Rob. Morton, Kirkdyke of Cragie
John Galt, farmer, Hairlaw, ——
David Loudon, ——
Ja. Wood, farmer, Fulton, ——
Hugh Morton, maſon, Damhead
James Lochead
Thomas Lindſay, ſervant, Finwick
Stephen Wallace, do.
Rob. M'Cale, Knowhead, Millburn
Peter Ritchie, Fail Tarbolton
Archibald Hood, do.
Ja. M'Cluer, Whitehill, Symington
Samuel Smith, Cudan, do.
Rob. Reid, ſerv. Helenton, do.
William Auld, Netherton-holm
John Walker, do.
John Bennie, printer, do.
William Wallace, diſtiller
James Mann, Eagleſton
Robert Snodgraſs, wright, Beith
John King, taylor, —
John Reid, —
William Gulliand, —
William Wilſon, Third Part, —
Ja. M'Dougald, Giffan-mill, —
John Boyd, Greenhills, —
Daniel Montgomrie, —
Daniel Cameron, —
Jane Carſwell, Balgray, —
James Lauchland, taylor, —
Robert Barclay, Kilwinning
John Craig, do.
Neal Gray, do.
James Stirling, weaver
John Client, weaver, Derval
John Currie, fleſher
Moſes Smith, baker
John Miller, jun.
James Lambie, weaver, Newmills
William Bowie, do. do.
James Craig, do. do.
John Maſon, Redding, do.
Hugh Donaldſon, do. do.
James Naſbet, weaver, Carne
John Boyd, do. do.
Hugh Young, do. do.
Arch. Hodge, do. do.
Hugh Jamie, do. do.
Robert Gilmour, do.
James Anderſon, do.
John Wilſon, merchant, do.
James Woodburn, do.
John Lindſay, do.
Ja. Wyllie, hammerman, Stewarton
James Wilſon, ——
William Barber, ——
Humphrey Barber, ——
James Kirkland, ——
John Stevenſon, ——
Thomas Currie, ——
John Dunlop, wright, ——
James Wyllie, hoſier, ——
James White, ſawer, ——
James White, maſon, ——
William Ranken, ——
Matthew Currie, ——
John Carſwell, ſhoemaker, ——
Robert Smith, wright, ——
Robert Cochran, weaver, ——
William Cunningham, ——
John Gilmour, ——
John Stewart, Gabrochill, ——
John Gemmel, weaver, Neilſton
Thomas Finlay, ——
John Craig, Rodinhead, ——
John Gemmel, ——
William Kennedy, ——
Thomas Gemmel, ——
John Brown, farmer, ——
James Anderſon, do. ——
James Lochead, do. ——
Robert Brown, maſon, Kilmarnock
James Murdoch, do.
Will. Brown, ſhoemaker, do.
James Wilſon, merchant, do.
Hugh Shields, Blackhills, do.
Robert Kerr, Little-mill
John Muir, ſhoemaker, Killmaurs
John Cuthbertſon, do.
John Templeton, weaver, do.
James Templeton, do. do.
Jo. Crawford, Little Berket Dalray
James Rodger, Bareſch, ——
James Kirkwood, ——
John Kirkwood, ——
William Dickie, ——
William Boyd, wright, ——
John Dunlop, ——
James Dickie, ——
John Kerr, ——
Thomas Greig, ——
Robert Rodger, ——
Andrew Eaſdale, Barkip, ——
James Bailey, farmer, Mid-part
William Smith, Galſton
James Kirkland, do.
James Howie, do.
John Deans, Peacock-bank
James Taylor, farmer, Dreghorn
James Wyllie, do. do.
Hugh Wyllie, do.
Margaret Fife, Kilbirney
David Logan, do.
Gavin Stevenſon, Mairns
James Orr, do.
Hugh Lawſon, baker, Newtoun, Ayr
Bryce Crawford, carpenter, Saltcoats
James Miller, Laig, Chapelton
Margaret Pollock, pariſh of Dunlop
William Strang, Little Dreps, Carmunnock
John Finlay, wright, Glaſgow
Jennet Aitken, do.

Given in by CHAR. STEWART, KILMARNOCK.

James Gibſon, weaver, Kilmarnock
David Bruce, do. ——
William Stevenſon, do. ——
Tho. Montgomrie, do. ——
John Calderwood, do. Nethertonh.
David M'Houll, do. ——
Will. Boyd, carpet do. ——
Will. Adam, ſhoemaker, ——
John Ferguſon, do. ——
James M'Math, ——
James Dunlop, printer, ——
Rob. M'Culloch, weaver, ——
Dav. Chambers, wright, Holm head
Joſeph Kennedy, ——
George M'Houll, weaver, ——
William Templeton, do. ——
Alexander Gibſon, do. ——
Robert Connel, do. ——
James Wilſon, do. ——
Robert Cornduff, nailer, ——
James Ewing, ——
Walter Bruce, ——
John Morton, ——
David Connel, ——
Robert M'Ron, weaver, Waterſide
James Anderſon, do. ——
William Gilleſpie, do. ——
Robert Bettie, do. ——
John Alliſon, do. ——
John Brown, do. ——
Ja. Forreſter, ſhoemaker, ——
George Boyd, do. ——
William Blair, do. ——
Jonathan Pollock, do. ——
David Murdoch, do. ——
John Mitchell, ——
James Craig, ——
David Muir, Sandbed
Ja. Miller, Milton-mill of Grougar
Geo. Murdoch, weaver, Claymugs
John Stewart, do.
John Scott, ſhoemaker
Michael Reid, do.
Geo. M'Donald, collier, Dundonald
Thomas Tape, do. ——
Walter Tape, do. ——
Robert Shedden, ropeſpinner, Saltcoats
John Willy, ſilk-weaver
Robert Stewart, ſervant, Riccarton

Given in by W. PINKERTON, Bookſeller, GLASGOW.

Rob. Witherſpoon, ſmith, Glaſgow
William Wilſon, porter, ——
Archibald Gillies, clerk, ——
David Seth, ſhoemaker, ——
James Rennie, barber, ——
Robert Urie, do. ——
Rob. Dobbie, jun. weaver, ——
John Shankly, ropemaker, ——
Tho. Maxwell, ſtaymaker, ——
James Kerr, taylor, ——
Mrs. Falconer, ſchoolmiſtr. ——
Will. Marſhal, ſhoemaker, ——
Walter Scott, maſon, ——
Robert White, cooper, ——
Dan. M'Intoſh, copperſm. ——
James M'Lellan, joiner, ——
Jo. Whitelaw, engrav. Grahamſton
Andr. Marſhal, printer, Anderſton
Donald M'Kinnon, do, ——
Andr. M'Farlane, do. ——
John Leckie, do. ——
Thomas Burton, do. ——
John Duncan, weaver, ——
James Ralph, do. ——
Will. M'Adam, do. ——
Margaret Orr, ——
John Hamilton, drawer, ——
Andrew Alves, ſhoemaker, ——
James Webſter, farmer, Bothwell

Given in by ROBERT SLOAN, Shoemaker, GLASGOW.

Thomas Knox,
Alexander Struthers,
John Craig,
John Shearer,
John Burns,
Robert Brichen,
James Taylor,
Archibald Sinclair, } Shoemakers
William Liddle,
Andrew Hepburn,
David Stewart,
James Crookſhanks,
Peter Eales,
David Thomſon,
John Calderhead,
Benjamin Gow, taylor
William Stewart, do.
John Thomſon, do.
James Sharp, do.
Allan Thomſon, do.
James Thomſon, do.
John Brichen, pipemaker
Robert Grant, do.
Thomas Maitland, do.
John M'Kechnie, weaver
John Miller, do.
William Murray
Robert Arthur
James Brownlie, grocer
Ebenezer Robertſon, watchmaker
James Barr, hoſier
David Logan, farmer
Alexander Donald, clerk
James Gilleſpie, bleacher
William M'Farlane, cotton-ſpinner
Thomas Park, clerk, Greenock
John Shanks, baker
Elizabeth Struthers

Given in by JOHN FERGUSON, Tanner, GLASGOW.

Arthur Barcley, Glaſgow
John Bennie
Henry Houden, curtier
John Gardner, victuler
Peter Moriſon, ſhoemaker
Thomas Shirra, do.
John Morchie, do.
Archibald Maſon, do.
Thomas Billinie, do.
Alex. Muirhead, changekeeper
William Love, writer
Robert Harvie, merchant
Andrew Maſon, victuler
John Bennie, tanner
John Thomſon, grocer

Taken in at the SHOP.

Peter Paterſon
Colin Campbell, ſtockingmaker
Archibald M'Intyre,
John Arthur
John Parlane
James Logan
John Bulloch
John Moriſon, wigmaker
James Moriſon, wright
Adam Sommervell, do.
John Chriſtie, late ſergeant 73 regt.
John Chriſtie, ſtaymaker
William M'Farlane, merchant
James M'Indoe, weaver, Gorbals
Robert Shaw, do.
William Brown, baker, do.
John Oliver, taylor
John Scales, writer
James Dempſter, druggiſt
Alexander Fiſher, Tobacconiſt
Andrew Thomſon, grocer
Robert Witherſpoon, Walflet
Hugh M'Farlane, cooper
James Dun, grocer
John Smith, wright
John Allan, nailer
George Lang, hatter
John Aitken, Paiſley
John Niſbet, wright
David Duncan, porter
John Gardner, taylor
John Freebairn, inn-keeper
William Cameron, ſmith
Robert Craig, merchant, Paiſley
William Frame
John Watt, wright
John Gordon, paper-maker
James Burns, leather-cutter
Widow Ralſton
John Nicol, wright, 2 copies
Rob. Chriſtie, do.
Alex. Blair, do.
William Nelſon, weaver, Calton
Daniel M'Knaught, ſtudent
Iſabel Marſhal
Ja. Wood, paper-maker, Netherlee
Will. Shearer, weaver, Carmunnock
John Dick, inn-keeper, do.
Will. Thomſon, farmer, do.
John Muir, paper-maker, Netherlee

Given in by JOHN PATERSON, Weaver, PARTICK.

Alexander Shearer, weaver, Partick
William Smith, do. —
James Walker, do. —
James Niviſon, do. —
Thomas Mitchel, weaver, Partick
Archibald Gardner, do. —
William M'Gregor, do. —
Andrew Robertſon, ſhoemaker
William Martin, do.
David Keſſock, linen-printer
Michael Gebbie, bleacher
John M'Uat, miller
Will. Shearer, ſhoem. Strathblane
Andrew M'Farlane, farmer
John Adam, do.

Given in by JAMES SMITH, Ship-maſter, STENHOUSE.

Arch. Porteous, ſchoolm. Stenhouſe
James Eaſon, farmer, ———
Arch. M'Gilchriſt, do. ———
Jo. Robertſon, ſhoemaker, ———
John M'Gilchriſt, do. ———
John Gilleſpie, do. ———
Will. M'Queen, taylor, ———
Rob. M'Farlane, wright, ———
Jo. Muir, tayl. Needlefield, ———
David M'Innes, maſon, ———
W. Robertſon, ſtockingm. ———
William Young, ———
Alexander Muir, taylor, ———
Will. Allan, moulder, Carron-work
John Oſwald, ———
Ja. Gardner, ſchoolmaſter, ———
John Walker, Carron-ſhore
Tho. Smith, merchant, Bainsford
Rob. Dounie, bridgekeeper ———
John Muirhead, ———
Robert Shaw, ſhipmaſter, ———
John Moodie, wright, ———
James Jaffrie, weaver, ———
Alex. Greenhorn at Mungal-mill
John Moriſon, farmer, Bothkener
And. Nelſon, ſhipmaſter, ———
George Gibſon at Grangemouth

Given in by W. ANDERSON, Bookſeller, STIRLING.

James Miller
Andrew Cowan
Thomas Smart
Robert Cowan
Daniel Dunbar
Robert Armſtrong
James Paton
William Bowie
James Blackadder
James Ruſſel
James Edmond
Andrew Marſhal
James Archibald
Alexander Moriſon
John Frazer
Alexander Smith
Alexander Craig
Robert Wright
John Callender, Eſq;
Walter Oliphant
Thomas Thomſon
John Ferguſon, jun.
Adam Crawford
William Nelſon
Archibald Telford
John Dow
James Grant
Walter Blair
Thomas M'Nee
John Dun
David Fergus
James Murray
Robert Lambert
William Chriſtie. 1774.

THE END.